

Experiences on the ground: usage statistics as a practical tool in the Library

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Why is usage data important?

- Evidence of whether a resource is being used or not
- Evidence of the usage levels – is a resource well used or underused?
- Demonstrates value for money
- Helps justify expenditure on a resource
- Accountability – evidence evaluation being continuously carried out
- Benchmarking Tool
- Informs collection development decisions
 - which resources to cancel, which to retain
- Demonstrates need to improve training, discovery tools, promotion

What it can't do

- **Doesn't tell us anything about the impact of the resource on Teaching and Learning, and Research**
- **We'll return to this later**

Know what questions you are trying to answer

- **Identify your main objectives:**
 - Provide information to institutional stakeholders or funding agencies
 - Inform a subscriptions review
 - Submit statistics to benchmarking initiative, for e.g. SCONUL.
- **Objectives will inform the process**
- **Skills and time requirement**

What data is available?

- COUNTER and non-COUNTER usage reports
- login statistics from authentication systems
 - EZproxy, Athens
- search statistics from discovery tools, catalogue systems
- Google Analytics from webpages

COUNTER Usage Statistics

- COUNTER's objective - to ensure vendor online usage statistics are:
 - Credible - audited
 - Compatible - formats
 - Consistent – definitions of what to count



COUNTER Code of Practice 10 year Anniversary
UKSG Conference 2012

A bit more on COUNTER

- **A variety of COUNTER Reports exist.**
 - Database Reports
 - E.g. Database Report 1: **Total Searches and Sessions by Month and Database**
 - Journal Reports
 - E.g. Journal Report 1: **Number of Successful Full-Text Article Requests by Month and Journal**
 - Book Reports BR
- **COUNTER Release 3 currently implemented for Journals and Databases. Release 1 for Books**
- **Release 4 – implementation deadline 31st December 2013**
 - single, integrated Code of Practice covering journals, databases and books, as well as multimedia content

What are your key metrics?

- **Cost Per Use**

Total cost

Total no. of searchers download

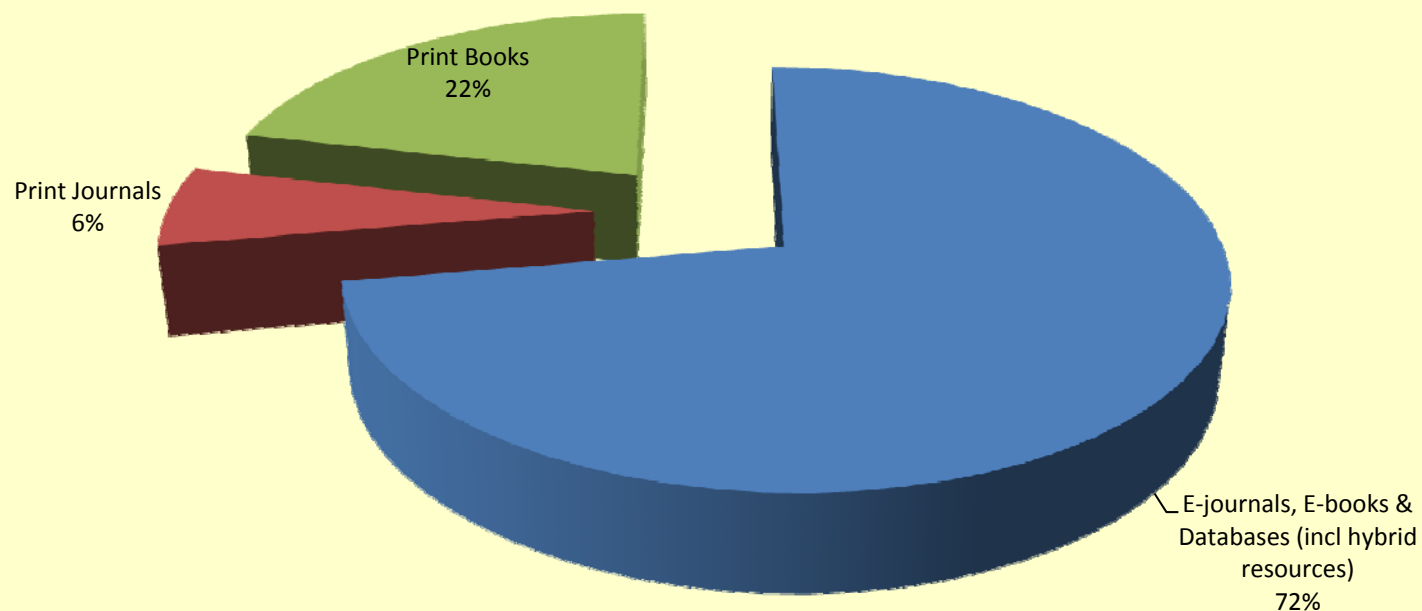
- **Use/cost per staff/student - FTE numbers**
- **Journal collections performance – low-use as % of total, high-use as % of total**
- **Top performing titles**
- **Resource performance by type and discipline**
- **Types of Use – on campus, off campus etc.**

