

<b>Cover sheet for proposals</b> <i>(All sections must be completed)</i>	<b>JISC Digital Repositories Programme</b>
<b>Name of lead institution/organisation</b> The Open University (OU)	
<b>Name of proposed project</b> PRO:BE (Personal Repositories Online: BLIKI Environment)	
<b>Project partners</b> The OU (Library and Institute of Educational Technology) University of Leicester (UoL), Beyond Distance Research Alliance	
<b>Full contact details for primary contact</b>  <b>Name:</b> Gill Needham <b>Position:</b> Head of Strategic and Service Development, Library & Learning Resources <b>Email:</b> g.needham@open.ac.uk <b>Address:</b> Walton Hall, Milton Keynes, MK7 6AA  <b>Tel:</b> 01908 858369 <b>Fax:</b> 01908 653571	
<b>Objective(s) proposal will meet</b> (Please indicate the objective(s) your proposal addresses as outlined in paragraph 17 of the Circular, i.e. i, ii, iii or iv) <b>ii) Assessing the cultural and practical issues effecting the implementation and usage of digital repositories in institutions (for example, IPR, provenance, quality assurance and user requirements).</b>	
<b>Length of project and total cost to the JISC over its life: two years (£124,365 )</b>	
<b>Cost of proposal to the JISC in each year or part year (a project year runs from June - May)</b> Year one costs ( <b>£101,460</b> ), Year two costs ( <b>£22,905</b> )	
<b>Proposed project start and end dates</b> June 2005 – May 2007	
<b>Outline project description:</b>  The PRO:BE project (Personal Repositories Online: BLIKI Environment) will provide an innovative informal environment to support collaboration and learning amongst part-time, remote tutors on distance education programmes, and will build on and be evaluated alongside the asset repositories and digital library collections which are already available. PRO:BE will address some of the practical issues of building an information sharing culture, by examining the informal and formal exchange mechanisms between remote workers in an institutional context. Informal repositories such as BLIKIs, WIKIs and weblogs offer the lighter touch approach (no moderation, for example) and therefore, less staff resource intensive options to engage part-time remote tutors in interacting with other forms of repositories whilst they are analysing, synthesizing and producing new forms of knowledge. Although the contexts used for this investigation are the strategic organisational contexts of two large distance education providers, The Open University (OU) and University of Leicester (UoL), there will be transferable lessons to other employers of part-time and distributed teaching staff. PRO:BE will offer tools both for storing and managing resources, such as case studies, personal library resources, and making them available through informal conversational networks. The deliverables will be a demonstrator, proof of concept, and toolkit for sharing good practice and guidelines on integration of informal networks with more formal enterprise repository systems, case studies and an evaluation report which addresses the wider applicability of informal and personal repositories for remote and part-time tutors.	

## **Proposal Title: PRO:BE (Personal Repositories Online: BLIKI Environment)**

### **1 Introduction**

#### **1.1 Project Context:**

PRO:BE will develop and investigate the potential of informal and personal repositories for the professional development of distance education tutors by using new online, accessible and cost-effective networking tools such as weblogs and WIKIs to encourage the exchange of ideas, supported by access to resources, people and use cases. The outcome will be a demonstrator and toolkit, tried and tested in the context of two institutions, The Open University (OU) and University of Leicester (UoL). The OU uses a highly successful and developing blend of online and offline methods to support distance teaching through its resources and tutors. UoL is an on-campus research-led university with a very significant post graduate distance and e-learning programme mainly using a commercial VLE (Blackboard). We will, in both institutions use Open Source tools, readily available environments that can be easily embedded and work effectively with the established systems of the two institutions.

Both institutions have developed e-learning strategies which are in line with HEFCE, JISC and DFES e-learning strategies. Partnerships, open source software, personalised learning environments and peer-to-peer solutions are relevant in all the strategies.

#### **1.2 Need for this project**

The OU employs over 7,000 part time tutors throughout the UK. They form a heterogeneous and geographically dispersed community, the majority juggling this work with other employment, often as lecturers in other institutions, thereby enabling pull through to a much wider community. It is very difficult for staff to meet and share resources and develop across disciplines, level and geographical locations. The University is moving towards a new e-Learning environment which will require tutors to adopt different models of communication – asynchronous conferencing, instant messaging, weblogs etc. The OU Scottish Regional Office has established through its SOLACE<sup>1</sup> project, that these tutors learn best by the chance to exchange ideas with each other on approaches to teaching and learning. However, sharing beyond regions and courses is not well supported because of the logistical problems of part-time geographically dispersed staff.

There is scope for harnessing the potential of digital repositories, as tools both for creating resources, sharing resources, improving and developing but most importantly, applying them. One challenge will be to identify the most appropriate tools for these purposes, using a set of criteria developed with this user group. In order to ascertain the transferability of lessons learned from the project, both the criteria and the tools will need to be tested across two institutions which present significantly different contexts for use.

