



## **Inspire National Rollout: 2004-2006**

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## Inspire National Rollout: 2004-2006

### 1 Summary

Funding for the two-year rollout of Inspire as a national offer between public, academic and other types of libraries across all English regions has been approved by the Regional Libraries Advisory Group (RLAG)<sup>1</sup> and the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council as part of the implementation plan for *Framework for the Future*, the DCMS Public Library strategy to 2013<sup>2</sup>.

By July 2006, supported access will be available for adult learners and aspiring learners to resources in Higher Education and Public Libraries and in the British Library across all regions. Inspire will negotiate agreement to and membership of a “kitemarked” national access service for learners, create targeted marketing materials for use in traditional and non-traditional environments, and work with library and other staff to provide the resources and develop the skills and confidence to implement and promote the scheme.

Inspire will build on the *Empowering the Learning Community*<sup>3</sup> demonstration projects in the North-West and West Midlands as well as the pre-existing Libraries & Learners in London<sup>4</sup> (LLiL) scheme and other library partnerships ultimately to link the 875 HE, 4610 public and 3 national libraries across the whole UK. Links with libraries in other sectors will be actively established to deepen and broaden the scope of access opportunities for learners. Inspire will assist the achievement of 2 fundamental aims in the DCMS *Framework for the Future* strategic vision for public library services and access:

- *Any member of a public library can also access materials held in HE and FE libraries*
- *Anyone seeking opportunities for learning and training can be guided to a course through a public library*

### 2 Lead organisations & contacts:

- SCONUL, the Society of College, National & University Libraries<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> RLAG is funded jointly by the British Library, CILIP and MLA Council

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.culture.gov.uk/global/publications/archive\\_2003/framework\\_future.htm](http://www.culture.gov.uk/global/publications/archive_2003/framework_future.htm)

<sup>3</sup> Library and Information Commission. (2000) *Empowering the Learning Community*, report of the LIC Education and Libraries Task Group. <http://www.mla.gov.uk/action/learnacc/emplearn00.asp>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.londonlibraries.org.uk/servlets/llil/aboutllil>

<sup>5</sup> SCONUL promotes excellence in library services in higher education and national libraries across the UK and Ireland. <http://www.sconul.ac.uk/>

- SCL, the Society of Chief Librarians (public library authorities: England, Wales & N Ireland)<sup>6</sup>

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### 3 The Inspire national offer in England

As a result of the DFES-funded Inspire England project and the *Empowering the Learning Community* demonstrator Inspire-based projects in the North West and West Midlands regions, there is now a body of experience built on the foundations of *Libraries and Learners in London* (LLiL) which is being reviewed as a matter of priority by the Inspire National Partnerships Manager.

*The Inspire national offer will support the following strategic objectives of the Framework for the Future Action Plan 2003-2006 (September 2003):*

*Objective 1: Develop & promote the role and contribution of public libraries through a clear vision supported by effective advocacy & communication.*

*Inspire will particularly focus on supporting:*

1.1.1 *Position public libraries to ensure they deliver key national, regional & local priorities*

1.2.3 *Work with advocates for libraries to promote services & support improvement*

1.2.5 *Present & promote public library services effectively*

*Objective 2: Build libraries' capacity to improve through better quality of leadership & workforce skills*

*Inspire will particularly focus on supporting:*

2.2.1 *Implement a nationally coordinated workforce development programme that improves staff skills in delivering high quality services*

*Objective 3: Implement innovative solutions to achieve maximum impact from available resources*

*Inspire will particularly focus on supporting:*

3.2.2 *Promote best practice models for joint provision of library services across local authority & sectoral boundaries*

<sup>6</sup> SCL aims to take a leading role in the development of public libraries by influencing statutory, financial and other decisions. <http://chieflib.org.uk/>

*Objective 6: Widen participation & demonstrate the impact & value of libraries in supporting learning*

*Inspire will particularly focus on supporting:*

*6.1.1 Ensure libraries play a full part in integrated strategies to improve access to adult learning support & resources*

*6.1.2 Implement best practice models to improve customer access to resources in academic & public libraries*

#### **4 Characteristics of Inspire libraries**

The “national offer” will be founded on an effectively marketed library welcome model and will have the following characteristics which were developed as the Inspire “kitemark” criteria:

- Allows visitors reference access to hard copy materials
- Has a service plan that reflects commitment to co-operative working with Inspire partners
- Agrees to publicise Inspire throughout the library/service and to the wider community where practicable
- Lists library collection strengths so they can be promoted via the Inspire web site<sup>7</sup>
- Ensures all staff have an awareness of the access the Inspire scheme
- Allows designated staff receive in-depth briefing and take responsibility for cascading information about the scheme to other staff
- Includes Inspire in induction and on-going training programmes about access schemes
- Collects qualitative and quantitative management information is to monitor the impact of Inspire

#### **5 Engaging the English regions**

The National Partnerships Manager will initiate work with all the 9 English regions.