Background to TCD Resources

- TCD is a member of IReL (Irish Research electronic Library)
- Government funded shared electronic research library
- STM phase established 2004
- HSS phase established 2006
- 2004-2012 total funding allocation across consortium = €58m
- 48 e-journal collections, including smaller society publishers and 'Big Deals'
- 29 single e-journal titles
- 25 databases
- 17 e-book/reference collections
- TCD Library also receives information resources budget from central College grant
- 15 e-journal collections
- 184 single e-journal titles
- 42 Databases
- 19 e-book/reference collections
- Resources specific to TCDs teaching and research needs – the long tail
- TCD Library information resources budget – static since 2009
- Min 10% reduction anticipated for 2012/2013

TCD Budget breakdown

Breakdown of Expenditure on Learning Resources 2010 - 2011



Background to TCD Resources

- **A mixture of funding sources - consortial and institutional**
- **Usage statistics gathering and analysis – shared objectives, shared methodology, shared performance indicators, and shared challenges.**

Usage statistics gathering and analysis – shared objectives

- **Informs collection development decisions**
- **Identifies resources with low use levels - not providing an acceptable return on investment**
- **Informs promotion activities as well as cancellation decisions**

How is Usage of IReL Resources Monitored?

- IReL Monitoring Group - very important part of the governance structure
- Collate and monitor **performance statistics** in relation to the **value for money** of IReL titles.
- Suggest retention or cancellation of IReL titles based on information gathered.
- These are reported in an Annual Report.

Monitoring Group Annual Report

- **Targeted at funding agencies and key institutional stakeholders (e.g. VPs Research)**
- **Compendium of KPIs:**
 - Usage data and trends
 - Cost per use
 - Journal Collections' Performance
 - Resources performance by type and discipline
 - Most Popular Titles

TCD Library Reporting

- Targeted at key institutional stakeholders and local budget and planning groups
- Compendium of KPIs:
 - Usage data and trends
 - Cost per use
 - Journal Collections' Performance
 - Resources performance by type and discipline
 - Most Popular Titles

Producing the Statistics – what's involved

- IReL Usage statistics are gathered and collated by Rita Pinhasi and Orla Kennedy in the IRIS Office*
- Raw data, including institutional data is shared across consortium members
- TCD Electronic Resources Librarian, Cliona Ni Shuilleabhain, gathers usage statistics for non-IReL resources
- Accessing reports from password protected websites
 - Login details stored in Electronic Resource Management System (changing platforms, changing passwords!)

*IRIS Electronic Information Services Ltd.

