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**Matthews B (Barry)**

**From:** Evans, Jill [J.Evans@nls.uk]  
**Sent:** 29 March 2007 12:51  
**To:** Cultural Bill Consultation  
**Subject:** SCURL Response

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Dear Mr Matthews,

I have attached the response to the Draft Culture (Scotland) Bill from the Scottish Confederation of University and Research Libraries. We were pleased to have been offered the opportunity to contribute to the Draft Bill.

I have been unable to complete the Respondent Information Form electronically as it is in a format which does not allow populating of text so I have also posted a paper copy of our response and the Respondent Information Form.

With best wishes,

Jill Evans

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The Scottish Confederation of University and Research Libraries (SCURL) largely supports the content of the draft Culture (Scotland) Bill, welcoming greater emphasis on matters cultural within Scotland and the underlying intent to support creativity via Creative Scotland (although further definition of "arts" and "culture" may be desirable).

On some specifics however SCURL feels that the Scottish Executive may have overlooked certain opportunities and potentially created some problems for university and research libraries.

### **A distributed national library collection**

- The document fails to recognise nationally important collections held in our members' Libraries (e.g. the Bernard C. Lloyd Walter Scott collection at Aberdeen University Library, the STUC Archive at Glasgow Caledonian University). These dispersed collections of national significance, while valued by the scholars who are aware of their existence, could benefit from central support in matters relating to their preservation, exhibition and interpretation, and general management as a resource of value to the Nation. This may be an area for closer liaison between the Higher Education community and the local authorities, in order to offer enhanced "cultural entitlements" by means of greater access to the Library's holdings.

### **National Collections and Creative Scotland**

- The National Collections, research and university libraries must be considered of cultural significance. This is important in relation to membership of the Board of Creative Scotland. Consideration should also be given to funding such as National Lottery Funds and the membership of funding boards, and calls for projects that consider the value of these collections to the development of national and local "cultural entitlements". This includes "born digital" collections and collection digitisation to increase access. The development of the collections could have a significant economic impact.

### **Higher Education contribution to cultural provision**

- While it may be true that the local authority takes the lead role in cultural provision, the input from Further and Higher Education institutions is significant and influential in those areas in which they are located, and most would welcome the opportunity to work more closely with their local counterparts. For example many university libraries hold collections of local cultural significance such as local history.



### **Broadcasting rights and Higher Education**

- SCURL would support the extension of broadcasting rights to universities and the National Collections. This could transform the flexibility of delivery of higher education and encourage the exploitation of National Collections and increase accessibility to the knowledge of scholars within the National Collections, research libraries and universities.

### **National Collections Quality Role**

- SCURL supports the notion that the NLS and other National Collections bodies will contribute to work on a quality assurance framework: although other statutory bodies (e.g. SLIC) also work in this area, input from the NLS team will be valuable. We are happy to assist in this, as may be required.

### **National Collections Advice Role**

- The draft Bill proposes that National Collections should offer advice and assistance to local museums, galleries and libraries. SCURL sees this as a natural extension of the role of NLS (and others) and would welcome a strengthening of the links with the Further and Higher Education sector too. This should take account of the value of having specialised facilities in Scotland, (e.g. the Book and Paper Conservation Studio at Dundee University) and the economic value of having such resources and expertise available in Scotland.

### **National Collections support functions**

- While the concept of rationalising common support functions across the National Collections is appropriate, SCURL would suggest that, where existing resource sharing is already working effectively (e.g. NLS' shared Library Management System with Edinburgh University Library, Heriot Watt University, Edinburgh College of Art and Abertay University) it may be counter-productive to withdraw. The scholars employed by the National Collections also have a distinct set of professional skills to enable them to understand and exploit those collections. Any rationalisation has to acknowledge the importance of this diversity.



### **Document Disposal**

- Consideration should be given to stating a more explicit process relating to potential local authority disposal of documents and records which may be of cultural significance.

### **National Library of Scotland Trustees**

- Changes to the governance of the National Library of Scotland Board of Trustees, reducing to a maximum of 14 members, could impact adversely on universities: any diminution of interaction with the higher education sector could be detrimental both to the national collections and to the university community. SCURL would like to see the current level of representation from the Higher Education Sector on the NLS Board of Trustees preserved.

### **National Library of Scotland and the Faculty of Advocates**

- As a final comment, SCURL would appreciate clarification on the historical precedent of the Edinburgh University Librarian acting as arbiter in any dispute between the NLS and the Faculty of Advocates – was this simply a locally expedient arrangement, or is there some other significance? A more formal governance route through the Scottish Executive is perhaps more appropriate.

Jill Evans (on behalf of the SCURL membership)  
SCURL Service Development Manager.  
22<sup>nd</sup> March 2007