

Who We Worked With

Librarians and metadata experts from across our member institutions, responsible for approximately £55 million in annual sector spend.

The Situation

More and more resources for students' learning are now provided online. The global pandemic has accelerated this digital provision of books and journals. The metadata held within university library catalogues is vital to ensuring students can find and use critical resources. It makes the books, journals and other resources searchable and easy to locate, which is a fundamental requirement for meeting students' expectations.

What Happened

Metadata is a complex, niche area of librarianship. It enables sophisticated connections to and between online works so that they can be easily discovered and used. We realised that we could add value by supporting our members to discuss this evolving area together.

Our Academic Services Category Manager Gavin Phillips, who came to SUPC from a role as a university librarian himself, set up a metadata special interest group so SUPC and LUPC members could learn from each other. The network we have created is made up of around 70 librarians



and data professionals. We have continued to host these conversations remotely during the pandemic. The next stage for this group is to look at ways we can enable collaborative projects between member institutions.

The Difference it Made

Metadata improvements underpin value for money for institutions. If a resource cannot be found, it will not be used and the cost to acquiring it will have been lost. The group therefore gives our members the opportunity to ensure ongoing value beyond SUPC's framework in this area.

This special interest group has enabled member institutions to learn about this changing area and share their experiences. They are able to improve their own online library catalogues and provide a better experience for their students and staff. In this safe space with their peers, they feel able to ask questions and seek reassurance when required. Given the growing importance of digital library provision – especially in light of Covid-19 - this best-practice sharing network is already helping to shape the future of learning in UK higher education.

‘Books are there to be read. If a student or other member of the university community can’t find a book, they cannot use it. Members have told me how valuable our metadata special interest group is for developing their practices to ensure a high-quality library experience and value for money for their students.’

GAVIN PHILLIPS,
SUPC CATEGORY MANAGER,
ACADEMIC SERVICES

A chance to Share, Learn and Add Value to the Learning Experience

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