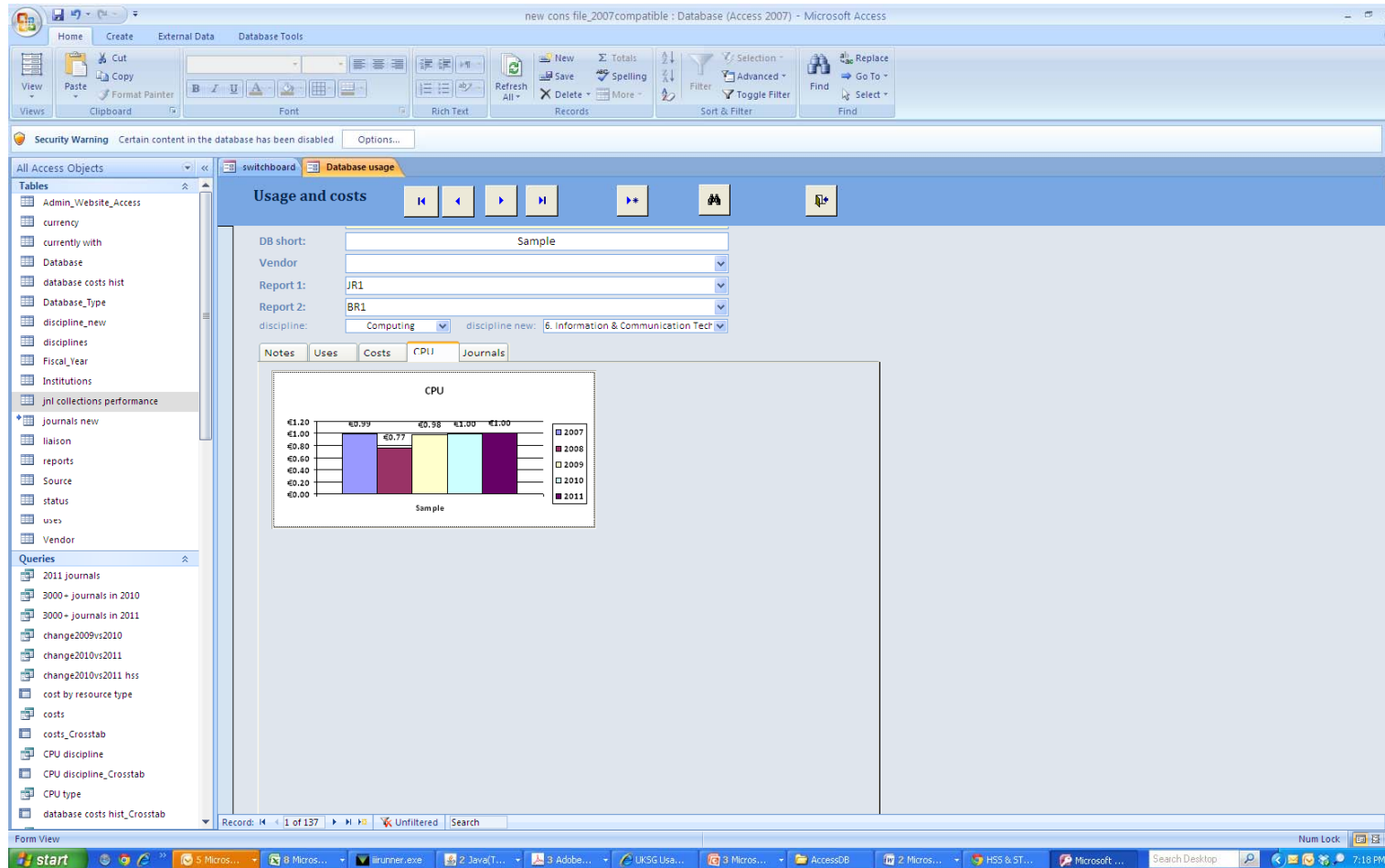
Producing the Statistics

- **Gathering of usage statistics & analysis:**
 - Statistics are gathered manually, but we are investigating SUSHI (IReL & TCD)
 - Processing the data can range from 5-10 minutes to 5 hours per resource
- **As well as extracting the data the work includes:**
 - Obtaining costs - ensuring all costs included
 - VAT
 - Maintain print/historical spend & e-access fees
 - Library contribution to an IReL resource
 - Querying usage spikes etc. with publishers/providers, librarians

Producing the Statistics

- **IReL - Maintaining MS Access database**
 - Resource costs
 - Resource & Journal level usage
 - Usage by institution
- **TCD – Maintaining Excel spreadsheets**
- **Production of charts and visualisations**
- **Lib-stats mailing list invaluable!**

