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The PULMAN Network is funded under
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I am very pleased to be able to announce that the PULMAN Network of Excellence was launched on May 1, under the European Commission's research programme for a User-Friendly Information Society (DG Information Society).

Europe's public libraries and cultural organisations have a vital role to play in the development of an e-Europe. The PULMAN Network sets out to stimulate and promote sharing of policies and practices for the digital era, in public libraries and between them and cultural organizations which operate at local and regional level.

PULMAN has an ambitious and wide-ranging agenda to be accomplished by April 2003, the end of the EC-funded project period. In this issue of *PULMAN Express*:

One of the key activities of PULMAN will be the compilation of a series of Digital Guidelines Manuals (DGM), which will identify and describe best practice and innovation in policy making and service delivery, for example: Access to culture online, lifelong learning, social inclusion, digital literacy, e-government - and their social and technical implementation in Europe's differing cultural, political and economic environments. A current list of the DGM can be found on the PULMANweb server at: <http://www.pulmanweb.org/about>

Margo de Groot of Eblida sets out the PULMAN agenda for policy work, through Europe-wide lobbying and communication activities such as organising national cross-sectoral events and an international Policy Conference early in 2003.

This issue also includes articles by Lisbeth Christensen (Aarhus Public Library) and Deidre Ellis King (Dublin City Libraries) on two specific aspects of PULMAN's multi-stranded dissemination activity - training attachments for managers and influencers in Centres of Excellence across Europe and the Registry of Distance Learning Materials for practitioners.

Jan Van Vaerenbergh (Antwerp City Library), the PULMAN co-ordinator, writes about PULMAN's role in the EC's key DIGICULT forecasting study.

Finally, on page 5, Chris Batt of Resource describes the impressive progress of the UK's Peoples' Network.

As its starting point, PULMAN has identified country co-ordinators in all 26 member and candidate countries. However, the PULMAN approach is inclusive. Participation will be extended, in the first instance by the establishment of wider groups of active professionals and policy makers in each country.

PULMAN also has an explicit International Co-operation agenda. We plan to disseminate our work and findings internationally and to extend interaction with the PULMAN Network to other parts of the World. During the remainder of 2001, members of PULMAN will be

conducting a study of conditions for public library services in countries neighbouring the 26 participating countries, including Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, Albania, Croatia, Serbia and other countries of the former Yugoslavia. Our hope is to establishing the case for an extension of the PULMAN Network.

You can keep in touch through PULMANWeb www.pulmanweb.org, I do encourage you to get involved. Your active engagement with the work of PULMAN is a necessary condition for its success and through it the development of effective future public library services right across Europe.

By Rob Davies
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The Thing to Do

Well," said Owl, "the customary procedure in such cases is as follows."

"What does Crustimoney Proseedcake mean?" said Pooh.
"For I am a bear of Very Little Brain, and long words Bother me."
"It means the Thing to Do."
"As long as it means that, I don't mind," said Pooh humbly.

At EBLIDA the Thing to Do is workpackage 3 of the PULMAN project, where EBLIDA is the co-ordinator. The work focuses on policy support and cross-sectoral constituency development. The other partners in this workpackage are: Aarhus, Amitie, Antwerp, Aquitaine, Bremen, CERLIM, Dublin, Essex, FORCE, Ljubljana, Oeiras and Olstzyn.

The overall aim of the policy work is to develop dialogue and encourage co-operation on three levels. At a national level, we aim to develop dialogue between public library policy makers and practitioners. At a European level we strive to create dialogue between policy making bodies for public libraries throughout Europe. Thirdly, we intend to bring together public libraries with other cultural institutions, i.e. museums and archives.

The role of EBLIDA

The role of EBLIDA is to engage in dialogue with international and European bodies and to co-ordinate the activities in the PULMAN countries. These activities are led by national country co-ordinators, responsible for identifying key national contacts in the field. By this we mean professionals, policy makers and those with technical interests in the provision of public information services. Country co-ordinators are also responsible for the organisation of a workshop in their country. These workshops will be held from September to November 2002. EBLIDA will gather and analyse the results of the workshops by February 2003. This is necessary because the results of both the workshops and the analysis will feed into a major policy conference, which is to be held in March 2003.

Where will the policy conference be held?

March 2003 seems far away, but we all know how time flies! Because of this, the choice for the conference location needs to be made soon. During the Antwerp meeting in June four countries were proposed: Greece, Portugal, Ireland and Lithuania. Additionally, The Netherlands has offered to host the conference. We now invite these countries to submit a brief proposal for the organisation of the conference no later than 15 October 2001. In order to help us plan a successful conference, the proposal should cover the following:

- ❑ The facilities available in terms of venue, transport and accommodation
- ❑ The level of local professional support for the conference organisation (project funds may be available). Please state names if possible.
- ❑ Potential media coverage of the conference, i.e. press contacts.
- ❑ The potential to attract key politicians for example through contacts with national ministries
- ❑ The ability to attract national and/or international sponsors for the conference, if necessary
- ❑ The political contribution the country has made over the years to the Information Society and in particular the concern for citizens in these contributions

Should you have a strong preference for one of the named countries, please let us know. Please also let us know if you feel that your country should host the conference. In this case, please send us a brief proposal along the guidelines stated above. We will do an evaluation based on the information received and the conference location will be selected by the end of October. So watch this space!

