

SCHOLARLY INFORMATION IN A DIGITAL AGE

The Information Futures Commission

Background

Advanced information and communication technologies are fundamentally transforming the process of creating, synthesising and disseminating knowledge. Researchers no longer need to be co-located with the research instrument they are using, nor humanities scholars with the works they are studying. Yet this has not slowed the ever-increasing volume of printed publications, and scholars continue to place high value on having ready access to original source materials.

Growing Esteem signals the University's intention to remain a leading education provider in the 21st Century. It reaffirms our place as a leading research-led university, developing graduates with the attributes that enable them to contribute to the ever-changing global context in a meaningful and positive way and committed to contributing to the intellectual and economic life of society more broadly. *Growing Esteem* provides the logical foundation for a re-conceptualisation of the University's information strategy and plans for the next decade. What do these changes mean for our libraries? For our teaching and learning spaces? For our research infrastructure? For our information and communication systems and infrastructure?

These questions are not asked in a vacuum. There is a wealth of background material upon which to build our scholarly information strategy: the excellent work developing the Library of the Future Vision¹; earlier documents such as the Sheehan report² and the Fisher report³; and key University documents such as the *Nine Principles Guiding Teaching and Learning at the University of Melbourne: the framework for a first-class teaching and learning environment* and the *Cultural Strategic Plan 2007-2009*.

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The Information Futures Commission will develop a strategy that positions the University as a leader in the application of scholarly information and technologies to underpin next-generation research, teaching, learning and knowledge transfer, binding the strands to achieve the *Growing Esteem* vision.

Under the guidance of a Steering Committee chaired by the Vice Chancellor, the Vice Principal Information will lead a broad process of consultation to develop an inspirational, coherent and deliverable 10-year strategy to guide the development of the University's scholarly information services, collections, systems, technologies and infrastructure. External and internal expert advisors will play critical roles in this process. A report will be presented to Academic Board in June before presentation at the July 2008 meeting of University Council.

A more detailed implementation plan and budget will be presented to Planning and Budget Committee at the annual planning conference in late July/early August 2008.

Further Information

For further information about the Information Futures Commission, and ways in which you can contribute to this important discussion, visit the web site at www.informationfutures.unimelb.edu.au. We would very much welcome your participation and input into this exciting process.

¹ see http://inside.infoservices.unimelb.edu.au/library/docs/PBC_Library_Future_Vision_Final_version.pdf

² Review of library services : report to the Vice-Chancellor / Barry A. Sheehan, with the assistance of Barbara Minchinton. Published [Parkville, Vic. : University of Melbourne], 1991.

³ University of Melbourne libraries: 10 year strategic plan, executive summary report/Dr Kenn Fisher, Feb. 2005