

IReL – The Irish Research Electronic Library



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Outline



- ⌘ IReL Irish Research Electronic Library
- ⌘ Events leading up to formation of IReL
- ⌘ Aims of IReL
- ⌘ Management of IReL
- ⌘ Progress so far

IReL – Irish Research electronic Library

- ⌘ First Irish national third level information initiative from top-sliced funds.
- ⌘ Applies to electronic information only
- ⌘ Aims to support research in the seven Irish universities

University of Ulster



Queen's
University
Belfast

National
University
of Ireland,
Maynooth



National
University
of Ireland,
Galway

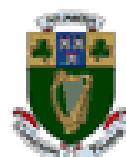


Dublin
City
University



Trinity
College
Dublin

University
of Limerick



University
College
Dublin

University College Cork

Irish universities

- ⌘ Seven institutions funded through Higher Education Authority (HEA)
- ⌘ Small by international standards (2004 OECD report)
- ⌘ Largest UCD 18,000 students
- ⌘ DCU 10,000
- ⌘ Budgets also small
 - ⏏ “investment in tertiary education, at 1.3% of GDP is slightly below average of 1.4% (OECD 2004b B2.1b)
- ⌘ Review of Higher education in Ireland OECD

Irish University Libraries pre IReL



- ⌘ No top slicing of central funds.
- ⌘ Resistance to central initiatives
- ⌘ Collaborative ventures (e.g. Science Direct) funded from libraries own budgets
- ⌘ Libraries one of the few university agencies to co-operatively purchase e.g. periodicals contracts
- ⌘ Libraries had sought change on JISC/Finnish model for over 5 years.

Science Foundation Ireland



- ⌘ Founded in 2000 to promote world class research in Ireland in two areas: Biotechnology and Information and Communications technology
- ⌘ 1999 government study had identified these as the main “engines of future growth in the global economy”
- ⌘ SFI funded (€650m) by Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment, not Education
- ⌘ Initially debate whether SFI research would be located in universities
- ⌘ Initiative headed by Dr W Harris from University of Columbia.

Science Foundation Ireland (contd)

- ⌘ Established a competitive system of research grants, aimed mainly at universities
- ⌘ Also aimed to attract high profile individual researchers to Ireland, to build teams
- ⌘ Had to act quickly and discovered significant deficits in the Irish third level system, including information.

Formation of IReL

- ⌘ University libraries stepped up their requests to the Higher Education Authority for a centralised information resource as a consequence of the increased pressure caused by SFI researchers.
- ⌘ SFI researchers made demands on SFI itself for improvements in infrastructure, including information.
- ⌘ In autumn 2003 a university library proposal was accepted by HEA and SFI who agreed jointly to fund it

IReL - Aims



- ⌘ Provide Irish researchers with an appropriate information infrastructure
- ⌘ All key titles and services in biotechnology and information and communications technology
- ⌘ Electronic information, direct to desktop, (or remote locations) continuously available.
- ⌘ Provide bibliographic and service supports to ensure full exploitation of information

IReL – the grant



- ⌘ 20 million Euro over five years 2004-2008
- ⌘ To be allocated to:
 - ☑ Major bundled electronic services e.g Science Direct
 - ☑ Nominated electronic single titles
- ⌘ IReL grant to be met by matching funding in the form of value of existing subscriptions
- ⌘ Grant disbursement covered by legal agreements between funders and universities

IReL - Content



- ⌘ 27 Full sets of publishers journals (4,000 + titles) e.g. Science Direct
- ⌘ 10 Databases e.g. Web of Knowledge
- ⌘ 68 individual titles
- ⌘ IReL titles figure in top rankings for 11 relevant subjects (ISI Sciencewatch – hottest journals of millenium)

IReL – legal structures

- ⌘ Legal agreements between funders and a nominated university to cover initial transfer of grant.
- ⌘ Legal agreement between nominated university and 7 librarians to cover distribution of grant to company, IRIS, owned by universities, which will pay publishers
- ⌘ Management of above company

IReL – terms of business



- ⌘ All contracts to be of 2-3 years duration
- ⌘ Uniform licence to be offered
- ⌘ Publishers deal only with negotiating agent, Content Complete, whom IReL have retained.
- ⌘ Currently deal applies only to Irish universities

IReL Management



- ⌘ IReL has a manager and part-time assistant
- ⌘ Manager reports to current chair of Irish university librarians group (rotates annually)
- ⌘ An IReL Working Group, composed of acquisitions librarians, with manager and Librarians Chair, meets monthly to approve deals/monitor accounts/troubleshoot

IReL management (Continued)



- ⌘ University librarians take IReL matters as a standing item on their meetings (8 per year)
- ⌘ Formal reports on funds, commitments, and cash flows.
- ⌘ University librarians required to report to main funders, Science Foundation Ireland and Higher Education Authority
- ⌘ Will be subject to annual audit
- ⌘ Possibly subject to audit by Comptroller and Auditor General

IReL Monitoring



- ⌘ Representative group set up to monitor:
 - ☑ Downtime & access issues. Links need to be monitored
 - ☑ Usage patterns and statistics to inform contract renewal & renegotiation
 - ☑ Service promotion on a central web site
 - ☑ Liaison with suppliers

IReL - Progress

- ⌘ Still only in second year of IReL
- ⌘ Big increase in availability of full text electronic journals +4,000
- ⌘ Requirement to provide awareness and support services for research teams: post docs etc
- ⌘ Requirement to provide administrative and monitoring services
- ⌘ Libraries need to market themselves: can become invisible

IReL – The future

- ⌘ IReL's significance: first Irish national third level information initiative from top-sliced funds.
- ⌘ Began in 2004. How many funding cycles are possible?
- ⌘ Extension to other institutions besides universities?
- ⌘ Work on open access and institutional repositories continues and is encouraged by our funders.