We will develop a tool that will:

1. enable a personal tool for recording and developing resources for saving time, enable reuse of resources
2. provide a simply and enticing way of sharing and commenting on these resources
3. build a database of case studies that promote good practice

The diversity of teaching staff that this project will research will enable us to thoroughly address a variety of cultural and practical issues, including the adoption and use of online repositories to support collaboration and sharing between remote users. The participants in the social network determine at what point they share information and with whom. From experience with computer mediated

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<sup>1</sup> Macdonald, J. (2004) *The tutors' story. Blended learning in practice.* (OU in Scotland, SOLACE report no 2) <http://kn.open.ac.uk/document/index.cfm?documentid=4274>

conferencing in the OU, we know that participants can be reluctant initially to post their ideas in a public forum. An exploration of these issues will also inform understanding of the role of personal and informal repositories in supporting remote students.

The sustainability of the use of informal and personal repositories throughout changes in teaching role will be an important area of investigation, remaining accessible through changes of employment across and between courses. This project will support a bottom up approach to deliver significant benefits for the education community. At its heart will be the group BLIKI which will be a combined weblog (Tebbutt<sup>2</sup>) (allowing multiple authors in a distributed environment to post items of interest or past experience) and WIKI (collaborative authoring system), and complementary tools such as RSS syndication (XML-based publishing), directories of resources and people, discussion groups, shared document repositories based on a range of use cases in teaching and learning.

### **1.3 The OU**

While the OU is a unique organisation operating with an extensive UK regional and worldwide presence, its use of part-time teaching staff and its concerns to provide these with appropriate professional development and opportunities for quality enhancement is widely replicated across the HE and FE sectors. For example, there is widespread use of part-time teachers in FE.

The OU has a number of personal repository tools available to both staff and students, including the online personalised library system, MyOpenLibrary. All OU learners and tutors have access to personal bibliographic tools, such as Endnote and Refworks. In addition, part-time tutors have a personal portal on the 'Tutorhome' website where they have access to library resources, staff development information and a bulletin board. PRO:BE tools would extend the personalisation and offer more informal technologies for learning, thinking and collaborating.

PRO:BE will address some of the practical issues around building an information sharing culture, by examining the informal and formal exchange mechanisms within an organisation. Informal repositories such as BLIKIs, WIKIs and weblogs offer the lighter touch approach (no moderation, for example) and therefore, less staff resource intensive options to engage part-time remote tutors in interacting with other forms of repositories whilst analysing, synthesizing and producing new forms of knowledge.

### **1.4 UoL**

The pilot group at UoL will be 50 University associates involved in the delivery of the University's distance learning programmes in management, archaeology and education and other disciplines. This will test the relevance of the PRO:BE environment to such staff across a range of disciplines. Involvement by staff engaged in distance learning – particularly associates has been limited to date. The flexibility and collaborative nature of the BLIKI environment would encourage such participation.

The PRO:BE environment developed and explored by this project will also be trialed as part of the University of Leicester's Academic Practice programme. This approach to teaching is relevant both for colleagues new to teaching in HE and for the personal development of more experienced colleagues.

The incorporation of such work in the Academic Practice programme will assist the dissemination of the findings of the project through the University of Leicester and its wider network. The results will also be disseminated through the Colleges-University of Leicester Network (CULN) – a significant regional alliance linking further and higher education institutions. The core of the syndicate will be University of Leicester, Bishop Grosseteste College (Lincoln) and Newman College (Birmingham), including their associated colleges. In addition to the HEIs, CULN encompasses 21 further education and sixth form colleges in the Midlands (Appendix refers). Teacher training is a particular strength of the network, including the collaborative development of the Professional Certificate in Education (PCE) – an initial teacher-training programme for the post-16 sector across the region.

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<sup>2</sup> Tebbutt D. Making the right connections. Information World Review, March 2005, pp 21-22

## 2 Project description

PRO:BE will work with part-time tutors on distance education programmes in the partner institutions to investigate the role of informal repositories within the context of their own professional development needs.

The aims and objectives of the collaborative pilot project are to:

- Identify the most sustainable technology solution to support the establishment and the development of a proactive community of practice for the partners' distance education tutors.
- Undertake a user needs analysis and feasible metadata model to underpin the development of an electronic collaborative working environment for the part-time tutor community which is both cost effective and non resource intensive.
- Evaluate existing collaborative communication tools leading to the recommendation of a clearly preferred, Web Service based and fully accessible communication tool to support proactive online collaboration for other communities of practice.
- Evaluate the use of informal and personal repositories by staff across both institutions using data capture methods to record the use and explanations of the users for comparative purposes and deeper analysis of use in practice.
- Ensure the full interoperability of the collaborative communication tool with other toolkit resources, making full use of RSS feeds to provide additional 'continuous professional development' updates.
- Deliver a shared document repository of a range of case studies in teaching and learning.

The outcomes will be:

- **A demonstrator community of practice based on WIKIs, BLIKIs and Weblogs, which offers a 'user defined' view of repository management and engagement**
- Two '**Use Cases**' around '**repository engagement and management**'
- An extensible **Metadata Application Profile for 'E- Learning Professional Development'** for use within personal and informal repositories.
- A **User Defined 'Repository Management Reference Model'** based on strategic priorities, distributed regional networks, individual tutor needs and the specific community needs of the partners.
- A shareable '**Repository Management Toolkit**' for wider sectoral use – HEIs, FE colleges, referencing existing accessible resource wherever appropriate. The toolkit will include how to choose the right tool, how to use a WIKI/Weblog (BLIKI) in an education community, guidelines for managing collaboration and social networking/best practice, metadata management, how to integrate informal repositories with the more formal repository systems based on enterprise solutions, and how to build a culture of organisational sharing.
- **Evaluation** of the implementation and use (cultural and practical considerations) of the tools.

