



Project update

The aims of the project are:

- To develop evaluation techniques in the UK higher education sector through work with universities and colleges
- To create a toolkit of resources for the effective evaluation of electronic libraries
- To provide training and dissemination workshops to promote the toolkit and its use.

Toolkit

A pilot website has now been developed and will be live from January 2004 at http://www.cie.uce.ac.uk/cirt_toolkit.

Based on the research carried out during the earlier stages of the project, it was decided to divide the evaluation of electronic resources into four key areas: use and users; resources; access; and management. These are then subdivided as follows:

Use and users	Usage Impact on users User satisfaction User support Promotion
Resources	Current Provision Future provision
Access	Access Technical aspects
Management	Outcomes assessment Personnel Budgeting Collaboration and integration

By dividing EIS evaluation into these themes, the toolkit will, hopefully, make the process manageable for libraries, reflect their main concerns and perhaps even encourage staff to consider aspects of the service which had previously been neglected.

Under each of these themes, there are tools to help with the evaluation of EIS, for example, sample questionnaires and interview schedules, audits and advice on documents and statistics to collect. Advice on the analysis of findings will also be available.

In addition, there is background information about each topic, tips and issues to consider, advice on using the findings and links to relevant case studies and related projects and resources.

The website includes a step-by-step guide to evaluation which takes those new to the subject through questions such as what to evaluate, what methods to use and which stakeholders need to be considered.

Piloting

Some of the draft materials were piloted with institutions during autumn 2003, but a further round of piloting is planned now these resources are available on the website. In addition, anyone with an interest in EIS evaluation is encouraged to comment on the site design and content via a feedback form on the website [http://www.cie.uce.ac.uk/cirt_toolkit].

The site will be refined and developed further as a result and the final version will be available in May. This will be followed by a six-month training phase to promote use of the toolkit and develop the evaluation skills of library staff more generally.

Dissemination

The project has secured additional funding to assist with dissemination activities including a summary booklet, articles in the professional press and conference presentations.

In June 2004, the project team will host a one-day conference in Birmingham, UK. There will be a keynote address by Professor Charles McClure of Florida State University, who has been a consultant to the project, and there will be a range of speakers from the UK giving papers on issues relating to the evaluation of EIS in Higher Education. The conference proceedings will be published as a special issue by Emerald journals.

eVALUeD is funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) as part of its Good Management practice programme. The research team is at the University of Central England in Birmingham, UK (UCE).

The project URL is <http://www.cie.uce.ac.uk/evalued>

For further information, please contact:
Sarah McNicol, Sarah.McNicol@uce.ac.uk
or Pete Dalton, Pete.Dalton@uce.ac.uk