Access Database



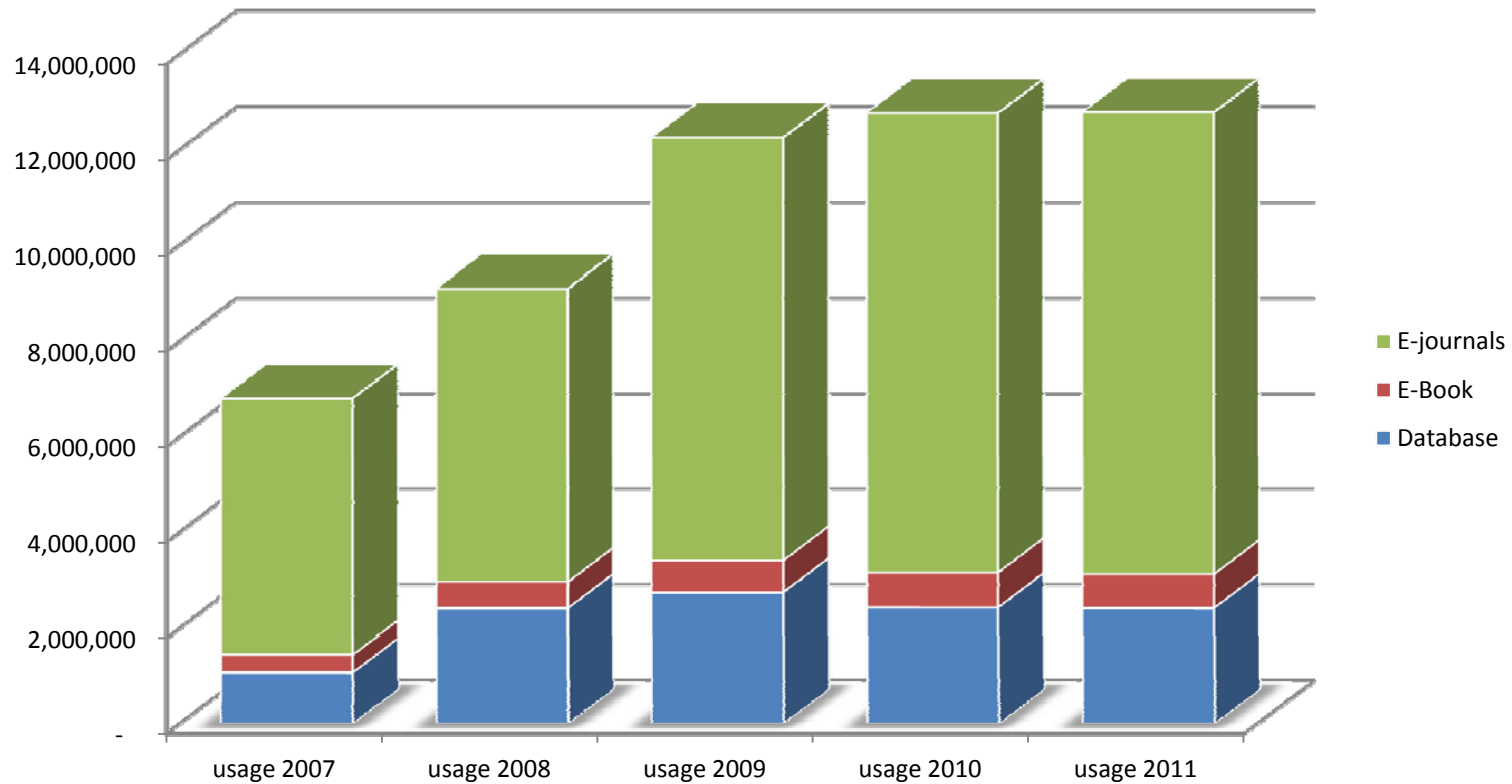
The screenshot shows the Microsoft Access 2007 interface. The main window displays a report titled "Usage and costs" for a database named "Sample". The report is currently showing the "CPU" tab, which contains a bar chart comparing costs from 2007 to 2011. The chart shows a general upward trend in costs over the period.

Year	Cost (€)
2007	€0.99
2008	€0.77
2009	€0.98
2010	€1.00
2011	€1.00

The interface also shows a left-hand pane with "All Access Objects" including Tables, Queries, and Reports. The "Tables" list includes "journals new" and "journals new". The "Queries" list includes "2011 journals" and "cost by resource type". The "Reports" list includes "CPU discipline".

