

University investment in the Library Phase II

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Abstract

Figures from the Association of Research Libraries, show that while the amount of money libraries spend on resources has gone up over time, library users perceive a decrease in the value of the library overall as an information gateway. This perception, along with a combination of other factors, makes establishing insights in the Return Of Investment (ROI) for libraries more important than ever. To demonstrate that library collections contribute to the income generating activities of their parent institution, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Campaign (UIUC) pilot study was established. When the data were put into the model, a 4.38-to-1 return ROI-ratio was calculated. In its second phase, this study was expanded to 8 institutions in 8 countries, including the University of Pretoria, to determine in what ways universities around the world are similar as well as different, and whether or not the original model could be replicated. This work was completed in the autumn of 2009. Methods used were interviews with key university leaders, collection of library budget figures and grants income, and a faculty survey. As expected, differences were uncovered, particularly in the areas of university mission, funding sources, mandates and library alignment with the institutional mission. Highest ROI-values come from institutions with a purely research mission or with a concentration in science and technology. Further results show that library collections help faculty in areas of productivity, efficiency, interdisciplinary explorations, and international collaborations; university leaders use the library to help recruit and retain faculty and students and that the library plays a role in promoting the university's international reputation; and last-but-not-least, a majority of faculty view the library and its resources as valuable to research and integral to the grants process.



In his current position of Customer Development Manager, Mr Arthur Eger is responsible for organizing user engagement activities for academic institutions and governmental organizations in Germany, Holland, Belgium, United Kingdom, France and South Africa. These activities include: the NRF Young Scientist Award Event, Author and Career Workshops and database trainings. Before this position, Eger worked in various roles for leading publishers and the University of Utrecht (Holland). He is author of a number of articles on issues on library and information science and bibliometrics and holds a MSc (with distinction) from the University of Glamorgan (UK).