- **Report on piloting of the demonstrator and toolkit** including data capture (audio visual) records of different tools in use.
- **Evaluation report** including use cases and critical examination of the potential of these tools with part-time campus-based tutors and part-time (distance and campus-taught) students.

## 2.1 Value to the JISC community

The project partners (OU and UoL) both have extensive distance education programmes and a significant community of part time teaching staff, but represent a diversity in the mode of delivery to students. The project findings will, therefore, be applicable across a wide range of institutions in the JISC sector which have similar staff development needs. In particular, the OU will be able to demonstrate application to a large community of part-time teaching staff (7000+), who, like other part-time teaching staff, are time poor and need to keep abreast of new developments, responding to and drawing on ideas from peers. It builds on an identified need within the distance learning context, but is applicable to part-time staff more generally, indeed most of the OU's part-time teaching staff also hold teaching jobs in other institutions. The availability of new ICT tools which encourage communication and use of both formal and informal repositories provides an innovative opportunity to support and develop a networked community of practice. The work will include a pilot demonstrator and shareable case studies based on the experience of a wide range of part-time teachers. It will also seek to work closely with the new Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL), for example, the OU has 4 CETLs, one is focussed on Work-based Learning, and UoL's three successful CETL bids are subject-based. We are confident that the learning will be transferable to any group in the FE/HE sector.

### Benefits to users:

- Quicker access to material to support their teaching
- Time saving
- Enhanced peer to peer community for sharing ideas and experience
- Tools will be easy to use for both experienced and inexperienced users of ICT
- Portability and accessibility

### Benefits to institutions

- Project will explore the role of personal digital repositories within a social network supporting learning and the related cultural issues and impediments to their use
- Better prepared teaching staff will enhance quality of learning and teaching
- Better uptake of shared resources
- Transferability of the product and the learning to other communities of practice, for instance, those reliant on the use of discussion lists

The PRO:BE project will build on the findings of the JISC DEVIL<sup>3</sup> (Dynamically Enhancing VLE Information from Libraries) project, which explored the concept of dynamically linking VLEs to electronic repositories of course resources. The project will build also on a number of recent pieces of work including the OU's Institute of Educational Technology's survey of tutors' professional needs. UoL has wide experience of externally funded projects (see Appendix 4), for instance, it completed its involvement in two JTAP projects: The Virtual Field course (with Birbeck College) and the CASTLE (Computer-assisted Teaching and Learning Environment) project, which attracted a further 18 months funding in 1999. In 1996, UoL became one of the original TLTSN centres. The University has been involved in three TLTP Phase 1 and 2 projects including the Web-based Students' and Teachers' Integrated Learning Environment (STILE) project which addressed institutional change.

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<sup>3</sup> <http://srv1.mvm.ed.ac.uk/devilweb/index.asp>

## 2.3 Project plan and timetable

Activities	Jun05- Nov05		Dec05-May06		Jun06- Nov06		Dec06- May 07	
<b>WP 1: Project management (planning, progress reporting)</b>								
1. Kick off meeting with JISC and OU/UoL team		+						
2. Agree and implement an operational plan								
3. Set up project and steering group meetings								
4. Recruit project officer								
5. Liaise with relevant projects and site visits								
6. Progress reporting		+	+	+	+	+	+	+
<b>WP2: Metadata</b>								
1. Metadata Application Profile								
<b>WP3: User requirements</b>								
1. Focus groups with tutors at OU and UoL								
2. Set up experimental BLIKI and use medium to gather requirements								
3. Develop user defined repository management reference model								
<b>WP4: Tool selection</b>								
1. Develop criteria for selection of tools								
2. Identify appropriate tools and test with user groups								
3. Build toolkit								
4. Implement and customise for OU and UoL								
<b>WP5 and 6: User testing and evaluation</b>								
1. Test with tutors groups at OU and UoL (data capture suite, IET)								
2. Review and make changes to toolkit								
3. Develop case studies								
4. Evaluation report								
<b>WP7: Dissemination</b>								
1. Build project site								
2. Dissemination activities								
3. Write interim report June 06								
4. Write final draft report, circulate for comment, finalise								

## 2.4 Risks

- Loss of key staff during the project – minimised by use of a wide range of OU and UoL staff to support the project and team working throughout.
- Lack of buy-in from already stretched part-time staff – minimised by the research (MacDonald) into BLIKIs already conducted at the OU and the known need for informal personal repositories as a time-saving tool for part-time staff. UoL will encourage tutors to participate by providing incentives for tutors to test the tool.
- Disruptive changes in technology – review of changes will be carried out as the project progresses. The outputs of the project will be generalisable and generic.
- Evolution of user expectations/requirements over time – review of changes will be carried out as the project progresses. The use cases evaluated will cover the full range of probable ICT literacy in part time teachers of courses with online elements.
- Failure to recruit tutors to test the BLIKI environment – ensure the benefits are communicated to the OU and UoL at the outset via dissemination workshops for the user groups, provide incentives for the tutors to participate in the study.

