

# **Steps Toward a Scholarly Information Strategy: a work in progress**

## ***Introduction***

This paper outlines:

1. the University's strategic imperatives, drawn from Growing Esteem documents, University plans and related documents
2. the external change drivers
3. a high level assessment of our existing capability (to be progressively completed as more Melbourne and comparison data is collated).

In response to the above context a number of planning assumptions are proposed.

## ***Research***

### **The Environment**

#### **Strategic Imperatives**

- Improve overall research performance whilst recognizing the need to focus research investment in targeted areas if we are to continue to be internationally competitive.
- Increased focus on inter-disciplinary, inter-institutional and international research.
- Increased competitiveness through high impact and highly cited research
- Delivery of a distinctive PhD which develops broader, interdisciplinary knowledge and skills in addition to attributes developed by intensive, focused research.

#### **External change drivers**

- Increasing prevalence of international collaboration across institutions and across disciplines
- Evidence of increased institutional, national and international investment in research information infrastructure to facilitate e-research and encourage collaboration.
- Emerging requirements from research granting bodies to make available the outputs of publicly funded research and the research data itself.
- Increasing evidence of higher impact and citations through open publishing of research outputs.

#### **Existing Capability**

- Many existing special and cultural collections, which may yield rich research opportunities, remain inaccessible to the researcher
- Melbourne significantly lags behind its competitors nationally and internationally in the provision of peak computing capability, research data storage and access to a critical mass of information professionals with the relevant expertise to support e-research
- R&RQT taskforce found that many of our researchers do not perceive Melbourne as a major player in the nation's research and research training infrastructure initiatives. Melbourne's devolved approach may work against this.
- Melbourne has now developed its IT network infrastructure to meet known research requirements. Emerging needs may necessitate further investment.
- Melbourne lacks the systems (middleware) to ensure Melbourne researchers can effectively collaborate nationally and internationally

## **Implications**

1. Investment in scholarly information services, collections, systems & technologies to underpin research will be a mix of basic broad investment with greater investment targeted to areas of research focus.
2. Understanding of, and support for, technologies and skills to sustain collaboration across disciplines, institutions, and globally.
3. Significant investment (by the University or collaboratively) in shared research infrastructure and the skills in using it will be required including access to rich scholarly collections, high quality information and communication infrastructure, large datasets, advanced compute capability and high bandwidth networks.
4. Wide dissemination and access to our research data and outputs will be a broad aim.
5. The development of broad interdisciplinary knowledge and skills by RHD students in scholarly information literacy is a requirement at a University level.

## *Learning & Teaching*

### **The Environment**

#### **Strategic Imperatives**

- Implementation of the Melbourne Model with a consequential growth in the postgraduate student population and stabilisation of the overall student population.
- Undergraduate students will be exposed to, and learn about, alternative domains of knowledge, different methods of inquiry and different 'ways of knowing' and be exposed to a research and knowledge transfer experience as part of their program
- Our graduates will be equipped for lives and careers in which knowledge boundaries are more permeable, the issues of professional practice often require interdisciplinary understanding, and knowledge is rapidly renewed
- Innovative teaching which is research-led and enhanced through the application of information and communication technologies

#### **External change drivers**

- Global competition for students, facilitated through information and communication technologies
- Information explosion and perceptions that “if it isn’t online it doesn’t exist”
- MIT and others are making their teaching resources available to all (Open Courseware).

#### **Existing Capability**

- LMS now well established. Increasing demand for the rapid adoption of emerging technologies to support teaching innovation
- Significant variability in the quality of the teaching and learning spaces
- Understanding of, and skills in, effective use of technology to enrich teaching and learning highly varied across the University’s academic population

### **Implications**

1. All undergraduates will be required to develop broad disciplinary knowledge and skills in the use of scholarly information. Skills/knowledge required from postgraduate coursework students TBC.
2. Scholarly information collections and access must support the breadth of scholarship in undergraduate degrees and a specialist discipline base for postgraduate students
3. Places where students study should facilitate collaboration and exposure to research collections.
4. There will be a need for both discipline specialized teaching, learning and study spaces and those that encourage broad and collaborative use by the whole university community.

5. Quality teaching and learning environments must use information technologies which are appropriate for the outcomes sought given the emerging technologies which are available
6. Wide access to and dissemination of learning and teaching resources may be an expectation.

