

North West Academic Libraries (NoWAL) Governance

NoWAL is a network of 14 academic libraries in the North West of England, with an outstanding reputation for knowledge exchange, staff development and training; benefitting our members by providing access to specialist skills and shared services across the HE sector. NoWAL serves all the UK Universities and Colleges of Higher Education libraries in Cheshire, Cumbria, Greater Manchester, Lancashire and Merseyside.

Since 2015, NoWAL has been a working partner of SCONUL. SCONUL provides administrative and financial support to NoWAL, as well as assisting with any HR requirements NoWAL may have. Further information on the agreement between NoWAL and SCONUL, which is reviewed annually, can be found in **Appendix 1**.

1. Membership

The following eligibility criteria must be met for membership of NoWAL. Members must:

- have a main base in the North West of England
- provide access to services in support of teaching, learning and research in the tertiary sector
- agree to active participation in collaborative activities including procurement, training & development and as part of the Critical Friends' initiative
- host at least one event / visit a year, where feasible
- contribute to NoWAL planning
- contribute to disaster recovery processes

Membership of the consortium is also at the discretion of the existing NoWAL members and the NoWAL Board. Acceptance for membership will be managed by a fair ballot process. Membership of NoWAL is by institution and by conditional payment of an annual subscription.

If a member institution wishes to leave NoWAL and resign its membership, the relevant Board member should send written notice of the intention to leave to the NoWAL Operations Officer no later than 14 days before the next AGM, and one year in advance of the year it wishes to leave. If subscriptions are increased at that AGM, the relevant Board member will have to have announced their intention to resign at a previous meeting if they wish to avoid paying the increased subscription for their last year of membership.

2. NoWAL Board

One representative from each library is a member of the NoWAL Board. This is usually the Director / Head of service or equivalent, as determined by each institution individually. If a Board member is unable to attend a meeting, they can send a substitute or proxy; the substitute or proxy will be authorised to vote on behalf of his / her institution.

The NoWAL Board meets three times a year, usually in February, June and October. Meetings are held in member institutions on a rota basis. NoWAL Board meetings are managed by the Chair, or otherwise by the Vice Chair, Treasurer or immediate past Chair. All decisions made at Board meetings are by majority vote. A two thirds majority is required in the event of winding up the functions of NoWAL.

For any Board meeting to be quorate, at least one-third of all Board members must be present. Should a meeting take place with fewer Board members, any decisions will be ratified at the next quorate meeting or by majority email.

The NoWAL Operations Officer acts as secretary to the Board meetings. Minutes of each meeting are made

available to Board members via a private discussion list (backed up on the NoWAL hard drive) and made available by password on Google Drive.

3. Annual General Meeting (AGM)

An Annual General meeting is held every June, usually on the same day as the Board meeting. The meetings follow a set agenda, found at **Appendix 2**. The officer roles of Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer and Training & Development Lead are ratified at the AGM. Financial reports from the previous full financial year are presented and subscription rates for the forthcoming year are agreed.

4. Elections

Elections to Officer roles take place every three years, unless an officer stands down mid-term. Candidates for the roles should be nominated by at least one member of the Board, and seconded by another.

There is an expectation that the Vice-Chair will normally be elected Chair, at the end of their term of office, with agreement from the Board and with no requirement for an election. Should the Vice-Chair choose not to take the role of Chair, this will trigger nomination and election for both posts from the NoWAL Board.

Three months before the end of an Officer's term of office, the Chair invites expressions of interest from the NoWAL Board. Individuals can express their interest during a Board meeting or in writing directly to the Chair / Operations Officer. In the case that more than one representative puts themselves forward, a ballot will be organised by the Operations Officer, with each member of the Board having one vote. The NoWAL Operations Officer is not entitled to vote.

A decision on new officers will be made at the June AGM with a view to starting in role immediately.

5. NoWAL Operations

NoWAL employs an Operations Officer who deals with day-to-day activities. The Operations Officer has responsibility for the administrative running of the reciprocal Training & Development programme; serves as secretary to the Board, Operations Group and Special Interest Groups; and has an overview of all the procurement activities undertaken by the consortium.

