

RSC Newsletter

Autumn/Winter 2009

Stimulating and supporting innovation in learning



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Nominate a friend!

You don't have long to nominate a colleague for an Evolution Award!

To celebrate 10 years of the RSCs in 2010, we have launched our new awards scheme to recognise the talented individuals we have been working with in learning providers in the region - and we need your help in putting them forward!

Is there someone who has used technology to inspire learning? Or has someone made learning more accessible through technology? Perhaps a colleague is experimenting with cutting edge technology to great effect? Or maybe there is someone that has brought more fun to learning - or is inspiring colleagues?

There are eight categories in

total, covering various job roles and all sectors (see page 2 for details). Two finalists per category will be invited to the Awards Evening in March, where the winners will be announced and presented with their award.

But hurry! **All nominations must be received by 5pm on Friday 15th January 2010.** Finalists will be notified by the end of February, ready for the prestigious ceremony on Monday 22nd March 2010 at the Royal Armouries in Leeds.

So, don't wait! It's just five simple questions to nominate.

Full details - including how to download a nomination pack - can be found at www.rsc-yh.ac.uk/evolution.

Evolution categories - who will you nominate?

Bringing Fun to Learning Award

Using technology to inspire learning and engage learners, making learning more effective and enjoyable.

Education Without Walls Award

Enabling learners to access quality teaching and learning outside the boundaries of the "traditional classroom".

Enabling Resources Award

Engaging learners and widening access to resources, making full use of innovative technologies.

Inclusivity Award

Enabling inclusive learning, removing barriers and creating accessible learning, increasing learner opportunities.

Innovative Practice Award

Adopting innovative teaching methods using technology to make a difference to learners.

Inspiring Colleagues Award

Supporting, encouraging and inspiring other staff to embed learning technologies within their teaching practice.

Leadership Award

Significantly influencing strategy development and progression to embed e-learning across the whole organisation.

Technical Award

Collaboration with teaching staff to facilitate learning, resolving technical issues to enable solutions for learners.

Nominate now at www.rsc-yh.ac.uk/evolution!

Recognising success



Not sure if your organisation is good enough to be nominated for an award?

The Excellence Gateway provides good practice case studies, all of which could be put forward for an Evolution Award.

Check out the latest case studies at: www.excellencegateway.org.uk/casestudies and see if you are doing anything similar.

Some of the latest case studies from our region are:

Pennine Camphill Community College: Improving network efficiency for small organisations

Ideal for any small organisation, Pennine Camphill Community College found an open-source solution to an overloaded network that, at the same time, solved issues surrounding e-safety and e-security.

Its solution increased the efficiency and flexibility of the network, saving money, staff time and providing a more environmentally friendly option.

T-centrix: A solution to digital signatures

T-centrix has created secure digital signatures. For the first time, online items can be reliably authorised by a signatory. Learners' work can be securely assessed online and administration processes can become paper-free.

Calderdale College: The end of the classroom?

Calderdale College is creating a radically different learning culture and environment, based on using the most appropriate space for each "learning event". The "Transform Project" uses technology to improve learning and explores how learning spaces should reflect the kind of learning taking place.

Read more about these case studies via links on our website: www.rsc-yh.ac.uk/casestudies.asp.

For advice on the Evolution Awards nomination process, please contact us on 0113 343 1000 or email support@rsc-yh.ac.uk.

How to use your RSC

Interview: Heather MacDonald

We recently published our guide on "5 Ways To Use Your RSC".

Heather MacDonald, Principal and Chief Executive of The Sheffield College and new Chair of the JISC RSC YH Steering Group, took time out to explain the benefits her organisation receives from RSC support.

How is the RSC useful to your organisation?

"The RSC tailors its advice and support to the needs of individual institutions; personalising its service which provides real value-added for my organisation, The Sheffield College.

"The RSC facilitates collaborations between institutions too, rather like a match-making service, to help reduce costs and attract additional resources into the region.

"I think the RSC has a key role to play in the next few years as the effects of recession and the national debt start to really bite in the public sector. The RSC can help us to deliver our services more efficiently which will be necessary in times of stringent fiscal constraints."

How do you feel about becoming Chair of the Steering Group?

"It is a great privilege to be appointed as Chair, but it is also a significant responsibility, that I take very seriously, to advise, guide and shape the work of the RSC in our region.



"I care passionately about the creative use of new technologies in support of learning and to increase students' success. The support from the RSC in YH is critical, in my view, in encouraging, enabling and empowering learning providers to be innovative in their use of new technologies."

