

## Bi-annual Progress Report

<b>Title of Project:</b>	Theses Alive!		
<b>Project Manager:</b>	John MacColl	<b>Lead institution:</b>	University of Edinburgh
<b>Duration of award:</b>	11/02 – 10/04	<b>Total amount:</b>	£84,277 JISC
<b>Period of report:</b>	11/02 – 02/03	<b>Total co-funding:</b>	£88,267 JISC/University of Edinburgh
<b>Date:</b>	05/03/03	<b>Version:</b>	1
<b>Report author:</b>	John MacColl		

### Confirmation statement

I confirm that the project development is being conducted under the terms agreed in the initial contract with JISC.

### Aims, objectives and methodology

The aim of the Project, as stated in the Project Plan, is to develop on a pilot basis a distributed system for the management of electronic theses and dissertations (ETDs) in the UK, in order to take advantage of the availability of the networked digital environment. This system will provide both a metadata submission system, and a full-text repository for those universities wishing to use it.

The objectives remain as stated in the Plan:

- To test the value of a national support service for e-theses creation and management in the UK.
- To develop an OAI-compliant thesis submission system for use in all participating universities.
- To develop and support a generic metadata format capable of delivering metadata to a number of relevant metadata repositories for UK thesis information.
- To develop an infrastructure which enables e-theses to be published on the web to the extent that a minimum of 500 e-theses exist within the UK segment of the NDLTD after two years.
- To work with other e-theses developments internationally, and in particular to assist the research aims of other e-theses projects funded within the JISC FAIR Programme.
- To produce a 'checklist approach' for universities to use as they develop e-theses capability.

The methodology, broadly, involves the evaluation of ETD management systems with a view to selecting one system for use in the service, and then the building of the *Theses Alive!* system. In parallel, a user service will be set up based upon the selection of a group of test sites, and the establishment of a help and support service.

## Highlights, outcomes and important findings from project

The Project's progress has been affected by the loss of a key member of staff, the Project Officer (see below), at a very early stage. This has limited the findings in respect of the user service set-up to date. However, good progress has been made on the evaluation of systems to support ETD management. To date the Virginia Tech ETD-DB software has been extensively tested and evaluated. A brief evaluation of Eprints.org software was also undertaken. Evaluation of DSpace has also now begun. It is anticipated that the chosen product will be either ETD-DB or DSpace.

## Changes to original award

Delays in setting up the Project due to summer vacation and the reallocation of existing contract-based staff into the Project led to us rescheduling the Project to begin in November 2002. Since then, the departure of the Project Officer at the end of January has resulted in a review of the Project Plan. We anticipate the new Project Officer being in place from the beginning of April 2003 (month 6). The workpackages affected are Workpackage 3 *Advocacy* and Workpackage 4, *User Support*. Because the Project Officer had been in poor health for some time (she had transferred from another project within the Library), there had effectively been very little work done on these workpackages by the time she left.

This has resulted in some rescheduling of activity within the Project (shown in the revised Project Plan, attached). Workpackage 3, *Advocacy*, will now commence in month 6, and Workpackage 4, *User Support*, in month 7. Task 1.1, *Pilot Set-up*, will now aim to be completed by month 8, and Task 1.2, *Initial Interviews*, by month 10. We are hopeful that, despite the loss of time caused by this need to find a replacement Project Officer, the Project will still be able to deliver according to its original objectives. We intend to explore the option of offering a more than 0.5 FTE contract to the replacement Project Officer, which would allow us to make up some of the lost time.

## Project staff

Project Director (part time):	John MacColl
Project Officer (part time):	Originally Avril Conacher (Nov 02- Jan 03). Post now waiting to be filled.
System Developer (part time)	Richard Jones

## Involvement with Programme

*Theses Alive!* has played an active role in JISC activities. John MacColl and Avril Conacher attended the JISC FAIR Programme meeting in Nottingham on 31st October and 1st November 2002. They have also attend meetings of an informal 'E-Theses Sub-Cluster' in Glasgow in September 2002, and in Edinburgh in December 2002 (chaired by John MacColl). In addition, John MacColl and Richard Jones attended the evaluation workshop in Manchester on 26th February 2003.

## Publications and publicity

Other than internal dissemination of information about the Project within the University of Edinburgh (newsletter articles, presentations, etc) this activity is awaiting the arrival of the new Project Officer. Prior to the start of the Project, and using separate funding, John MacColl attended the Networked Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations (NDLTD)

International Conference in Utah in May 2002, and described the project, in broad terms, to other conference delegates.

### **Web site**

[www.thesesalive.ac.uk](http://www.thesesalive.ac.uk)

### **Publications**

MacColl, John 'Electronic theses and dissertations: a strategy for the UK' *ARIADNE 32* (June-July 2002) [[www.ariadne.ac.uk/](http://www.ariadne.ac.uk/)]

### **Engagement with potential outcomes users**

Discussions have been held within the University of Edinburgh with the Chair of the Postgraduate Studies Committee and the Director of the Transferable Skills Programme for research students, and advice taken from them on advocacy approaches. Approaches have been made by sites interested in becoming pilot sites for the user service. Taking into account those which have expressed interest, and those which are likely to be approached by the Project, we expect the final group to consist of all or some of the following:

- University of Edinburgh
- University of Leeds
- University of Nottingham
- Manchester Metropolitan University
- University of Cambridge
- University of Warwick

### **Detailed progress and future plans**

#### **Progress**

- A Systems Developer is in post, and Workpackage 2, *Building the System*, is proceeding according to schedule.
- The Project web site has been established at [www.thesesalive.ac.uk](http://www.thesesalive.ac.uk).
- The Project Plan has been submitted and approved.
- The replacement of the Project Officer is in hand.

#### **Future plans**

Upon the appointment of a new Project Officer (hopefully in April 2003), priority will be given to Workpackages 3, *Advocacy* and 4, *User Support*, which have lost ground. This work will involve the development of an FAQ system and the selection of test sites for the user pilot. It will also involve the setting up of a number of advocacy events and meetings. As far as Workpackage 2 is concerned, we are on target for making our decision on platform by month 6 (April 2003) and then proceeding with the system build.

## Financial summary

Date run: 06-Mar-2003

### The University of Edinburgh

Report Ref : Monthly

Monthly Analysis of Income/Expenditure for financial year 2002

Cost Centre 365000 Cost Centre Description

Job Code	J52011	Job Code Description												
Account Code	Account Description	Aug £	Sept £	Oct £	Nov £	Dec £	Jan £	Feb £	March £	April £	May £	June £	July £	Period 13 £
1103	Joint Info System Grnt (Jisc)	0	0	-25,000.00	0	-24,058.00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>Total Income</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-25,000.00</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-24,058.00</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
2140	Clerical Staff	0	0	0	0	0	938.64	938.64	0	0	0	0	0	0
2260	Other salaried staff	0	0	0	1059.47	1059.47	1059.47							
2130	Academic-related	0	0	0	399.85	399.85	399.85	399.85						
4504	Photography	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	0	0	0	0	0	0
4513	Sundries	0	0	0	0	0	34.72	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4707	Taxi Hire	0	0	0	0	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4709	Rail Travel	0	0	0	0	0	2.3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1459.32</b>	<b>1459.32</b>	<b>2444.98</b>	<b>1353.49</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-25,000.00</b>	<b>1459.32</b>	<b>-22598.68</b>	<b>2444.98</b>	<b>1353.49</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>Financial Year Total</b>													<b>-42,340.89</b>

Year 1    Year 2

Percentage Spend

End month 4                      14%