## 2.5 IPR and sustainability issues

It will be important to assess the impact of IPR on personal and informal repositories since the relevance of IPR to personal repositories is an area which is currently little understood by individual academics. Although the deliverable will be a demonstrator and use cases there will be, necessarily, some restrictions placed on users in terms of what third party material they may upload and modify within their repositories and the contexts in which this may be used. The deliverables of the project will, however, not carry any IPR restrictions as it is the objective of the partners that the tools and cases be shared widely within the education community.

The attraction of weblogs, WIKIs and BLIKIs is the high degree of control that they present to the users, with flexibility to reflect and meet the changing needs of those users. It is anticipated that the outcome of this project will be general tools and approaches with applicable use cases which can be used to facilitate the development of communities of practice for part-time staff support within a variety of contexts. Such communities would be self-sustaining and self-regulating.

## 3 Partnerships

The roles of the partners are:

The OU will lead the PRO:BE project

- Project management and financial management
- Identify user requirements and appropriate tools
- Map repositories
- Advise on and determine the metadata requirements
- Implement at the OU
- Involve representative sample of distance tutors
- Map fit with formal enterprise-wide systems
- Lead the development of Use cases
- Provide project direction and management, convene steering group,
- Provide evaluation and dissemination
- Prepare final report and toolkit
- Organise dissemination activities including workshops

University of Leicester will:

- Involve representative sample of distance tutors available across at least 5 disciplines
- Research into user requirements and technology
- Implement and customise the repository toolkit including BLIKI
- Develop case study
- Undertake dissemination activities including workshops

- Attend joint steering group

### 3.1 Key personnel and roles

The OU

Main project contact is :

- Gill Needham, Head of Strategic and Service Development, Library & Learning Resources Centre (Project Director and sponsor) [g.needham@open.ac.uk](mailto:g.needham@open.ac.uk)

Project team

- Anne Ramsden, Electronic Service Development Manager, (project manager) [a.ramsden@open.ac.uk](mailto:a.ramsden@open.ac.uk)
- Project officer – to be recruited for fixed term of one year (user requirements, identifying and selecting tools, dissemination activities, user testing and evaluation)
- Lara Whitelaw, Metadata Development Officer, Metadata advisor ([l.whitelaw@open.ac.uk](mailto:l.whitelaw@open.ac.uk))
- Chris Pegler, Lecturer, Centre for Studies in Educational Technology, Institute of Educational Technology (Evaluation consultant) [c.a.pegler@open.ac.uk](mailto:c.a.pegler@open.ac.uk)
- Murray Altheim, Systems Development Manager, OU Library (technical advisor) [m.altheim@open.ac.uk](mailto:m.altheim@open.ac.uk)
- 3/5<sup>th</sup> FTE Project Officer, University of Leicester

Steering group

- Dr Janet MacDonald, E-Learning Coordinator, OU Scotland Steering group advisor [j.r.macdonald@open.ac.uk](mailto:j.r.macdonald@open.ac.uk), Open University
- Gilly Salmon, Professor of E-Learning and Learning Technologies, Beyond Distance, University of Leicester [gks13@leicester.ac.uk](mailto:gks13@leicester.ac.uk)
- Tony Churchill, Staff Development Centre, University of Leicester [tc40@leicester.ac.uk](mailto:tc40@leicester.ac.uk)
- Richard Mobbs, Computer Centre, University of Leicester [rjm1@leicester.ac.uk](mailto:rjm1@leicester.ac.uk)
- Doug Clow, Centre for Studies in Educational Technology, Institute of Educational Technology [d.j.clow@open.ac.uk](mailto:d.j.clow@open.ac.uk)
- Gill Needham, OU Library and Project Leader [g.needham@open.ac.uk](mailto:g.needham@open.ac.uk)
- JISC representative

<b>4 Budget</b>			
	<b>Funding sought from JISC Year 1</b>	<b>Funding sought from JISC Year 2</b>	<b>Institutional contribution</b>
<b>The Open University</b>			
<b>Staff costs</b>			
Staff resource: Project officer - project coordination, report writing - full time (D2 mid point) for 12 months	£32,028		
Consultancy (Accessibility/IET) Chetz Colwell @ 2 days	£380		
Consultancy (Evaluation/IET) Chris Pegler @ 28 days over 12 months		£8,595	
Project management @ 30 days (D3 top of scale)	£5,149	£1,329	
Administration support @ 12 days over 12 months (S&C 2)	£899		
Technical development @ 24 days over 12 months (D3)	£5,149		
Dissemination: setting up project website @ 10 days (D2 mid point) £1530	£1,530		
<b>Staff sub-total</b>	<b>£45,135</b>	<b>£9,924</b>	
<b>Non staff costs</b>			
Travel and subsistence including project meetings, workshops (3) venue and hospitality, steering group costs, site visits, tutors expenses, focus group meetings	£2,500	£2,500	
Equipment and consumables including Project officer PC, web server & recruitment costs	£5,000		
Dissemination including conference presentations (£1600)	£300	£1,600	
Evaluation costs: IET Data Capture Suite for 5 days @ £250 per day (£1250) Year 2; Contribution towards tutor participation (Year 1 £2000, Year 2 £2500)	£2,000	£3,750	
<b>Non-staff sub-total</b>	<b>£9,800</b>	<b>£7,850</b>	<b>£0</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£54,935</b>	<b>£17,774</b>	<b>£0</b>
Open University contribution (overheads, staff resource etc) @ 40%			£29,083
VAT	£9,613.63	£3,110.40	
<b>TOTAL + VAT</b>	<b>£64,549</b>	<b>£20,884</b>	<b>£29,083</b>
<b>University of Leicester</b>			
Direction - Prof Gilly Salmon £328/day x 15 days (AH)	£3,280	£1,720	
Tony Churchill staff development x 10 days @£210 per day (OR2, top of scale)	£2,100		
Technical support £200/d x 10 days	£2,390		
Research Assistant Grade 1A pt 6 1 yr 3/5ths	£16,080		
Secretary/Administrator @ 6 days (S3, top of scale)	£564		
<b>staff sub total</b>	<b>£24,414</b>	<b>£1,720</b>	
Admin (stationary, postage, printing, recruitment)	£1,000		
Travel	£2,500		
Equipment	£1,000		
Dissemination	£2,500		
<b>non staff costs sub total</b>	<b>£7,000</b>	<b>£0</b>	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£31,414</b>	<b>£1,720</b>	
University of Leicester contribution (overheads, staff resource) @ 60%			£19,880.40
VAT	£5,497	301	
<b>GRAND TOTAL (OU + UoL)</b>	<b>£101,460</b>	<b>£22,905</b>	<b>£48,964</b>

