



JISC Project Plan

Overview of Project

1. Background

JISC funded programmes in recent years have led to an acceptance of the need for and the value of shared infrastructure services and a shared platform – the eFramework – by the UK HE sector. Some services have been developed and are widely used – e.g. the JISCmail service and ATHENS and Shibboleth authentication services. Others are still at varying stages of the development, service roll-out and user take-up continuum: for example identifier services, metadata registries, JORUM, ROMEO/Sherpa, geoXwalk, HILT and the SWORD application profile for institutional repositories. In practice, actual use and views on whether a service meets a specific user need have been variable. Services have sometimes turned out to be, or are experienced by the user as, not user-friendly and/or not easily interoperable in the Web environment.

This has resulted in users increasingly using services developed outside the academic sector by global enterprise. Not only is the academic sector using these services but in some cases they may also be engaged in 'mashups', where a combination of services are used for a single application, or a service is used to provide added value to data already held.

Currently, much of the evidence for such usage is anecdotal or hidden, recorded only by references within articles and reports on other topics. This study will provide a snapshot of what content services (ranging from generic web resources to specialist scientific databases and datasets) are currently being used by HEI in the UK. The project timescale and the staff effort available preclude a comprehensive survey approach and interviews with large numbers of individuals. The approach will therefore focus on desk-based research, although it is planned to include some case studies as illustrations of typical use patterns. Given that collaborations are often international, at least one parallel study will be undertaken in another region of the world; this will enable differences and trends to be identified. The exact number of these is still to be confirmed.

Note: This proposal is partially based on an earlier unfunded proposal submitted by David Flanders.

2. Aims and Objectives

The study aims are:

- to inform the JISC of the current use of web content services by the UK academic sector;
- to compare this with the current use of web content services in other regions of the world;
- to inform stakeholders of the services with most potential for supporting academic sector activities

Objectives

- to identify the services which are most commonly used by the academic sector;
- to identify the uses made of these services;
- to provide examples of combination and reuse of services
- to identify the significant service features that influence the choice of service;
- to identify any significant variation in take-up in different regions of the world;
- to provide a report that transforms the study findings into a set of recommendations

Project Acronym:
Version:
Contact:
Date:

3. Overall Approach

In order to achieve the aims and objectives, the study will focus on collecting information using desk-based research methods.

Case studies are likely to include for example, specialist scientific content services, therefore placing the 'web content services' within the wider content environment

4. Project Outputs

A report will be submitted to the JISC. This will draw on the studies on the situation in the UK, Australia and the USA (and on the other regional studies if these are carried out). An analysis of the findings will be used to develop a set of recommendations for the report.

The report will also provide a means of raising the awareness of this area within the UK HE community.

5. Project Outcomes

The report findings and recommendations will inform the JISC of the current situation, enabling them to take this into account in developing future initiatives and funding streams.

6. Stakeholder Analysis

Stakeholder	Interest / stake	Importance
JISC Executive	Sponsoring the project	High
HEIs	Awareness of current landscape for these services	High

7. Risk Analysis

Risk	Probability (1-5)	Severity (1-5)	Score (P x S)	Action to Prevent/Manage Risk
Staff: For UKOLN staff, there is a slight risk of illness affecting one or more of the staff working on this study; this cannot be predicted or avoided. It is unlikely that any of the staff will leave UKOLN within the project timescale.	1	4	4	If serious illness occurs, will seek to find alternative staff effort.
Organisational	N/A			
Technical	N/A			
External suppliers. These are the researchers identified by the original proposer. Only one has confirmed they can still participate; the other three are unable to do so due to conflicting commitments. The project timescale does not provide sufficient time to identify and contract replacements.	2	3	6	Proceed without replacement due to timescale limitations
Legal	N/A			

Project Acronym:
Version:
Contact:
Date:

8. Standards

Not applicable.

9. Technical Development

Not applicable.

10. Intellectual Property Rights

Any Intellectual Property contributed to the Project will remain the IP of the contributor but the Project grants to JISC a non-exclusive licence allowing it to utilise, archive and disseminate the work as required.

Project Resources

11. Project Partners

UKOLN: Main contact: Ann Chapman

Sub-contracted researchers

Jane Hunter (Professor of e-Research at ITEE, The University of Queensland, Australia)

12. Project Management

Project Manager: Ann Chapman a.d.chapman@ukoln.ac.uk
UKOLN
University of Bath Tel: 01225 386 121
Bath
BA2 7AY

0.1 FTE for project management

Researcher: Ann Chapman (details as above)

Researcher: Rosemary Russell r.russell@ukoln.ac.uk
UKOLN
University of Bath
Bath
BA2 7AY

Researcher: Professor Jane Hunter jane@itee.uq.edu.au
School of ITEE
The University of Queensland
St Lucia Tel: 617 33651092
Australia Fax: 617 33654311

Training needs: Not applicable.

Project Acronym:
Version:
Contact:
Date:

13. Programme Support

It is not anticipated that any specific support will be required.

14. Budget

The budget is attached as Appendix A. The total budget request is £45,000.

Detailed Project Planning

15. Workpackages

The workplan is attached as Appendix B.

16. Evaluation Plan

A draft version of the report will be circulated to the JISC Programme Manager.

17. Quality Plan

A draft version of the final report will be submitted to JISC towards the end of the project timescale. Adjustments of focus and content may be made at this point.

18. Dissemination Plan

Timing	Dissemination Activity	Audience	Purpose	Key Message
30 Sept 2009	Submission of report to JISC	JISC	Provide context and recommendations for future JISC SIS work	Direction-setting recommendations
May 2009	Study blog. This will be retained on the UKOLN Web site after the end of the study.	UK HE community	Publicly visible method of collecting evidence.	Snapshot of current activity
Post Sept. 2009	Potential further dissemination (e.g. journal articles based on the study, open publication of some or all of the report) to be decided by JISC / UKOLN	UK HE community	To inform the community	Snapshot of current activity

19. Exit and Sustainability Plans

Not applicable.

Appendixes

Appendix A. Project Budget

Appendix B. Workpackages