## ***Knowledge Transfer***

### **The Environment**

#### **Strategic Imperatives**

- To engage communities in collective experiences and through selective engagement when Melbourne has a distinctive contributions to make and the benefits are compelling.
- Ensure our research, student learning and external engagement serve public ends.
- To enrich the Melbourne Experience for students through knowledge transfer activities.

#### **External change drivers**

- Increasing expectation that scholarly output, particularly that which is publicly funded, will be made freely accessible
- Increasing expectation that research data of national or international significance, particularly that which is created through publicly funded research, will be made freely accessible subject to appropriate privacy and related matters

#### **Existing Capability**

- Our special, cultural and archival collections are a valued and potentially valuable resource for the nation, but it would be costly to complete the work that would allow this value to be realized.
- Currently we provide access for the public to our library collections and facilities where possible. Whilst there is near zero cost per single visitor overall it adds to the pressures on space, IT and staff.

### **Implications**

1. We should provide digital open access to our scholarly output, teaching materials and research data in accord with an agreed policy
2. We should preserve and make accessible unique scholarly materials created or held by the University where these support our research and teaching imperatives or are of national or international significance
3. We should review open public access to our libraries assessing the value proposition for Melbourne
4. We should position ourselves to be a collaborator, building partnerships and seeking development & funding opportunities that would not be otherwise possible

## *Linking the Strands*

### **The Environment**

#### **Strategic Imperatives**

- Binding the strands of the triple helix tightly to one another to achieve outcomes across all strands
- Maintain a strong sense of place in Melbourne's campus locale for learning communities, while recognizing that these learning communities also extend beyond the campus.
- Fiscal sustainability for the University.

#### **External change drivers**

- The University must anticipate and deal with a range of potentially disruptive future technological and societal changes. It is clear that the consequences of many of these have yet to play out.
- Changes in the intellectual property environment are underway, significantly in music related areas, but now also in scholarly information.
- Sustainability across all activities, particularly environmental sustainability.

#### **Existing Capability**

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### **Implications**

1. The campus locale must preserve "special" places for the development of learning communities. An appropriate balance between investing in physical and virtual infrastructure and content to achieve this is needed.
2. Research, Teaching & Learning, and Knowledge Transfer should be linked in terms of people, content/collections, place, and infrastructure whenever possible.
3. A high degree of flexibility in planning and implementation is required to allow the University to deal with potentially disruptive future changes.
4. The University must plan for a diverse range of intellectual property possibilities and should advocate for those it sees as beneficial to its future.
5. Sustainability both fiscal and environmental must be taken into account in the planning of all scholarly information initiatives and activities.

## *The Student Experience*

### **The Environment**

#### **Strategic Imperatives**

- Commitments to equity and diversity and to the quality of the Melbourne student experience - an on-campus experience which develops a sense of cohort and is enriched through emerging technologies to support learning, high-quality effective learning environments - both virtual and physical.
- Maintain a strong sense of place in Melbourne's campus locale for learning communities.
- Undergraduate students will be exposed to, and learn about, alternative domains of knowledge, different methods of inquiry and different 'ways of knowing' and be exposed to a research and knowledge transfer experience as part of their program
- Our graduates will be equipped for lives and careers in which knowledge boundaries are more permeable, the issues of professional practice often require interdisciplinary understanding, and knowledge is rapidly renewed
- Delivery of a distinctive PhD which develops broader, interdisciplinary knowledge and skills in addition to attributes developed by intensive, focused research.
- To enrich the Melbourne Experience for students through knowledge transfer activities.
- We want our students to emerge as global citizens

#### **External change drivers**

- IT becoming ubiquitous – most students will come with an established “digital identity”, will demand fast, convenient technology-enabled services and expect to use their own devices to access information
- Students are fast adopters of potentially disruptive technological and societal changes – for example changes in intellectual property law related to music that also play out with scholarly information. This generation is often ahead of the academics/teachers.

### **Implications**

1. Places where students study should facilitate the development of cohorts, collaboration and exposure to research collections
2. The campus locale must preserve “special” places for the development of learning communities. An appropriate balance between investing in physical and virtual infrastructure to achieve this is needed.
3. The development of broad interdisciplinary knowledge and skills by students in scholarly information literacy is a requirement at a University level.
4. Access to services and collections must be convenient from a student perspective whilst not compromising the development of effective scholarly literacy.

5. A high degree of flexibility in planning and implementation is required to allow the University to deal with potentially disruptive future changes.
6. We should foster students as creators and innovators, including partners in curriculum development and delivery.