## 4.1 Value for money

The project represents value by building on a wide variety of previous work and bringing together an exceptional team from two institutions. It provides a ready made dissemination model and community, represents value for money because it will generate a low-resource highly sustainable model for meeting the needs of large numbers of distributed staff, uses low cost technology, and provides a proof of concept tool for wider dissemination. It will also build on the experience and findings from relevant projects, for example, DEVIL and Strathclyde's DIDET, which is using a WIKI for a digital libraries/classroom project. The project draws on the extensive experience of the OU and UoL in supporting part-time tutors. The project offers strong project management structure and rigorous evaluation under use conditions. Both institutions have teaching and learning strategies which emphasise the importance of staff development for teaching staff and the embedding of electronic repositories and resources into teaching and learning, so this project will build and draw on an established successful network of supportive staff development. The UoL has just accepted an e-learning strategy with immediate implementation.

### References

JISC funded DEVIL (Dynamically Enhancing VLE Information from Libraries) project website  
<http://srv1.mvm.ed.ac.uk/devilweb/index.asp>

Macdonald, J. (2004) *The tutors' story. Blended learning in practice.* (OU in Scotland, SOLACE report no 2) <http://kn.open.ac.uk/document/index.cfm?documentid=4274>

Tebbutt D. (2005) Making the right connections. An article on enterprise blogging. Information World Review, March 2005, pp 21-22

## **Appendices**

1. Signed letter(s) of support
2. Key personnel and previous relevant experience (OU)
3. Colleges-University of Leicester Network
4. Technical & Pedagogic Expertise (UoL)

**Appendix 1: Letters of support**

**The Open University**

29 March 2005

Nike Holmes  
JISC Executive  
Joint Information Systems Committee  
Northavon House  
Coldharbour Lane  
Bristol  
BS16 1 QD

Dear Nike

**JISC Circular 03/05: Call for Projects in Digital Repositories**

I have pleasure in providing a letter of support for the University's proposal for the JISC call 03/05, for consideration under the theme "ii Assessing the Cultural and practical issues effecting the implementation and usage of digital repositories in institutions".

The PRO:BE (Personal Repositories Online: BLIKI Environment) project will explore the potential and use of personal and informal repositories within the Open University and the University of Leicester (UoL). The benefits to other institutions will be:

- Exploration of the role of personalised digital repositories within a social network supporting learning and the related cultural issues and impediments to their use.
- Better prepared teaching staff will enhance quality of learning and teaching
- Better uptake of shared resources

The Open University fully supports this proposal directed by Gill Needham, Head of Strategy and Service Development Group, Library. The University of Leicester is the supporting partner, represented by Professor Gilly Salmon, Beyond Distance research alliance. Chris Pegler, Centre for Educational Technology, Institute of Educational Technology, The Open University, will be the evaluation partner. The OU is the lead partner and will be responsible for the project management, evaluation, user requirements, dissemination and metadata workpackages.

Yours sincerely

Professor David Vincent  
Pro Vice Chancellor (Strategy, Planning and External Affairs)

Nike Holmes  
JISC Executive  
Joint Information Systems Committee  
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23 March 2005

Dear Nike

**JISC Circular 03/05: Call for Projects in Digital Repositories**

I have pleasure in providing a letter of support for the University's proposal for the JISC call 03/05, for consideration under "ii Assessing the Cultural and practical issues effecting the implementation and usage of digital repositories in institutions".

The PRO.RE (Personal Repositories Online: BLIKI Environment) project will explore the potential and use of personal and informal repositories within the Open University and the University of Leicester (UoL).

The University of Leicester fully supports this proposal directed by Gill Needham at the OU, and in the University of Leicester by Professor Gilly Salmon. The OU is the lead partner and will be responsible for the project management, evaluation, user requirements, dissemination and metadata workpackages. The University of Leicester will involve representative sample of distance tutors available across at least 5 disciplines, research into user requirements and technology, implement and customise the repository toolkit including BLIKI, develop case studies, undertake dissemination activities including workshops and attend the joint steering group.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "John C. Fothergill".



