News of an Important New Publication Describing Hands on Evaluation

There is immense interest in the application of quantitative and qualitative measurement of performance in the library sector throughout the world. Last year, LISU – the Library and Information Statistics Unit at Loughborough University - hosted an IFLA Satellite conference, supported by the IFLA Statistics section, focussed on the practical application of quantitative methods in library management. Now published as Statistics in Practice – Measuring & Managing: Proceedings of IFLA Satellite Conference, Loughborough, August 2002, the presented papers covered a range of library types, and showed how statistics have been utilised in real-life situations to inform management of library services.

Patricia Layzell Ward’s introduction on the teaching of statistics in library schools across the world is followed by papers from Steve Hiller, Anja Smit and Liz Hart on academic library applications, and from David Lightfoot and Don Mills giving examples from the public library sector. Developing skills in evaluation is important and Eric Davies and Claire Creaser describe the LISU workshop sessions, which comprised a mixture of short presentations and practical exercises. Sebastian Mundt’s paper on the application of sampling techniques is followed by two contributions on the measurement of e-resources, from Tony Kidd on project COUNTER, and Julia Blixrud on the ARL E-Metrics project. Papers from Joan Stein and Wanda Dole offer further case studies of academic libraries, and John Sumson concludes by giving his personal overview of library statistics.

Following the presented papers are a series of shorter contributions, drawn from the poster session at the meeting. This gave a platform for delegates to demonstrate applications of statistics in their libraries, and a further opportunity for exchange of views.

There is much that librarians and library managers can learn from the experiences of others, and this volume makes a valuable contribution to the dissemination of everyday work which so often goes unrecorded. The papers have been published on the LISU web site, to encourage a wide readership; the full proceedings are also available in print.

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Note to Editors
Statistics in Practice – Measuring & Managing: Proceedings of IFLA Satellite Conference, Loughborough, August 2002, Creaser, C ed., 190 pages, spirobound paperback, ISBN 1 901786 52 8 (LISU Occasional Paper no 32), is published at £30.00 (post paid UK) and is available from LISU, Loughborough University, Loughborough, Leics LE11 3TU, Tel: + 44 (0)1509 223071, Fax: +44 (0)1509 223072, Email: lisu@lboro.ac.uk, through TeleOrdering and http://www.lboro.ac.uk/departments/dis/lisu/lisuhp.html.

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LISU ~ The Library and Information Statistics Unit
LISU – The Library and Information Statistics Unit – is a national research and information centre based at the Department of Information Science at Loughborough University and partially supported by Resource: The Council for Archives, Museums and Libraries. LISU seeks to contribute, in appropriate ways, to good management practice in the various public and private sector agencies that make up the strands of the information economy and cultural services. Its ‘mainstream’ work covers public, academic and special libraries and the information publishing and distribution field.