9th February 2009

David De Roure
School of Electronics and Computer Science
University of Southampton
Southampton SO17 1BJ
UK

Dear David,

Re: JISC Circular 12-08 – Strand A5
Bid Title: myExperiment Repository Enhancement Project

I am writing to confirm the engagement of the University of Manchester's John Rylands University Library and Institutional Repository in the proposed myExperiment enhancement project. We see myExperiment as a very important example of the emerging social software tools used by researchers across the university sector and we are very pleased to have this opportunity to work more closely with the myExperiment team. We feel it is essential for institutional repository's to be aware of emerging research practice in order to support the next generation of researchers.

The John Rylands University Library (http://www.manchester.ac.uk/library) provides library and information services to the students and staff of The University of Manchester. It is one of the largest academic library services in the country catering for the needs of well-over 36,000 students and researchers, as well as academic staff. The JRUL possesses 4 million printed items, one million microfilms, over 41,000 electronic journals, 500,000 ebooks and a large number of databases. The Library is establishing Institutional Repository Services for the University of Manchester (http://www.manchester.ac.uk/institutionalrepositoryproject). These services will offer members of the University a means of storing, managing and disseminating their scholarly works in an electronic format. Launch of repository services is set for 23rd April 2009. At launch, Manchester's institutional repository will host around 70,000 University research outputs, including full text of its RAE2008 submission and provision for mandatory submission of electronic theses and dissertations (around 4,000 items per annum).

Strategically John Ryland's University Library is committed to play a vital role in underpinning research at the University. As such we see myExperiment as distinctive for facilitating discovery of repository content, for encouraging sharing and for addressing issues of attribution, credit and rights flow. We are very interested to see how this "social infrastructure" can come together with our repository infrastructure in order to promote repository use - we anticipate that the myExperiment principle of fitting into the users' research environment will encourage deposit, facilitate access and hence promote repository usage.

The Library's institutional repository support team will work directly with the myExperiment team, participating in developer discussions, in design workshops, the weekly management meetings and monthly face to face meetings. We will assist in the organisation of focus groups and user workshops. In year 1 we will support preliminary tests and trials of the myExperiment-IR integration, bringing institutional repository content to users of myExperiment and deposits through myExperiment.
year 2 our operational support for the IR will facilitate the evaluation of the integrated repository functions as the enhancement projects conducts studies with our research users. The major evaluation will be with Bioinformatics users. We will also share our experience of Fedora as a scalable store, as myExperiment enhances its support for this particular system.

We believe the parallel activity in Southampton with EPrints and the Southampton institutional repository will also be very informative, and we look forward to interacting further with the EPrints team. The insights gained from this enhancement project will inform the repository community and we are committed to sharing the studies and experiences widely.

We look forward to working with the myExperiment team, building on their insights and exploring the innovations that are made possible by integration of myExperiment with Manchester’s institutional repository. We wish you every success with the proposal.

Regards,

Dr Phil Butler  
Institutional Repository Manager  
John Rylands University Library  
The University of Manchester  
Oxford Road  
Manchester M13 9PP, UK  
Tel: +44 (0)161 275 1514

Copies to:  
Dr Stella Butler, Deputy University Librarian and Associate Director, JRUL  
Ms Lorraine Beard, Head of Information Systems, JRUL