## **Appendix 2 Key OU personnel and previous relevant experience**

### **Gill Needham**

Gill's current post is Head of Strategic and Service Development in the OU Library and Learning Resources Centre. Since joining the OU in 1998 she has taken a leading role in developing the Library's electronic services to its 200,000 students, has launched and developed an Information Literacy Strategy for the University and has been a major author on three OU courses. Previously she worked for 15 years in the National Health Service, initially as a librarian and then subsequently as an R&D Specialist in Public Health, responsible for promoting Evidence Based Practice and public involvement in healthcare decision making. During her career she has managed a wide variety of projects at local, regional and national levels. These have included a local Citizens Jury (sponsored by the Kings Fund) in 1997, a British Library project on Teachers Information needs in 1977 and the national Critical Appraisal Skills Programme 1995-6. Gill will be project leader for the PRO:BE project.

### **Chris Pegler**

Chris Pegler has managed a variety of educational initiatives in UK Higher Education, public and voluntary sectors, but since 1990 the focus of her work has been on distance education, initially at Warwick Business School and since 2000 at The OU. In 2002 she joined the Institute of Educational Technology (IET) as a lecturer, researching and producing reusable digital learning objects. In 2004 she received both an OU Teaching Award and a HE Academy National Teaching Fellowship for her teaching and development contributions to OU online courses, her work in developing and reusing learning objects and her leadership of dissemination and staff development activities. Chris is currently evaluating learning objects for the Stor Curam (<http://www.storcuram.ac.uk>) repository for social work education and is an active member of several e-learning experts groups within and outside the OU. She will support the user testing and evaluation of the PRO:BE environment.

### **Lara Whitelaw**

Lara Whitelaw current post is the Metadata Development Manager for the Open University, based in the Open University Library and Learning Resources Centre. Since 2003 she has been working to defining metadata application profiles for Open University systems including the university's learning resources repository. Previously she has worked for the AHDS Visual Arts as Collections and Systems Manager and for the Art, Design, Architecture and Media Gateway (ADAM) as a metadata cataloguer. She is currently developing collaborative metadata workflow models for the university's enterprise content management system. Lara will support the metadata work package of the PRO:BE project.

### **Anne Ramsden**

Anne Ramsden will manage and coordinate the project. Anne was principal investigator on MyOpenLibrary and organiser of the Personalisation and Digital Libraries seminar held at the OU in October 2002. She co-authored the successful DEVIL project proposal with John Maccoll, Edinburgh University. Anne is currently responsible for electronic service development in the Library, including implementation of the ENCompass library portal /resource discovery system and for redesign and build of the library website.

### **Dr Janet Macdonald**

Dr Janet Macdonald is E Learning Coordinator for the OU in Scotland, where she is responsible for e-learning development, which includes staff development in new areas of expertise for part-time tutors and representation of the e-learning interests of the OU on a variety of committees and fora. Her current research interests are in innovative approaches to learner support, and she is currently completing a book on good practice in blended strategies. She has directed a variety of studies on the pedagogy of networked and web based courses, and has published widely in this field. She has 10 years of practical experience as an OU tutor and developed first hand knowledge of the practicalities of using online media for supporting students throughout that period. Janet's experience will be invaluable to the success and acceptance of the PRO:BE project.

### **Dr Doug Clow**

Doug Clow is the Head of the Centre for the Study of Educational Technologies, one of the three centres that comprise the OU's Institute of Educational Technology. He has a wide range of interests and expertise in the area of new technologies to support teaching and learning. He was a key member of the team that developed the OU's award-winning Knowledge Network, web-based system

for sharing expertise about teaching and learning. Other projects he has worked on include the Reusable Educational Software Library (RESL, [www.resl.ac.uk](http://www.resl.ac.uk)), the Knowledge Resource Network (KRN, [krn.open.ac.uk](http://krn.open.ac.uk)), and European-funded projects in the areas of learning technology standards and mobile learning. As Head of Centre, he closely tracks other important projects in the Institute, including the JISC-funded 'Development of Service-Based Learning Design System', and OpenMentor.

### **Murray Altheim**

Murray joins the OU Library as Systems Development Manager in April 2005. He was previously researching for his PhD in Knowledge Representation with the Knowledge Media Institute in The Open University. He has worked in various systems related positions in the United States with Sun Microsystems Inc., Spyglass Inc., National Technology Transfer Center, NASA Headquarters and California State University. Murray will support the technical implementation of the BLIKI environment.