Finally, are you looking forward to our Evolution Awards?

"I truly believe we should celebrate success. The Evolution Awards are a fantastic opportunity to promote the calibre of the high achieving staff we all have in our region.

"The Evolution Awards are rather unique in that they offer opportunities for 'back room' and technical support staff to step into the spotlight too. I am really looking forward to the awards ceremony itself!"

Download your copy of "5 Ways To Use Your RSC", packed with information that can save your organisation money and provide support, via our website: www.rsc-yh.ac.uk.

Forthcoming events



Generator Workshop

11 Jan 2010

University of Leeds

FREE

This event will equip you with the knowledge to use Generator effectively, developing an understanding of the application of Generator to your technology planning and strategy.

Moodle User Group

27 Jan 2010

Askham Bryan College

£100 annual subscription

This forum is a merging of the Moodle User Group (MUG) and the Moodle Administrators' Group (MAG). The forum discusses and shares developments in Moodle and its use and meets three times a year.

Excellence in e-Learning Forum: Green IT and Sustainability

10 Feb 2010

Leeds City College

FREE

The Excellence in e-Learning forum meetings are a means of updating the FE & Skills sector on regional and national developments in e-learning. The focus of this meeting is Green IT and Sustainability.

Online booking for all events is via www.rsc-yh.ac.uk

A big well done!

AoC Beacon Awards

Award for Excellence in the Use of Technology - Wakefield College

Award for College Engagement with Employers - North Lindsey College

Award for Equality and Diversity - Grimsby Institute of Further and Higher Education

Award for Enterprise - The Sheffield College

Award for Functional Skills - Bradford College

LSIS Star Award

Lifetime Achievement Award - Paul Delmar, lecturer, photojournalism, The Sheffield College

MoLeNET

MoLeNET Academy Status - The Sheffield College

MoLeNET 3 Projects - Hull College Group, The Sheffield College, and Bradford College as a Partner Organisation

MoLeNET 3 Micro-Projects - Franklin College, Henshaws College, John Leggott Sixth Form College

MoLeNET 2 Project Manager Award - Dave Pickersgill, The Sheffield College

LSIS Flexibility and Innovation Fund Projects

The Sheffield College

LSIS-IfL Research Development Fellowship

Tony Oakley, Rotherham College of Arts & Technology

Big success for region



There has been much to celebrate for our region recently as learning providers have received national recognition. Several organisations have won awards and funding bids. The large number of MoLeNET projects, in particular, have enabled the region to have a good grounding in the challenges of using mobile technology in learning.

Heather MacDonald (see page 3) has seen tremendous success for The Sheffield College in the AoC Beacon Awards, the LSIS Star Awards and MoLeNET. The College has also been shortlisted in the e-Government National Awards 2009.

So what's the secret? She says: "Like many successful organisations, we have a clear shared vision supported by strategies stating what we intend to achieve along with our values and beliefs which demonstrate how we will do it. Success is second nature in a constructive, proactive culture which is achievement focussed."

She also sees the RSC as playing a vital role in helping to bring funding into the region in order to achieve successes: "The RSC provides

superb support for bid writing which helps many learning providers to be more successful in drawing down regional or national funds in support of their local developments."

In order to be successful, appropriate strategies need to be written and implemented. **Sue Slassor**, Director of Quality and Curriculum at Wakefield College, commented on their recent AoC Beacon Award: "We are really pleased. Thanks to the RSC for their contributions to our winning bid. We certainly cited the e-Progress Review as evidence..."

So are you next? Whether you are bidding for funding or not, we can help you build the strategy and implementation plans that can pave the way for success. And if you are bidding for funding, see our short bid writing guide (next page) for tips.

Congratulations to all our successes in Yorkshire and Humber (listed left)!

If you have a success that you want to share with the region, we can add you to the roll-call! Please contact us on 0113 343 1000 or email support@rsc-yh.ac.uk.

Bid writing 1, 2, 3...



Bidding for funding is stressful and time-consuming but the outcomes can achieve a lot for your learners and your organisation. And you're not on your own! We can provide help and support in that crucial time when preparing to write a bid.

The RSC can help you put your bid together. We can:

- provide information about relevant work elsewhere
- help identify possible partners
- advise on the range of technologies and methods available or in development
- offer an impartial read of your bid before you submit

Anne Hornigold, Director of Whitby & District Fishing Industry Training School, says of the service: "We took a lot of advice... I don't think we could have managed without the RSC, as sometimes we found the process daunting. The advisor gave a lot of encouragement and support."

