M25 CONSORTIUM OF ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

Newsletter

David Archer, M25 Consortium Chair

We are kickstarting 2026 with a Leadership Briefing on 30 January and a great selection of cpd25 events and visits over the first few months. These events provide knowledge, skills and networking opportunities and are proving popular, so register now to guarantee your place: www.m25lib.org.uk/events/

2026 marks the last year of the M25 Consortium's Strategic Plan 2023-2026. From August 2026, we will move into our next three-year phase, and the Trustees and Steering Group will be meeting at our annual Planning Day on 27 January to take stock of our current position and plan for the future. It's not too late to have your say on the next period for our Consortium: if you have thoughts or ideas please

get in touch via the M25 Support Team at m25libadmin@london.ac.uk

This month we are announcing the first of our Innovation Fund 2025-2026 recipients and also details of this year's eight Staff Development Awards which enable staff in our member libraries to attend training events for free (in exchange for a post-attendance piece). Find out more below. And don't forget our live call for Lightning Talks at our online Conference on 9 June, where we're keen to highlight and celebrate all the excellent work - big or small - that's happening across our Consortium.

Finally, we have recently opened a new charity bank account with the Co-op Bank and will start using it for all our banking and invoices from 1 March 2026. M25 Representatives will soon receive an email with all the details - please update your finance teams as necessary.

Best wishes, David

Staff Development Awards 2026

The M25 Consortium of Academic Libraries offers Staff Development Awards each year for staff of member libraries and form part of the charitable work of the Consortium.

People are at the heart of the Consortium and our member libraries. We recognise that supporting all staff to achieve their potential is key to the success for our members.

The Awards provide a fantastic opportunity for staff working in any role at any level in any of our member libraries to attend training, conferences and other events to further their professional development and network with others.

The Awards

This year we are pleased to announce that there are **eight** Staff Development Awards offering free places across M25 and cpd25 events and conferences:

- Free attendance at the cpd25 SLA Annual Conference 2026 (in person, London, two awards available)
- Free attendance at the cpd25 Cataloguing Training event 2026 (in person at British Library in London, two awards available)
- Free attendance at the online M25 Consortium Annual Conference 2026 (member libraries are allocated one free place, this award provides two further free places)
- Free attendance at a cpd25 event of the applicant's choice from events taking place

up to the end of July 2027 (two awards available).

Find out more and download the application form on our website: www.m25lib.org.uk/m25-resources-and-activities/staff-development-awards/

We warmly welcome your applications. Send your application form to m25libadmin@london.ac.uk by Wednesday 11 March 2026.

Spread the word to your colleagues and get your applications in now!

Image by RDNE Stock Project, Pexels

Library Excellence Framework resource package from the University of Bedfordshire: Innovation Fund 25-26 recipient

We are very pleased to announce the first of our Innovation Fund 2025-2026 successful applicants: the University of Bedfordshire. They have been awarded a grant to develop a resource package for library teams to support the development of bespoke institution-specific Library Excellence Frameworks.

The Assessment Panel thought this was an excellent application which will benefit members and provides flexibility and the ability to customise. They also liked the innovative involvement of a

student to create visual resources which will promote the work of libraries and potentially inspire entry to the profession.

The M25 Consortium Support Team and Trustees will be liaising with staff at the University of Bedfordshire as their project develops and we will keep you informed with progress and when the Resource launches on our website later this year.

Your Stories Matter
Present a Lightning Talk at the M25 Consortium Annual Conference
9 June 2026, Online

Lightning talks are a very popular part of our Conference programme and provide a great opportunity for staff who want to develop their presenting skills whilst sharing their work and insights.

What does your library service want to share? Has your service worked on an approach that has resonated well with your users? Have you introduced a small adjustment or activity that has helped colleagues to manage change and challenges? Our aim is to provide delegates with positive stories, inspiration, and ideas to consider in their own institutions, however small.

There is still time to apply to present a talk at Conference as applications are open until the end of February.