### Appendix 3: Colleges-University of Leicester Network

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Principal/Vice Chancellor</b>	<b>Profile</b>
<b>Bishop Grosseteste College</b> (HEI)	Muriel Robinson Bishop Grosseteste College Newport, Lincoln LN1 3DY	BGC has been offering Higher Education to students since 1862. Provides a range of teacher education programmes.
<b>Bournville College of Further Education</b> (FEC)	Ms Anne Mitchell Vice-Principal Bournville College of FE Bristol Road, South Birmingham, BH31 2HA	General vocational further education college (providing a wide range of courses aimed at adult learners)
<b>Brooksby Melton College</b> (FEC)	Annie White Principal Brooksby Melton College Brooksby, Melton Mowbray LE14 2LJ	Land-based further education college, offering a broad range of courses including Animal Care to Performing Arts.
<b>Daventry Tertiary College</b> (FEC)	Mr Len Closs Principal Daventry Tertiary College Bradby Road West Daventry, Northamptonshire NN11 4HJ	General vocational further education college offering 22 A Levels across a broad curriculum offer.
<b>Fircroft College of Adult Education</b> (AEC)	Fiona Larden Principal Fircroft College of Adult Education, 1018 Bristol Road Selly Oak, BIRMINGHAM B29 6LH	Fircroft is one of 5 UK specialist residential colleges, focussing on adult education.
<b>Gateway College</b> (Sixth Form College)	Mr Nick Goffin Principal Gateway College The Newarke, Leicester LE2 7BY	Gateway is a thriving further education/sixth form college providing excellent educational opportunities for the people of the Leicester and Leicestershire.
<b>Halesowen College</b> (FEC)	Mr Keith Bate Principal Halesowen College Whittingham Road Halesowen, West Midlands B63 3NA	A tertiary college, Halesowen provides general vocational courses and A-level programmes to the Halesowen and surrounding area.
<b>John Leggott College</b> (Sixth Form College)	Mr David Linnell Principal John Leggott College West Common Lane Scunthorpe, DN17 1DS	John Leggott College is a Beacon status sixth form college with outstanding practice in teaching and learning and excellent examination results.
<b>Leicester Adult Education College</b> (AEC)	Mr Robert Raven Principal Leicester Adult Education College, Wellington Street Leicester LE1 6HL	The College provides learning programmes in response to the continually changing educational need of adults.
<b>Leicester College</b> (FEC)	Ms Maggie Galliers Principal Leicester College Aylestone Road LE2 7LW	One of the ten largest general vocational further education colleges in the country, catering for around 38,000 full and part-time students.
<b>Lincoln College</b> (FEC)	Mr John Allen Principal and Chief Executive Lincoln College, Monks Road LINCOLN LN2 5HQ	Lincoln College is a general vocational further education college serving the Lincoln, Gainsborough and Louth areas.

<b>Loughborough College</b> (FEC)	Mr Jim Mutton Principal Loughborough College Ashby Road, Loughborough	Originally established as a Technical College in 1909, Loughborough College now provides a broad range of FE and HE courses.
<b>Moulton College</b> (FEC)	Mr Chris Moody Principal Moulton College West Street, Moulton Northampton NN3 7RR	Moulton College was established in the village of Moulton over 80 years ago, and offers predominantly land-based and management studies at FE and HE level.
<b>Newman College</b> (HEI)	Pamela Taylor Newman College of Higher Education Newman College, Bartley Green Birmingham B32 3NT	Formed in 1968, to train teachers Newman has expanded into a range of other areas including traditional single and joint honours degrees and the recently introduced foundation degrees.
<b>North Warwickshire &amp; Hinckley College</b> (FEC)	Ms Marion Plant Principal North Warwickshire & Hinckley College Hinckley Road, Nuneaton Warwickshire CV11 6BH	The College offers a range of quality programmes, from full-time opportunities for school leavers to Higher Education and part-time opportunities for those seeking new skills.
<b>Northampton College</b> (FEC)	Mr Len Closs Principal Northampton College Booth Lane, Northampton NN3 3RF	Northampton College is a further education college with approximately 2,750 full-time and 18,277 part-time students.
<b>Plater College Oxford</b> (AEC)	Mr Robert Beckinsale Principal Plater College Oxford Pullens Lane, OXFORD OX3 0DT	Offers mature students (over 19) the chance to study in a supportive learning environment.
<b>Regent College</b> (FEC)	Mr Eddie Playfair Principal Regent College, Regent Road Leicester LE1 7LW	Offers a wide range of AVCEs, A levels and GCSEs. Provides Access Courses, evening courses, and courses for business.
<b>Sandwell College</b> (FEC)	Val Bailey Principal Sandwell College Oldbury Business Centre Pound Road, Oldbury West Midlands B68 8NA	Works closely with business and all types of employers to create learning programmes, which raise and achieve aspirations.
<b>South Leicestershire College</b> (FEC)	Mr Lowell Williams Principal South Leicestershire College Station Road, Wigston LE18 2DW	A further education college catering for around 6000 people in any year and offering a wide variety of educational opportunities for all learners.
<b>Stephenson College</b> (FEC)	Mr David Rathe Principal Stephenson College Bridge Road, Coalville LE67 3PW	Stephenson offers a wide range of further education courses to over 6000 students per year.

<b>Tresham Institute of Further &amp; Higher Education</b> (FEC)	Mrs Sian MacDonald Principal Tresham Institute of Further & Higher Education St Marys Road, Kettering Northamptonshire NN15 7BS	Tresham College offers a vast range of learning opportunities across the FE and HE curriculum, and is a Centre of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) in Motorsports.
<b>Wyggeston &amp; Queen Elizabeth I College</b> (Sixth Form College)	Mr Ian Wilson Principal Wyggeston & Queen Elizabeth I College, University Road	One of the top-ranking sixth form colleges in the UK, with student progression rates to HE exceeding 75%.