Already there has been a clear indication from the London Libraries Development Agency that LLiL aims to re-brand as Inspire London during 2005. Inspire West Midlands will be broadened from the recently concluded pilot into a pan-regional scheme through a Steering Group reconstituted from the academic libraries group, Access West Midlands, with cross-sectoral representation of public, higher and further education, health and workplace libraries and the Learning and Access Development Manager of MLA West Midlands. Agencies in the North West region are currently considering the optimum model for implementation. North East Museums Libraries & Archives Council (NEMLAC) has commissioned “Implementing Inspire” a preparatory mapping study in the North East and it is likely that LINE (Libraries in the North East) will form the operational group for Inspire North East.

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.inspire.gov.uk/home.htm>

The National Partnerships Manager's role is closely focused on negotiation with each of the English regions to sign-up all public and higher education libraries. Other priority targets are further education libraries in colleges with COVE (Centre of Vocational Excellence) status, libraries in Strategic Health Authorities and their associated trusts, and workplace libraries within commercial organisations.

Other key aspects of the role are:

- Promotion of the service to learners, learning and skills organisations and to community and voluntary bodies
- Development of a national training toolkit for front-line workforce development based on the existing work of the 3 founding regions
- Strategic support for the development of regional portals and web access to special collections

As a result of the DFES-funded Inspire England project and the *Empowering the Learning Community* demonstrator Inspire-based projects in the North West and West Midlands regions, there is now a body of experience which will be reviewed by the Inspire National Partnerships Manager and used for further development of the scheme. The lessons learnt from the LLiL implementation and from other access schemes such as SCOUNL Research Extra, will also be applied in engaging all regions.

The model adopted by LLiL was to encourage sign-up, not to apply coercive tactics and to sell the initiative through the success achieved by early joiners. The National Partnerships Manager will work with regional Inspire operational groups to ensure that the rollout is guided by local circumstances. Existing local schemes will be used to support subregional rollout where that is the appropriate starting point. The requirement for adherence to the nationally agreed kitemark criteria as a fundamental principle of engagement will be used to eliminate the risk of developing a confused national offer through this route.

## **6 Stakeholders on the Inspire England Steering Group**

The Inspire England Steering Group will be reconstituted with effect from January 2005 for the 2-year implementation period 2004-2006. It will be made up of the following stakeholders:

- MLA Council: Margaret Croucher
- RLAG: Clare Connor as Chair, Lynn Hodgkins and Fiona O'Brien. These 3 members will represent the interest of the 9 English regional agencies and CILIP
- British Library: Stephanie Kenna
- Learning & Skills Council: Programme Manager, Widening Participation (post currently vacant)
- SCL: Andrew Green and Roy Knight as nominees of SCL executive
- SCOUNL: Mary Heaney and Jon Purcell as nominees of SCOUNL executive
- Devolved Administrations: Stuart James of the Scottish Consortium of University & Research Libraries
- National Partnerships Manager ex officio

## **7 Engaging the UK's devolved administrations and the Republic of Ireland**

The reconstituted Inspire Steering Group includes a representative of one of the UK's devolved administrations, through whom we hope to encourage the rollout beyond England. We are in contact with library colleagues in Wales who were recently awarded European Social Fund Objective 3 funding for a *Gateways to Learning* project with similar aspirations to Inspire. The Inspire Partnerships Manager will also shortly be holding talks with staff at the National Library of Scotland on access issues and how they are being dealt with in Scotland and by NLS. While the funding resources allocated to the Inspire rollout 2004-2006 are clearly focused on achievement of the English "national offer", we have approached COLICO<sup>8</sup> on how collaboration in Ireland such as the work initiated in the Inspire Foyle project and the pre-existing academic library cooperation scheme, ALCID, could support the implementation of Inspire across the whole of the island of Ireland.

## **8 Timescales and sustainability**

The delivery deadline for the Inspire national offer is March 2006. The National Partnerships Manager will continue in post to August 2006 through RLAG funding to embed marketing, collection mapping, performance monitoring of the website/associated collection mapping and workforce development. It is anticipated that sustainability and embedding of Inspire beyond 2006 will be achieved by a combination of the efforts of HE library groups linked to regional HE Associations working in partnership with the Society of Chief Librarians nationally and at regional level, with MLA Council and with the regional agencies for Museums, Libraries and Archives.

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<sup>8</sup> COLICO = The Committee on Library Co-operation in Ireland