IReL Success

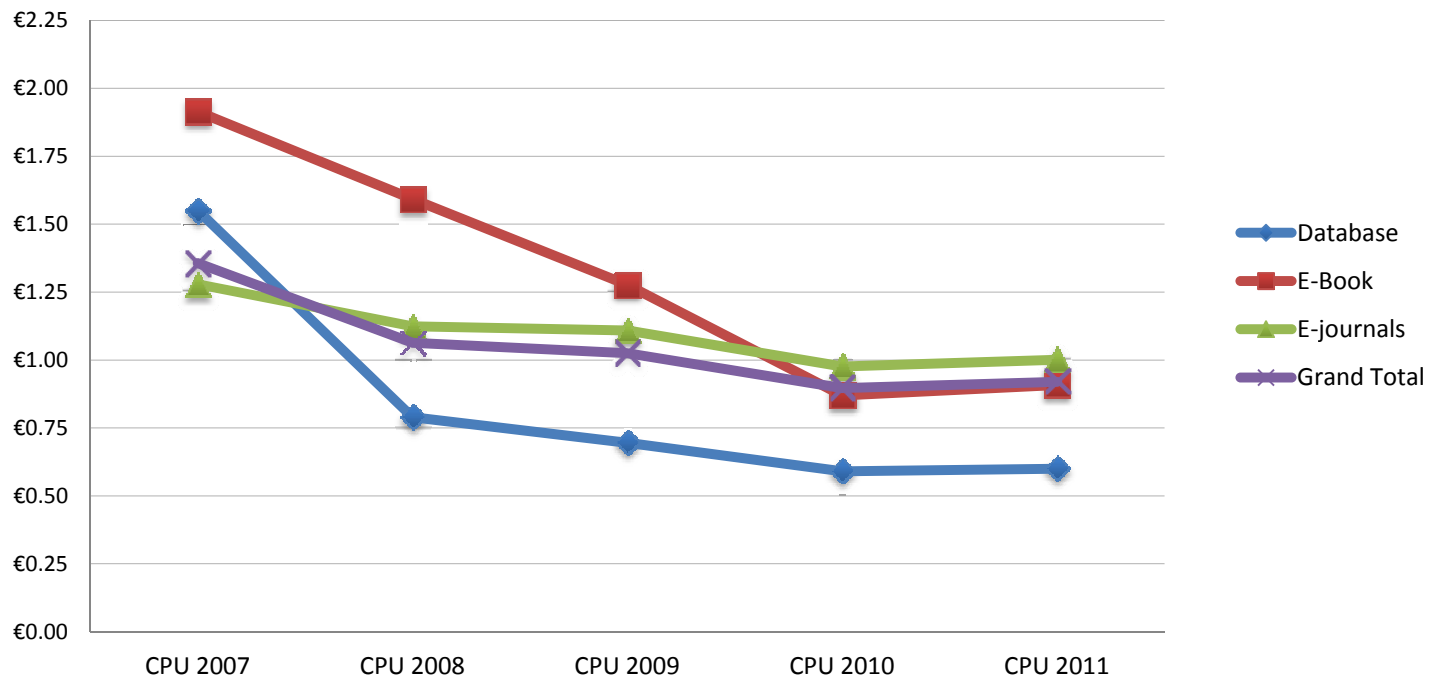
Usage by Resource Type: 2007-2011





IReL - Success

Cost per Use of IReL Resources by Type: 2007-2011





http://www.chamonet.com/whats_new_article.php?id_whats_new=3915

Economic Crisis

- **Funding Crisis for IReL and for TCD**
 - Ongoing and urgent need to cut public expenditure, so as to reduce budget deficit
 - Significant cuts in budget allocation to all public sector bodies year on year since 2008
 - Ongoing drive to significantly and permanently reduce public expenditure
 - VAT increase – 23%!
 - Currency fluctuations – weakening of Euro
 - Inflation
 - IReL Budget Reduction
 - TCD Information Resources budget reduction
- **Information resources budget – a target**
- **Importance of usage statistics to inform decision making – brought into sharp relief**

Importance of Objectivity - IReL

- **Essential that objective, transparent measures are used.**
- **Conflicting demands and priorities of:**
 - 8 institutes
 - Broadest possible range of disciplines
- **Impossible to subjectively compare the value of resources in different disciplines**

IReL Cancellation Criteria

- Value for money (cost per use)
- Usage (extent and trends)
- Discipline (avoiding unfair focus on any one discipline)
- **All resources were analysed and categorised as high risk, medium risk and low risk based on those criteria**
- **Resources with no Usage Stats automatically considered High Risk since value couldn't be measured**

IReL - Cancellation outcomes

2010

- **12% (by cost) of IReL resources cancelled**
- **Final cancellations list :**
 - 21 Databases/Journal packages
 - 15 Single titles

2012

- **6 resources cancelled**

TCD Subscription Review Exercise

- **2010/2011**
 - Budget reduction information received late 2011
 - Most resources fell for renewal calendar year end
 - Usage statistics collated and used to rank resources
 - Data shared with Library User Committee and Heads of School
 - Aimed to gather feedback and input on cancellations
 - Response from Academic staff – more time required and requirement for “academic priorities” to be considered
 - Strategic funding sourced to bridge funding shortfall
- Pain held off for another day!

