

M25 Consortium of Academic Libraries

Membership Categories

Background

Categories of membership from the Rights and Responsibilities document (agreed June 2004).

There are two categories of membership as defined in the Constitution.

a) Full membership is open to:

- *Higher Education Institutions located in and around the M25 region (defined as London if located within the London Boroughs or within the HEFCE regional boundary) and which are eligible for membership of SCONUL*
- *Other academic and academic related institutions in the M25 region which may be invited to join, including groups of libraries with similar interests*

b) Observer status may be offered to such institutions or professional bodies as recommended by the Steering Group. This would give them eligibility to subscribe to information services and core activities offered to full members **ONLY** if appropriate and then on terms and conditions to be approved (as per the Constitution). There is currently access to staff development and training opportunities, but with no right to vote or be represented.

*Membership of the Consortium is open to members from outlying regions around the London area in order to add to the diversity and richness of the Consortium without seeking to dilute regional representation. The Consortium will be mindful of benefits potential members from outside the region can bring to it when recommending membership. However, the emphasis of the Consortium is clearly centred on London and the Consortium cannot represent those members which are located outside the London Boroughs **within their local region.***

Subscription Levels

Since 2004 subscriptions have been based on the JISC bands for those institutions who are funded by HEFCE and flat rates for those who are not. The range of subscriptions is:

JISC bands: £423 to £4233 p.a. (basic + systems + CPD25)

Flat rate: £750 to £3000 p.a. (basic + systems)

Observer: £150 p.a. (basic minus representation)

Flat rate and Observer status gives access to CPD25 events at a lower rate than that paid by members without any association with the M25 Consortium.

Issue

There is currently no time limit on Observer Status and there is a concern that it could be possible to derive many benefits from the Consortium by retaining Observer Status and without paying a subscription at the relevant rate.

It is however, beneficial to be able to have members who are not eligible for full membership the chance to be associated with the Consortium, and for Consortium members to benefit from their collections.

Proposal

A new category of *Associate member* should be created for those institutions applying to join the Consortium but who are not eligible for full membership to replace the current Observer Status. The cost of this should be banded as for non-JISC members depending on number of staff and based on 50% of the relevant non-JISC subscription.

Associate members should be expected to understand and support the core values of the Consortium together with its mission statement and development plan. However, they will not have voting rights, there will be no automatic assumption that their collections will be represented on InforM25, and there will be no assumption that the Consortium will represent them or undertake advocacy on their behalf.

It is expected that Associate members will support and participate in the access agreements that are promoted by the Consortium for those who are ineligible to participate in SCONUL Research Extra.

Associate membership may be available to those applying for membership who do not meet the criteria for full membership and are unlikely to do so. This will be for at least one of the following reasons:

- The organisation is outside the region (i.e. a London Borough or the HEFCE regional boundary, or the broad M25 region)
- The organisation is not eligible for membership of SCONUL
- The organisation is not primarily academic or academic-related
- The organisation is not publicly funded
- The organisation cannot fully participate in all consortial activities because of restrictions in their host constitutions

The Steering Group will continue to approve (or not) applications for membership as Associates Members.

CPD25

Access to CPD25 events for Associate members will continue as at present for Observers.

Note: those members who are eligible to join as full members will be expected to do so.

Next step

The Rights and Responsibilities document will be revised in light of approval of this recommendation.

RBH