## **Appendix 4 – Technical & Pedagogic Expertise (University of Leicester)**

### **Technical Expertise**

The staff primarily concerned with customising and user testing the suite of tools will be based at University of Leicester. Over more than a decade, the University has a successful record of participation in and implementation of similar projects including:-

- **UKHEP** - The United Kingdom Healthcare Education Partnership (UKHEP) established in 2002 with a £2,000,000 budget to transform healthcare education in the UK. **CETL** – Among the University's three successful 'Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning' (CETL) bids is a project on spatial literacy and associated spatial information (SI) technologies such as Geographical Information Systems (GIS), Satellite Remote Sensing and Global Positioning Systems (GPS). **TLTP Phase 1 & 2** - The University has been involved in three TLTP Phase 1 & 2 projects: the Department of Geography's GeographyCal project, the Department of Economics contributed to the very successful WinEcon project and the Web-based Students' and Teachers' Integrated Learning Environment (STILE) project was an institutional project affecting institutional change. **JISC/JTAP** - The institution completed its involvement in two JTAP projects: "The Virtual Field Course"[2] (a joint project between Leicester University and Birkbeck College) and the CASTLE (Computer Assisted Teaching and Learning Environment) Project, directed by Drs. Cann & Mobbs. In 1999 the CASTLE Project was successful in attracting 18 months continuation funding. **CTI/LTSN** - The University's Geography Department housed the CTI Centre for Geography, Geology and Meteorology. The Department of Geography maintains its national involvement by being a consortium partner in the Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences Learning and Teaching Support Network and the University's Archaeology Department is a consortium partner in the History, Archaeology and Classics LTSN. **TLTSN** - In 1996 the University of Leicester became one of the original eight Teaching and Learning Technology Support Network (TLTSN) centres. **TLTP Phase 3** - In 1998 Universities of Canterbury, Christchurch, Leicester and Northampton were awarded funds for the Teaching And Learning with Network Technologies (TALENT) - a generic, flexible implementation arrangement of properly structured Internet strategies for teaching and learning.
- **Dr Richard Mobbs** (Computer Centre) – A physics graduate, Richard Mobbs qualified his PGCE by teaching at a Leicestershire comprehensive upper school before returning to University. He is currently head of the Learning Technology Section (LTS), which is located within the University's Computer Centre. The LTS develops Web-based resources to assist the pedagogical process via the development and support of simple to use tool sets.

### **Pedagogic Expertise**

- **Professor Gilly Salmon** (University of Leicester) – Professor Salmon has two research degrees - one in change management and another in online learning. She joined the University of Leicester in October 2004 as Professor of E-learning, responsible for the Beyond Distance Research Alliance and e-learning strategy. Her research and practice focussed on the role of the online teacher and tutor in large scale open and distance learning systems. Professor Salmon is the author of 'E-moderating' and 'E-tivities'.
- **Tony Churchill** (Staff Development Centre, University of Leicester) is part of the Centre's course team delivering the University's Post-Graduate Certificate in Academic Practice and the Centre's contribution to the Professional Certificate in Education programme. He draws on 7 years work in FE (1992 to 1999 - as teacher, manager and cross-college ICT co-ordinator) and employment as co-ordinator of a team creating online management training materials (2000 to 2002). His current work includes the design and delivery of staff development activities supporting colleagues incorporating e-learning into their teaching.
- **Angela House** (Bishop Grosseteste College) – Angela contributes to the College's very successful Foundation Degree for Teaching Assistants and has been closely involved in the development of the Professional Certificate with the University of Leicester and Newman College, Birmingham. She will support dissemination of the outcomes of PRO:BE.

## **Library**

The University of Leicester Library has a rapidly expanding collection of digital resources for the use of learners anytime, anywhere. Some of these resources will be made available to the PRO:BE project. The Library is at the forefront of digital library developments. It was recently the first library in the UK to introduce Sirsi's link resolver, federated searching and context management software to provide easier access to digital resources, encompassing cutting edge features such as newsfeeds, embedded webpages and search boxes. Over a decade's experience in delivering such projects has ensured that UoL has the necessary project management expertise. Furthermore, key members of the team have a rare combination of both the technical and pedagogic expertise necessary for success.

- **Christine Fyfe**

Christine Fyfe is University Librarian at the University of Leicester in the UK. Previously she held several senior posts at the Universities of Keele and Warwick. She has degrees from the Universities of Bristol and Sheffield and was awarded an MBA from the Open University in 1999. At Leicester she is responsible for strategic planning and is Chair of the Library's Electronic Resources Group, a group set up to ensure that the University takes full advantage of the developments in information access and discovery. Christine is currently a member of the Executive Committees of COUNTER and of the United Kingdom Serials Group (UKSG) (after chairing the Group from 2000-2003). Her professional interests include strategic information planning, change management and the hybrid library.

- **Selina Lock**

Selina Lock is the Information Librarian for the Sciences and supports the University's research community in their use of bibliographic software. Since joining the University of Leicester Library in 2000 she has worked on a wide range of information literacy projects, including the use of interactive and multimedia online tutorials. She currently heads up the library's E-learning Group and is a key members of the team implementing the Sirsi Rooms library portal