TCD Subscription Review Exercise

2011/2012

- Detailed Subscription Review Exercise (print and electronic) currently underway
- Does not include ‘Big Deals’
 - Multi year consortial deals (IReL or IUA)
- Savings target not yet known – minimum 10% of overall budget

Subscription Review Exercise

Methodology

- **Head of School will be supplied with a spreadsheet listing resources aligned with the information needs of their School, which will include the following data:**
 - Cost of each resource and total expenditure
 - Usage data and cost per use
 - Total target saving to be reached (apportioned in line with budget spend for each School)
- **Heads of School,**
 - Consult with members of the School
 - Rank the resources, one to five, in order of priority

Usage Statistics - Challenges

- **Time-consuming to collect, collate and analyse**
- **Automated tools can help**
 - SUSHI (Standardized Usage Statistics Harvesting Initiative)
 - JUSP
 - Raptor - <http://iam.cf.ac.uk/RAPTOR>
 - Ustat, Scholarly Stats, 360 Counter
- **Value in becoming familiar with resource reports**
 - Identify trends, errors/spikes
 - Contact with publishers
- **Maintain & record usage report logins which automated tools require**

Challenges

- **Different standards, different formats**
 - “non-Counter”
 - Makes comparisons difficult
- **In some cases no statistics provided – hard to believe (mainly smaller, non-profit orgs)**
- **Incorrect data, missing data, double-counting**
- **Usage spikes – valid use or missue?**
- **Platform migration – two sources of data, pre-migration data not always maintained ☹️**
- **New login details ☹️**

Federated Search & Next Generation Resource Discovery Tools

- **Impact of cross-searching on search counts**
 - **Search activity** generated by federated search engines and automated search agents categorized separately from regular searches in COUNTER reports
 - “To include or not to include, that is the question...”
 - Is this induced usage redundant or should it be reported on?
 - Release 4 Counter Code of Practice - new metric to count more than just searches
 - Search Clicks metric (*utility of the output of searches*)

Resource Discovery Tools

- Investigate impact of tools on usage statistics



A few more challenges

- **Database Configuration**

Does database search lead to

- Abstract with links to full text?

Or

- HTML full text?

- Was this an intentional download?

- Does it matter?

- **Aggregator platforms**

- Title available on aggregator and via publisher

- Include usage or exclude?

Warning!

- CPU often considered a crude measure
- “but my discipline is different...”! – cf Mathematics
- Importance of qualitative feedback from academics
- It’s about using usage to inform decisions



- How can we reflect academic value?

How to reflect ACADEMIC value?

- **Recognition that we need to also reflect academic value, but how?**
- **Ireland performs very strongly in particular research fields**
- **We need to ensure the role information resources play in this good news story is recognised**
- **We need to demonstrate the strategic alignment of with high performing research in Ireland**

How to demonstrate strategic alignment?

- IReL Monitoring Group considering various potential methodologies:
 - Classify journals by discipline and match these to strongly performing research areas
 - Demonstrate where the IReL resources fit into these strongly performing areas
- **Demonstrate strategic alignment of IReL with research**

Other methodologies

- Establish journals researchers are publishing in
 - Establish what journals are citing Irish researchers
 - Demonstrate that these journals are included and maintained by IReL
- **Demonstrate strategic alignment of IReL with research**

Usage data will remain key

- **These measures of academic value will add to our armoury**
- **However, Usage Statistics and CPU will continue to play an essential role in IReL related decision making**
- **There's no doubt we'll continue to have difficult decisions to make in the future**
- **These decisions are made easier by the availability of objective evidence of value and impact**

Thank You!

- **A huge thank you to the staff of IRIS & Monitoring Group Members:**

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