A NoWAL Operations Group is in place to oversee all activities of the consortium, manage the progression of the NoWAL strategy and set the agenda for the Board. The Operations Group meets a month before the Board meetings, usually three times a year, in January, May and September. The Group consists of:

Chair	The Chair is elected by NoWAL members, usually serving a three year term of office, with a minimum of two. The NoWAL Board and Operations Group meetings are managed by the NoWAL Chair. The Chair is the main contact for all SCONUL-related activity.
Vice-Chair	The Vice-Chair is elected by NoWAL members, usually serving a three year term of office, with a minimum of two. The Vice-Chair will assist the Chair with the work of NoWAL and will deputise as required, including chairing meetings if the Chair is unable to attend.
Treasurer	The Treasurer is elected by NoWAL members, usually serving a three year term of office, with a minimum of two. The Treasurer's role is to provide up to date financial statements to the Board and Operations Group, to liaise with the Operations Officer and SCONUL regarding the financial health of NoWAL, and to set the budget and subscriptions for the new year.
Training & Development (T&D)	The Training & Development Lead is elected by NoWAL members, usually serving a three year term of office, with a minimum of two. The T&D Lead is responsible for liaising with

Lead	the Operations Officer and the Training & Development Group to work on the programme of events and to ensure it supports the NoWAL strategy.
Senior Staff Group Link	The Senior Staff Group (SSG) Link member provides the means of ensuring a two way dialogue between the SSG and the Board / Operations Group.
NoWAL Operations Officer	The NoWAL Operations Officer will normally be appointed by interview, as a paid official, for as long as funds are available to sustain the post. The NoWAL Operations Officer will be line managed by the Chair who will carry out monthly meetings and annual Performance Development Reviews.
The Operations Group may include other members on an ad hoc basis.	

6. NoWAL Functional Groups

NoWAL has four functional groups as follows:

Senior Staff	The group is a network of Deputy Librarians, Associate Directors or other appropriate members of staff, nominated by Directors of their respective institutions. The Group provides a forum for discussion and sharing of experience across the member institutions.
Procurement Group	The group is responsible for overseeing the NoWAL joint procurement of library materials (monographs and serials) ensuring best value for money; ensuring NoWAL is represented at national negotiations of purchasing consortia and co-ordinating NoWAL involvement in national procurement deals; and facilitating exchange of experience and horizon scanning amongst NoWAL members on procurement-related issues.
Training & Development Group	The group is responsible for planning the programme of events on an annual basis, providing a representative from each member institution and operating a reciprocal arrangement whereby each member will host a minimum of one event per academic year. Members are also responsible for disseminating event information, put together by the Operations Officer, around the staff at their home institution.

7. NoWAL Special Interest Groups (SIGs) and Communities of Practice (CoPs)

Special Interest Groups

NoWAL runs Special Interest Groups, set up to allow members to share knowledge, skills and experience on specific issues. SIGs may run for a defined period of time, as a 'task and finish' group, or may be a permanent group, looking to work together on shared projects across a specific topic.

All SIGs are required to provide short updates for the three Board meetings held each year, outlining activity and future plans. They should also present an annual summary of activity over the previous year at the NoWAL AGM in June.

Communities of Practice

NoWAL runs Communities of Practice Groups to allow staff from NoWAL institutions to come together on a regular basis and share best practice, explore areas which are new and engage in collective learning.

NoWAL CoPs are required to provide some written evidence of their activities: this can be in any form suited to the group eg blogposts. They are also required to report annually to the NoWAL AGM in June.

Membership of NoWAL SIGs and CoPs is open to NoWAL institutions only. The running of NoWAL SIGs and CoPs is at the discretion of the NoWAL Operations Group and must be discussed with the Group prior to creation.

8. Financial Regulation

NoWAL is a non-profit making organisation and any funds generated are used to fulfil the objectives of NoWAL.

NoWAL funds are used for day-to-day activities, including the employment of an Operations Officer, targetted expert events, training and expenses. The funds are also used to pay for refreshments at Board and Senior Staff meetings, invoiced by the host institution. Responsibility for the management of NoWAL funds is shared between the Treasurer, Operations Officer and SCONUL.

