Chapter 12
Commonwealth Professional Fellowship:
A Gateway for the Strategic Development of Libraries in India

Dinesh K Siddaiah
Indian Institute of Technology, Ropar, India

ABSTRACT

The main purpose of writing this paper is to provide strategic directions to the higher education library system in India for transforming libraries into dynamic digital learning spaces as per the changing trends. It is the responsibility of the Indian Library administrators and policy makers to bridge the technology and knowledge gap exist between the commonwealth countries. This paper gives many clues on how the fellowship help the libraries in transition from print to electronic content and also gives many ideas for the overall planning and development of libraries in India. This paper provides many hints on redefining the libraries attached to the higher educational institutions in line with the libraries of western counties. This paper is written based on the learning experience of the author from his 2014 Commonwealth Professional Fellowship programme that was successfully completed at University of East London, United Kingdom. Information technology based services along with best practices adapted and which are successfully using in UK are major supportive elements for the implementation. Some of the concepts introduced in this paper are relatively new to the Indian context. Overall, the paper provides experience based inputs and insights for further development of higher education library system in India.

INTRODUCTION

Commonwealth Professional Fellowship (CPF) programme was a great opportunity for the author to refine his professional skills, acquire new knowledge, getting more ideas on digital content management and as well as study the universities and life style in the UK. The CPF supports mid-career professionals from developing Commonwealth countries to spend a period of time with a UK host organization working in their field for a programme of professional development. Fellowships are typically three months but can be between one and six months in length, and can include limited time for attendance at short courses or conferences, as well as visits to other organizations. Programmes at the fellowship demonstrate the development impact in the Fellow's home country and the Fellow must be able to show how the knowledge and skills they will gain during the Fellowship will be disseminated after their return home (Commonwealth Professional Fellowships, 2014).

The author's host institution was "University of East London" (UEL), a reputed University, and it is one of top six modern universities for research in London. UEL is a vibrant university with a vision to bring transformational academic and enterprising opportunities in the region with rich diversity, partnership and excellence in teaching and research. UEL is one of the most diverse universities in the UK, with more than 120 nationalities represented on campus. UEL has got a very well established libraries in Docklands and as well as Stratford campuses. UEL Library and Learning Services (LLS) provide access to high-quality academic resources, expert advice, and inspirational study spaces. LLS is constantly looking to improve and build high standards and, as a result of this, the UEL Library service was recently voted best in London for student satisfaction by international students (University of East London, 2014).

Author has opted for fellowship because it was a well-structured programme. At the same time he wanted to gain expertise in Library and Information management as UK libraries are far ahead than Indian Library system in terms of using technology, best practices, strategic planning and management of libraries. Author's fellowship at UEL was for 13 weeks (June 2, 2014 - August 29, 2014).

He had many objectives to achieve which were for his home Institution i.e, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Ropar, for his profession and at large for his home country. Fellowship was a boon for the author to achieve his professional objectives. Also fellowship came as a bonus for him as his institute in the midst of planning a strategic Library building and designing advanced Library services for one of the prominent Institute of higher education system in India. As a whole this particular programme helping fellows from commonwealth countries in varieties of

15 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: www.igi-global.com/chapter/commonwealth-professional-fellowship/188032

Related Content

Google Search: Digging into the Culture of Information Retrieval

Pawan R. Agrawal (2016). *E-Discovery Tools and Applications in Modern Libraries (pp. 210-239).*

www.irma-international.org/chapter/google-search/159532

Responsive Library Website Design and Adoption of Federated Search Tools for Library Services in Developing Countries

Michael Opeoluwa Fagbohun, Nwanne Mary Nwokocha, Victoria Itsekorand Oyeronke Adebayo (2020). *Digital Libraries and Institutional Repositories: Breakthroughs in Research and Practice (pp. 227-259).*

www.irma-international.org/chapter/responsive-library-website-design-and-adoption-of-federated-search-tools-for-library-services-in-developing-countries/250672

Beyond Institutional Repositories

Laurent Romaryand Chris Armbruster (2010). *International Journal of Digital Library Systems (pp. 44-61).*

www.irma-international.org/article/beyond-institutional-repositories/39036

Impact of Electronic Information Resources on the Mindset of Researchers

Nazir Ahmad Bhat (2020). *Digital Libraries and Institutional Repositories: Breakthroughs in Research and Practice (pp. 566-574).*

www.irma-international.org/chapter/impact-of-electronic-information-resources-on-the-mindset-of-researchers/250694

Software Process Asset Libraries Using Knowledge Repositories

Leonardo Bermón-Angarita, Antonio Amescua-Seco, Maria Isabel Sánchez-Seguraand Javier García-Guzmán (2009). *Handbook of Research on Digital Libraries: Design, Development, and Impact (pp. 465-475).*

www.irma-international.org/chapter/software-process-asset-libraries-using/19911