You can also find help through our programme of events and forum meetings. At these events, you can network with peers, picking up ideas and developing collaborative approaches with possible partners.

We can't guarantee your bid will be successful but we can also support you once you've (hopefully) been successful. We can help to:

- source staff training
- source further expertise
- disseminate the outputs/ findings of your project

We can help with the continuation of your project, supporting embedding new approaches within your new organisation and identifying further funding.

What next? Contact us! Your dedicated e-Learning Advisor is on hand to provide this support and guidance. Contact us on 0113 343 1000 or email support@rsc-yh.ac.uk.

FEATURE:

How To... ... write funding bids

Things To Remember When Bid Writing: Top Tips from our team of Advisors

1. Make sure that you are ready for future bids by having robust strategies and implementation plans
2. Ensure the bid closely matches the requirements and reference accordingly
3. Keep it brief and in the required format, remember that the judges will have many bids to read!
4. Do your research
5. Provide supporting evidence, if appropriate
6. Be ambitious but also be realistic!
7. Leave enough time to meet deadlines
8. Make sure that your bid matches your strategic aims and then implementation will be easier
9. Make sure you have thought through staff development needs and project management
10. Have clear, timely, realistic, measurable and achievable milestones
11. State the obvious – say what you want to achieve without the 'jargon'
12. Consult your JISC RSC YH!

Launch of JISC Advance



JISC Advance is an organisation that brings together the collective expertise of eight established JISC services:

- JISC Digital Media
- JISC infoNet
- JISC Legal
- JISCMail
- JISC Netskills
- JISC Procureweb
- JISC RSC UK
- JISC TechDis

Focussed clearly on the needs of our users, JISC Advance is committed to providing agile, holistic services. Offering flexible, comprehensive knowledge and support, the organisation addresses new and challenging requirements throughout the education and research communities and beyond.

Working with the Regional Support Centres, JISC Advance provides a distinctive combination of independent advice, guidance and resources to enable effective, innovative use of technologies.

www.jiscadvance.ac.uk

News round-up



Working in Partnership

A new publication has been launched demonstrating JISC Services' support for the FE communities. "Working in Partnership" outlines

how the FE communities have used the expertise and experience of JISC-funded services to overcome challenges, to gain skills and to enhance the quality and value of what they offer. Wakefield College features as an example of how they have received support in strategy development from the JISC RSC. Online versions of the case studies can be found at www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/services/about/casestudies.

Legal resources

JISC Legal has upgraded their website, making accessing their guidance more straightforward in helping you to avoid legal barriers to the development and use of ICT in education.

The website is arranged in 'Roles', 'Themes' and 'Legal Areas', with a new range of audio-visual resources.

See the updated resources at www.jisclegal.ac.uk.

Strategy 'Infokit' launched

JISC infoNet has launched a new strategy planning resource. It covers all aspects of the strategy process: from articulating your institution's vision to advice on effective use of key performance indicators and a checklist for what to monitor.

More information at www.jiscinfonet.ac.uk/infokits/strategy



Digital Media

Want to learn how to shoot better video? Three new advice documents have recently been added to the JISC Digital Media website. The advice covers videoing interviews and lectures,

as well as how to use a Flip digital camera.

Also, the third deadline for the JISC Digital Media Video Assist project is looming. A project that qualifies for Video Assist will receive 4 days' worth in total of bespoke off-site support and on-site supervision in the creation of moving image resources. Deadline: 26 February 2010.

More information at www.jiscdigitalmedia.ac.uk.

CSS Winner!

Congratulations to Matthew Rhodes, Technical Services Manager at Freeman College, on winning a £100 Amazon gift voucher, courtesy of the JISC RSC YH! Matthew completed the national JISC RSC customer satisfaction survey (CSS) over the summer and was randomly chosen as the winner from the Yorkshire and Humber region.



The customer satisfaction survey provides the JISC Regional Support Centres with invaluable feedback on how we are doing in supporting learning providers in the region. We received a positive response, with the vast majority of respondents indicating they are 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the service we provide.

Chris Barber is the e-Learning Advisor that supports Freeman College and he presented Matthew with his prize. Matthew has also received support from Ken Scott, e-Learning Advisor (Technical and Infrastructure), and is on our Technical Discussion List. "It's good to know that support network is there and I'd like to get more involved," Matthew said.

Web 2.0 SOS

Five animations, covering social media, podcasting, RSS feeds, collaborative writing and microblogging are now available online.

The web2practice guides, created by JISC Netskills, explain how emergent web technologies can enhance your working practice.