Role of NoWAL Operations Officer	<p>Expenses - all expenses claims come through the Operations Officer. NoWAL can reimburse expenses (travel and subsistence) incurred by named individuals who are representing NoWAL at external events.</p> <p>The Operations Officer is able to authorise payments of up to £300 (three hundred) as a sole signatory; larger amounts require authorisation, by email by two other signatories (usually from members of the Operations Group).</p> <p>The Operations Officer must also obtain authorisation for personal expenses incurred in the normal course of the role. Authorisation is usually obtained from the NoWAL Chair and Vice-Chair, though other Operations Group members are also able to authorise in their absence.</p> <p>All expenses and authorisations are sent by the Operations Officer to SCONUL for payment. SCONUL provide remittance advice via email to the recipient once payment has been made.</p> <p>Members of the NoWAL Board and Operations Group are responsible for arranging their own travel expenses to meetings.</p> <p>Income & Expenditure - All income and expenditure is recorded on the NoWAL Cash Book which is held by the Operations Officer. A copy of this is sent to the NoWAL Treasurer three times a year in time for the Operations Group and Board meetings.</p> <p>The Cash Book is checked against the figures provided from SCONUL to ensure all expenses and income have been recorded.</p> <p>Additional expenditure requirements which occur on an ad hoc basis should be approved by the Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer and discussed with the Operations Group where appropriate.</p> <p>Regular payments include the Operations Officer's monthly salary, the quarterly hosting costs to Salford and the annual web hosting costs.</p>
Role of NoWAL Treasurer	<p>The Treasurer prepares and presents a financial report to the February, June and October Board meetings. In the absence of the Treasurer the report is presented by the Chair. The Treasurer also prepares ad hoc formal reports to be presented to NoWAL as and when required.</p> <p>The Treasurer provides advice to the Board and Operations Group on the state of NoWAL finances and any financial opportunities or risks that become apparent. The Treasurer also has responsibility for subscription setting and budget forecasting.</p> <p>A basic document is in place outlining NoWAL's financial management which can be handed over when the new officer is appointed.</p>

Role of SCONUL	SCONUL has responsibility for payment of invoices, processing and paying expenses, and providing reports of income and expenditure to the Operations Officer and Treasurer, three times a year (two weeks prior to the Operations Group meeting). SCONUL also administers the invoicing element of the biennial NoWAL conference.
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9. Subscriptions

The NoWAL subscription year, and hence financial year, runs January to December, in line with the SCONUL subscription.

Annual subscription charges are agreed by the Operations Group, following options provided by the Treasurer, and recommendations made to the Board at the June meeting and AGM. Subscriptions are based on Jisc bandings.

SCONUL is responsible for issuing invoices in December each year, and ensuring that all subscriptions are collected promptly from members

Failure by an institution to pay any subscriptions levied by a date specified on the invoice will result in the suspension of that institution's membership until such time as all accounts have been settled.

10. Communications

NoWAL has a set Communications Plan which involves the following regular activity:

- **'In Touch with NoWAL' Update**

The NoWAL Operations Officer is responsible for producing a monthly update email to individual members (rather than via NoWAL distribution lists) which provides information on forthcoming events, important news stories, SIG and CoP activities, governance issues and vacancies across NoWAL members.

- **NoWAL Newsletter**

The NoWAL Operations Officer is responsible for the production of a newsletter three times a year, usually in the month following the Board meetings. The newsletter provides a summary of activity across NoWAL institutions and celebrates individual and service-level successes.

- **NoWAL Annual Review**

An Annual Review is produced by the NoWAL Operations Officer in conjunction with the Operations Group in January of each year. The review is designed to highlight the benefits of NoWAL activity during the previous 12 months, showcasing activities in Training & Development, celebrating the work of the Special Interest Groups and promoting future plans and events.

- **NoWAL Conference**

NoWAL holds a biennial conference hosted by one of the member libraries, on a theme developed by the Conference Planning Team, made up of a maximum of 8 people nominated from across NoWAL libraries. The Team is responsible for defining, planning and delivering all aspects of the conference. A Conference Team Chair will be identified and, in collaboration with the NoWAL Operations Officer, will coordinate the overarching operations. Formal meetings will be held at a time defined by the Chair and Operations Officer to meet the needs of the planning process.

- **Social Media**

The NoWAL Operations Officer is responsible for the upkeep of the NoWAL website which is used to promote the consortium, provide information on Training & Development and other events and to share news on activities across the member libraries. NoWAL also operates a Twitter account, used principally to promote

NoWAL events and activities.