Your proposal or your "vote" should be sent to pulman@nblc.nl This is also the address for any questions regarding policy work of the PULMAN project. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any ideas, questions, comments, anything! We look forward to working together on this exciting and innovative project!



*Margo de Groot from EBLIDA
with an owl on her hand in
the Kalasha valley of
Bumburet in Chitral District
in Pakistan*

*By Margo de Groot
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Catalyst or calamity? Digital technologies in cultural institutions

The DigiCult project undertakes to define future strategies and actions for the cultural sector.

For cultural institutions and organisations, including libraries, the increasing use of digital technologies to produce, manage, store and preserve digital information not only brings new opportunities but raises many questions.

How can cultural institutions make informed decisions to avoid technological obsolescence? What technologies need to be in place to face tomorrow's challenges? How can ICT be better integrated into the daily workflow? How can memory institutions reach new audiences? What kind of skills do they need in-house? What can be outsourced? What policy framework needs to be in place to encourage and support the mission and vision of cultural institutions all over Europe?

Those and other questions are at the focus of the strategic study "Technological Landscapes for Tomorrow's Cultural Economy", a research project by the DigiCULT consortium, on behalf of the European Commission, DG Information Society - Cultural Heritage Applications. Primary objective of this study is to provide archives, libraries, museums and other cultural players with a tool to get prepared and plan their technological and organisational future.

The DigiCult study focuses in particular on five topic areas, i.e. technology, new services and demands as well as national policies and initiatives, organisational and financial aspects, exploitation, and future trends.

Visit their website at

<http://www.salzburgresearch.at/fbi/digicult/>

Pulman is a network partner in this consortium, with the double task of:

Using its contacts to stimulate contributions to the study by means of an online Delphi Survey (see below)

Disseminating the study findings as soon as they become available (by the end of December).

In the first round of the survey, representatives of cultural institutions and industries were invited to give their personal opinion on one or more selected issues. In the second round, participants were asked to rate the

analysed expert opinions put forward in the first round along a five-point scale to gauge the importance of certain issues over others.

The Delphi survey was finished mid September 2001. The results will be used to introduce and formulate points of action, and underpin recommendations for future development. We will keep you informed!!

If you want to know more about the DigiCULT study, please contact Ms. Andrea Mulrenin, Salzburg Research, Austria, andrea.mulrenin@salzburgresearch.at.

*By Jan Van Vaerenbergh
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Training programmes for library staff next year!

The Pulman network has decided to arrange training programmes for library staff within the project. In 2002 48 library employees in South, Central or

Eastern Europe will get an opportunity to attend to a training programme in one of the public libraries in Helsinki (Finland), Ljubljana (Slovenia), Veria (Greece) or Aarhus (Denmark). There will be a chance to obtain new qualifications for primarily managers or future managers within libraries. At the moment planning work is going on in the 4 libraries, but already now it has been decided that the content of the courses will be i.e. ICT, project work, international networking and new skills in librarianship. The training programmes will take place in September 2002, and invitations will be sent out in January 2002. Each country can apply for about 3 persons.



Photo from training programme in Aarhus 1999: A training session.

If you or one of your colleagues could be interested in participating in one of the training programmes it could be a good idea to fresh up your English language skills, so

you are better qualified to take part in the communication during the stay. It is an interesting experience to take part in such a training programme, and it gives you many contacts to colleagues in other countries.



Photo from training programme in Aarhus 1999: Meeting with the alderman in Aarhus

By Lisbeth Christensen
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PULMAN - Distance Learning Courses¹

PULMAN proposes to develop a directional Gateway to distance learning courses. The Gateway, accessible via the PULMAN web-site, will point to

learning activity in which the learner is remote from the providing institution and its tutorial assistance. Course materials may be wholly or partly electronically delivered, they may be provided in print or other multi-media format and courses may be of any duration. The quality and relevance of course content will be the key driving force for referral via the Gateway with courses identified being directed at the education and training requirements of those working at all levels in the broadly based cultural heritage sector of libraries, archives and museums. PULMAN will develop Criteria for Course Inclusion and Criteria for Course Evaluation purposes in the coming months and these will be posted on the PULMAN web-site in early September 2001. It is anticipated that Country Co-ordinators will play the key role in the identification and evaluative processes related to courses in their own countries thereby providing a resource which will result in PULMAN sustainability throughout and beyond the lifetime of the PULMAN action.

