The University Library as the credible place for research communication and information literacy

A 5 STEP MODEL FOR RESEARCH EXHIBITIONS

1. IDEA FORMATION
   - The process of making an exhibition starts with looking for ideas by scanning current research at the university. Ideas may come from the librarians, from researchers or from communicators at the university. Formulate a purpose statement for the exhibition. WHAT do you want to communicate and WHY? It is important to reflect critically on the topic, the issue and the implementation throughout the process.

2. PLANNING
   - Form an exhibition team. This is an excellent opportunity for talent sparring amongst the library staff. The team needs at least one curator-librarian with responsibility for contact and meetings with researchers, theme, narrative and production. Step 2 is also when you plan meetings and/or workshops with researchers. Before leaving this step, it is important to be able to answer the questions: HOW can the research be shaped into an exhibition? Consider experience, interaction and information. WHAT should be displayed? Make a prototype. WHO does what? Form an exhibition team.

3. PRODUCTION
   - Based on a sketch or a prototype, the team works together and according to the distribution of roles in building the exhibition. This step also includes producing materials such as posters and exhibition guides.

4. EXHIBITION PERIOD
   - At the opening, the exhibition is presented by the librarians and the researchers. The team manages and supports events in connection to the exhibition. The events may be general or targeted to a particular audience. Maintenance of the exhibition includes taking care of visitors’ comments and answering questions.

5. CLOSING
   - For each step a relevant checklist has been developed to help organize the work in the team. The full step model with checklists (currently only available in Swedish): blog.mah.se/forskarnas-galleri/

The aim of this project is to create enhanced opportunities for research communication in the library space and to bring together information literacy work and dissemination of research results performed by librarians.

- The focus is the physical setting and the library as a credible place where communication of research in an exhibition is developed in close collaboration between librarians and researchers and in a format that is interactive, attractive and accessible.

- The project bridges the boundary between the work of libraries in the area of formal scholarly communication and the activities of research or science communication, i.e. communication not targeting the academic society, but being part of public involvement.

- The idea is to develop the visitors’ (students, researchers, staff, students from other universities and residents in the city etc.) information literacy and foster a critical stance to news and presentations of research findings.

- The exhibitions are created to encourage continued learning, for example by connecting the theme of the exhibited research to the library collections for further reading.

- The key to success is the teamwork that is developed between researchers and librarians.

- The collaboration is not only part of creating the exhibitions, but gives unique opportunities and has explicit synergies in terms of furthering other collaborations among the researchers themselves as well as with the library as a whole, facilitating collection development and fostering the librarians’ knowledge of current research at the university.