<http://web2practice.jiscinvolve.org>

Numeracy

The Excellence Gateway has developed a new content theme to support numeracy, providing background information, links to resources and ideas which will be useful for managers and educators and help assist them in the meeting governmental targets.

See www.excellencegateway.org.uk/numeracytheme

Steering Group changes

The new academic year saw a few changes to our Steering Group. We bid a fond farewell to Jean McAllister, outgoing Chair, who retired this Summer, and welcome Heather Macdonald, Chief Executive and Principal of The Sheffield College, as the new Chair. Read about Heather's support for the JISC RSC YH on page 3.

We also welcome George Trow, Principal of Rotherham College of Arts & Technology, as our new Vice Chair, as well as new Steering Group members Ronan O'Beirne of Bradford College and Sue Slassor of Wakefield College.

Our Steering Group meet three times a year to support and advise on the work of the JISC RSC for Yorkshire & Humber. If you would like more details on the Steering Group, please email support@rsc-yh.ac.uk.

Exchange

These news items are a selection taken from Exchange, our news blog. Keep up to date with funding calls, new resources, training opportunities and details of new initiatives by visiting Exchange online. The link and newsfeed can be found on our website: www.rsc-yh.ac.uk

If you have an item to add to Exchange, please contact Christine Comrie, Information Officer: c.comrie@rsc-yh.ac.uk

If you wish to receive a fortnightly e-bulletin of major items from Exchange, email support@rsc-yh.ac.uk with your name, job title, organisation and email address.



Learning Revolution

The Learning Revolution is the Government's initiative for Informal Adult Learning. An online community has been set up for those involved in the campaign, providing a space to share information, discuss ideas and promote events. They are also hoping to collect lists of freely available digital resources and information that will lead to the creation of an online content bank.

To sign up, visit: <http://thelearningrevolution.ning.com>

Useful Links

JISC RSC YH Learning Platform

A structured virtual learning environment (VLE), our Learning Platform is a source of information from our events. It is a repository of presentations as well as information relating to our JISC RSC YH forums, where users can exchange and share information in user groups.

JISC RSC YH Exchange

Regular posts with details of news, events, funding opportunities and free resources, divided into appropriate sectors. You can also sign up to receive the fortnightly e-bulletin digest of the most important recent posts.

My RSC YH Space

Our informal social network to share and discuss ideas and developments in e-learning with peers. Upload photos and videos and view contributions made by other members. Write and read blogs, make and view podcasts, ask questions and share good practice. Join in!

All the above links can be found via our website:

www.rsc-yh.ac.uk

Contact Us

JISC RSC YH
University of Leeds
44 Clarendon Road
Leeds
LS2 9PJ

Tel: 0113 343 1000
Fax: 0113 343 4652
Email: support@rsc-yh.ac.uk

www.rsc-yh.ac.uk

Editorial



I would like to congratulate all recent award winners and those who have secured new project funding. Our region has been particularly successful in attracting new money and receiving national recognition.

Projects that are linked to your business objectives can help to accelerate implementation and enable staff to gain new skills. In the present financial climate this might be a good time to revisit your e-learning and related strategies and use the expertise of your lead advisor. We can help you join the list of successes!

Our new guide, "5 Ways to Use Your RSC", outlines several ways that we provide support. As well as free strategic support from your lead Advisor, we can help you make savings through access to knowledge and expertise in the region. Download the document from our website: www.rsc-yh.ac.uk.

I am really pleased with our new Evolution Awards scheme, which we are holding in association with Digital 20/20. It is very fitting that this scheme falls in the 10th year of the RSCs. We have seen a large amount of growth in the use of technology in learning in that time but most importantly, we now have a large community that shares expertise and, through your input to your RSC, timely support that truly matches your needs. This is your chance to promote what's happening in your organisation and I encourage you to put a colleague forward for an award.

Finally, I would like to wish all our Learning Providers a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. I look forward to working with you in the new year!

Marion Miller, Manager

E-Safeguarding: a resource

Following the first meeting of the Excellence in E-Learning Forum this academic year, a resource on E-Learning and E-Safety has been created on our learning platform.

The Forum debated issues around online safety, identifying three approaches organisations may take: 1. Denial of the problem; 2. Ban everything; and 3. Compromise.

A further issue explored was the increasingly popular use of mobile and student-owned devices to access the internet and the challenges this presents to an organisation.

Access the E-Safety module on our learning platform via our website: www.rsc-yh.ac.uk/keytopics. You can log in as a guest if you don't have an account.