By Deirdre Ellis-King. Dublin City Library
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¹ An extended version of this article will appear in the next issue of PULMAN Express

Let the Celebrations Commence: progress towards the People's Network

A flurry of press releases and announcements from Resource² and the New Opportunities Fund (NOF)³ over the summer marked a watershed in the progress of the People's Network project from preparation and planning to implementation and launch. The shift provides an ideal opportunity to reflect on progress achieved to date and to consider the next steps towards completing the project by the target date of the end of 2002. By then there will be 4,300 community Information and Communication Technology (ICT) learning centres, one in every public library in the United Kingdom - representing the biggest component part of the UK Government's plans to provide universal access to ICT and the Internet in support of lifelong learning for all.

The last 18 months or so since the establishment of the People's Network Development Team at Resource can only be described as a period of intense planning, preparation, testing and assessment with NOF of the three component parts that make up the People's Network project: network infrastructure, digital content creation and staff training. This has been exacting work but has ensured that all library services will end up with an agreed minimum standard of ICT services, regardless of their location and makeup.

Network Infrastructure

Now we have definitely entered a new phase - one of practical implementation and fruition. The first significant landmark of the infrastructure programme was in May when we attended the launch of the first fully NOF-funded People's Network learning centres to be opened in the UK, all 26 in Bristol, which is situated in the South West of England. Offering a glimpse of the celebrations to come, we can look forward to all authorities embarking on the implementation of their plans by early 2002. Once open for business, NOF-funded library centres qualify to use the Government's overarching brand for e-Government - *UK online*. In England 291 libraries have already been granted use of the brand.

An important off-shoot of the infrastructure programme is the *Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation*⁴ Gift of \$4.2m. Announced in July, gift recipients have libraries based in, and serving, the most socially deprived wards in the UK

² Resource: The Council for Museums, Archives and Libraries, <http://www.resource.gov.uk>

³ New Opportunities Fund, <http://www.nof.org.uk>

⁴ <http://www.gatesfoundation.org/>

Europe's Network of Excellence for Libraries, Museums and Archives

and will be able to buy additional hardware to complement the NOF-funded infrastructure programme, widening access still further in areas that need it most. Devolved administrations have each received a percentage of the gift which is being managed by strategic bodies in each of the countries - with Resource managing the process in England.

Training

Applicable to 40,000 public library workers, the £20 million *NOF ICT Training Programme for Public Library Staff* is now well underway, with all 210 library services delivering their training plans. Comprised of basic ICT competency skills, learner support, reader development skills and other more advanced ICT skills, the programme will ensure that library staff are skilled in using and guiding others in the use of services implemented as part of the project.

There are already signs that the programme is having a positive impact on users, library staff and the library service as a whole. Feedback demonstrates that the programme is boosting staff confidence and skills, and is delivering benefits to users, providing help and guidance in the use of networked services and the range of new services now being delivered.

NOF-digitise

Perhaps the loudest fan-fare of all was reserved for a high profile *NOF-digitise* press conference at the Science Museum on the 2 July. Here, it was announced by Government Ministers that £50m in awards will fund digitisation projects in 154 national, regional and local public, private and voluntary sector organisations, creating a new wave of networked content to support learning of all kinds.

Hailed as the biggest mass-digitisation programme ever in the UK, *NOF-digitise* will give people access to innovative content which celebrates the rich resources of our knowledge-based organisations. Over two-thirds of the projects are based in the museums, archives and libraries, and the scale of awards ranges from £14,000 to £4million. The 37 consortia and 34 stand-alone projects cover a broad range of themes including architecture, biodiversity, community advice, film, fine art, football, genealogy, health, industrial heritage, mining, manufacture, music, performing and visual arts, reader development, transport, world cultures and a range of projects exploring the sense of place of a particular geographic area. More project information is available on the *NOF-digitise* web site at www.nof-digitise.org

Next Steps

In the background of all the recent jubilation, the team has turned its attention to looking ahead to the future. With all three programmes now underway, our focus has

shifted to issues of evaluation, sustainability, and extensibility. Strategies for monitoring and evaluation at every conceivable level are being drawn up to ensure that the impact of the programmes is recorded and that lessons are built into the future planning of the network. Sustainability of the libraries network is another vital strand of work to ensure that the work that has just started is built upon. Both strands will inform the other key area of future planning - extensibility to Resource's other two constituencies: museums and archival institutions, encompassing network infrastructure and staff training strands as well as future planning of the digitisation programme through a major new digitisation programme planned for the future called Culture Online.

Planning for the future is not of course happening in a vacuum. These activities and discussions are taking place in a context of shared discussion with others working to deliver public sector networked learning spaces. With the promise of collaboration and partnership in the delivery of future networked services, the future's looking bright for libraries, museums and archives, but even better for users. So let's celebrate!

To keep up to date on all aspects of the project please visit www.peoplesnetwork.gov.uk

By Chris Batt

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Editorial info PULMAN express

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www.pulmanweb.org/news/reqiste.asp and fill in the on-line form. PULMAN Express will be also available on-line on the PULMANweb server at: www.pulmanweb.org/pulmanexpress/

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