How to apply
Send a short summary, of not more than 250 words, outlining the subject of your talk, to the Conference Planning Group via Jill Howard, M25 Consortium Operations Manager M25libadmin@london.ac.uk. The deadline for submissions is **Wednesday 27 February 2026.**

Download full details
/www.m25lib.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/M25-Conference-2026-call-for-lightning-talk-speakers.pdf

Illustration by Kushal Mistri on Unsplash

Celebrating LGBT+ History Month
19 February
2-4pm
Online

Join us at this **free** online event celebrating LGBT+ history month 2026. We will share LGBTQIA+ narratives in libraries and archives and hear from two speakers about their work and interests in this space:

Prejudice and Pride' revisited – Dayna Miller, Kingston University

In February 2025 Kingston University Archives and Special Collections held its first LGBT History Month exhibition, 'Prejudice and Pride'. Using materials from several collections, the display

explored legal, social and literary aspects of LGBT+ history from the 1950s to the present day, as well as the University's own journey in supporting the LGBT+ community.

This presentation will look back at highlights of the exhibition and discuss some of the hidden voices extracted from the collections.

Discovering Lived LGBTQ+ Perspectives in Libraries & Archives – Ashleigh Green, Goldsmiths, University of London

This talk will focus on discovering and sharing the voices of the LGBTQ+ community held within library and archive collections, s, with a specific focus on Goldsmiths Special Collections and Archives and the 2024 LGBTQ+ Positive Voices exhibition.

Register for your free place now: www.m25lib.org.uk/events/celebrating-lgbt-history-month-tg3-lgbt/

SpeedMeet Profile for January: Steve Briggs

January 2026's SpeedMeet profile is Steve Briggs who is Director of Learning, Teaching, and Libraries at the University of Bedfordshire. Find out what Steve's role in and why he finds it valuable to attend M25 Consortium events: www.m25lib.org.uk/m25-resources-and-activities/m25-speedmeet/

Be our next M25 SpeedMeet or Spotlight person

What Member Library do you work at and what's your role? What M25 Group are you involved with and how does it benefit your career? Send an email to m25libadmin@london.ac.uk and we will feature you and your library.

Upcoming dates

30 January
Leadership Briefing: Institutional Resilience and Business Continuity
Royal College of Nursing, 2-4pm
www.m25lib.org.uk/events/leadership-briefing-institutional-resilience-and-business-continuity/
All members receive one free place

12 February
Deaf Awareness Training with Dot Sign Language
Online, 10am-12.30pm
www.m25lib.org.uk/events/deaf-awareness-training-with-dot-sign-language-tg2-awareness-2026/

19 February
Celebrating LGBT+ History Month
Online, 2-4pm
www.m25lib.org.uk/events/celebrating-lgbt-history-month-tg3-lgbt/

26 February
Staying Positive in Trying Times: Looking after

yourself
Online, 10-11.30am
www.m25lib.org.uk/events/staying-positive-in-trying-times-looking-after-yourself-tg4/

4 March
Understanding libraries with qualitative techniques
Online, 2-4pm
www.m25lib.org.uk/events/understanding-libraries-with-qualitative-techniques-tg3-qualitative-2/

21 & 22 April
Moving into Management
In person, 9.30-4
www.m25lib.org.uk/events/moving-into-management-tg4-mim-3/

28 April
AGM 2026
Online, 11-12

9 June
Annual Conference
Online, 10am-3pm
www.m25lib.org.uk/events/virtual-annual-conference-2026/

Browse all our upcoming events, including visits, here: www.m25lib.org.uk/events/

Peer organisations:
SCONUL: https://www.sconul.ac.uk/
Mercian Collaboration: https://merciancollaboration.org.uk/
White Rose Libraries: https://whiterose.ac.uk/projects/white-rose-libraries/
Academic Libraries North: https://www.academiclibrariesnorth.ac.uk
SCURL: https://www.scurl.ac.uk/about
WHELF: https://whelf.ac.uk/

M25 Consortium website

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Apologies for cross-posting

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