- **NoWAL Discussion Lists**

The NoWAL Operations Officer is responsible for providing administrative support to the JISC NoWAL discussion lists as follows:

- NoWAL Academic Librarians
- NoWAL Academic Skills CoP
- NoWAL Board
- NoWAL Collections (formerly NoWAL Serials and NoWAL Monographs)
- NoWAL Content & Collections CoP
- NoWAL Copyright
- NoWAL Copyright CoP
- NoWAL Procurement Group
- NWRDM
- NoWAL Research
- NoWAL Senior Staff
- NoWAL Special Collections
- NoWAL Training & Development Group

11. Dissolution of NoWAL

NoWAL will continue to operate as a going concern until it is no longer felt to offer value to its members. At such time, NoWAL will be dissolved, if a resolution is carried by a two thirds majority of those present at a NoWAL Board meeting.

The Operations Group will be responsible for winding up the assets, any remaining of which should be distributed amongst the members proportionate to the subscription amounts paid in the previous year.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – SCONUL / NoWAL Agreement

Awaiting new agreement terms

Appendix 2 - Standard AGM Agenda

Annual General Meeting Date [DD Month Year], Time		
Venue [Room, Building Details]		
Item	Agenda	Timing
1	Welcome and Apologies	
2	Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising	5 mins
3	Financial Reporting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Report [Year] <i>This should be the financial report of the previous full 12 month period [January to December]</i> • Budget [Year] <i>This should be the forecast for spending in the forthcoming year, including standard items (pay, expenses, hosting costs etc) and known future outgoings (website, conference etc)</i> • Subscription Proposal [Year] <i>This should be a proposal agreed at the previous Operations Group meeting for the forthcoming year (January to December)</i> 	5 mins
4	NoWAL Annual Review [Year] including SIG & Functional Group Reporting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Academic Librarians - Copyright - Procurement - Research - Senior Staff - Special Collections - Training & Development <p><i>Reports should sum up activity within the groups over the previous full 12 month period. The review should highlight activity during the previous full 12 month period. This item is an opportunity for a formal sign off of the Review.</i></p>	5 mins
5	NoWAL Plan <i>This item should highlight activity during the previous full 12 month period.</i>	5 mins
6	Election of Officers <i>Officers are elected to serve a three year term of office. During the three years, the AGM should be used to check that the officers are still happy to fulfil their roles. When an election is taking place, officers are elected at the June AGM.</i>	5 mins
7	AOB	5 mins

8	Date of next meeting – DD Month Year	
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Appendix 3 – Standard Board Agenda

Board Meeting - Date [DD Month Year]		
Venue [Room, Building Details]		
Item	Agenda – [Time]	Timing
1	Welcome and Apologies	
2	Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising	5 mins
3	NoWAL & SCONUL Agreement Update – SB <i>To include recent negotiations with SCONUL on the agreement, any changes/updates which need to be agreed by the Board.</i>	5 mins
4	Operations Officer Update (verbal) – NF <i>To include an update on recent activity, updates on projects etc</i>	10 mins
5	NoWAL Plan Update – SB / SM / HT <i>To include progress updates on each of the three themes from the theme owners, including recent activity and completion of individual objectives</i>	10 mins
6	Treasurer's Report (paper) – JH <i>To include a written summary of financial activity over the past 3 months as well as a spreadsheet report showing financial spend during the year, and forecasted spend for the remainder of the year</i>	10 mins
7	Training & Development Report (paper) – HT <i>To provide an update on T&D activity since the last meeting, pulling together themes, feedback and progress</i>	10 mins
8	Procurement Report (paper) – DC <i>To provide an update from the Procurement Group on recent activity, where agreements are up to, a breakdown of serials and monographs spending,</i>	10 mins
9	Other SIG / Functional Group Updates (verbal) – SB / NF <i>To include details of any matters arising from the remaining groups</i>	5 mins

10	Other Consortia Reports (verbal) – RJ / NF <i>To include items to report from the Northern Collaboration, Mercian Collaboration or any of the other consortia across the country (M25, SCURL, WHELF etc)</i>	5 mins
11	AOB – ALL	5 mins
[Time]		
12	Member updates (Paper) – ALL <i>A round up of activity from each institution present, highlighting items of interest from the updates supplied ahead of the meeting.</i>	60 mins

Lunch Break – [Time – usually between 30 and 60 minutes dependent on other business]

	Afternoon Session – [Theme]	Timing
Item		
1	Speaker 1	10 mins
2	Speaker 2	10 mins
3	Speaker 3	10 mins
4	Facilitated Discussions	30 mins