



Academic Libraries North Conference 2025: Call for Papers

Sustainable innovation: moving forward in challenging times

#ALN25

We invite you to submit a proposal for the 2025 ALN Conference, to be held online on 18th June 2025 and in person on 11th July 2025 at the Business School, Manchester Metropolitan University.

We encourage submissions from those who are looking to present for the first time, and we particularly welcome submissions from people belonging to under-represented and marginalised communities and sectors, including but not limited to global majority and UK ethnic minority, LGBTQIA+, those with disabilities and those who are neurodivergent.

Prices

Ticket prices for presenters will be discounted to £30 (online), £75 (in-person) for ALN members and £45 (online), £110 (in-person) for non-ALN members. For full information see Eventbrite or the [website](#).

Context

We know our members are rising to the challenge of continuing to thrive while across the sector, finances and staff time are tight. How do we choose what to focus on, what to drop and manage our teams to get them through difficult times? This conference asks how we might continue to move forward, to innovate, and to share the positive changes we've made in these challenging times.

We invite submissions exploring any aspect of the topic, including, but not exclusive to, the following subthemes:

- **Wellbeing**
 - Getting the balance right
 - Avoiding burn-out
- **Impact**
 - How can we persuade our institutions to reduce services or workloads in ways that have least impact
 - Showcasing our impact to budget holders
 - Focusing on what truly matters
- **Sustaining services / resources in the longer term**
 - Coping with increased demands on our services/staff time
 - Managing teams through difficult times
 - Staying true to our professional ethics and beliefs in difficult times
 - Maintaining/rethinking productivity
 - Establishing partnerships and working with others
- **Innovation/creativity**
 - Responding to changing contexts
 - Rethinking productivity
 - Keeping creative in challenging times
 - Embracing technology to enhance productivity
 - AI and its increased integration in tools and resources – how best can we support good practice?
- **Best value**
 - Focusing our time and energy in ways that make a difference
 - Getting best value from suppliers
 - Embracing the value of libraries in uncertain times
 - Developing valuable skills
 - What to focus on, what to drop with the least impact

We also welcome submissions that may fall outside of these themes but will still be of relevance and interest to our delegates.

Who can submit a proposal?

We welcome papers from all colleagues working within any institutions, whether they are [ALN member institutions](#) or not. We particularly encourage submissions from those who are looking to present for the first time.

Submissions are invited from individuals, as well as collaborative contributions from within one institution, across institutions or between an institution and an external partner.

What types of paper can be submitted?

Proposals are welcome for the following formats:

- **Workshops (in person)**
Workshops are the opportunity to engage and involve your audience in an interactive session showcasing your practice and thoughts on emerging technologies. Workshops will be 50 minutes including time for questions.
- **Short papers**
You can use the short paper format to discuss changes or developments in your practice or services, or to present the results of a research project. Short papers will be 20 minutes followed by 5 minutes for questions.
- **Lightning talks**
These are rapid presentations that should present your key ideas on a topic in a quick, clear and concise way. Lightning talks will be 10 minutes with time for questions at the end of the session.
- **Panel Discussion**
Panel discussions will engage with a relevant theme and allow attendees to explore it from several angles and perspectives through the varied expertise of the panel. We encourage submissions with panelists from different institutions and sectors who can provide varied views on the chosen topic. You should be able to facilitate the room and encourage audience participation and interaction. The panel should be made up of a maximum of 4 speakers plus a facilitator. The speakers should offer a range of perspectives.
- **Wild Card**
If your idea does not fit with any of the above formats, then submit your innovative Wild Card suggestion for consideration. Please give an indication of the length of time and any resources you may need.

The expectation is for papers, workshops and lightning talks to be presented live, but pre-recorded presentations will be considered for the online event. Please note that all content will need to comply with [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines](#) at the time of the conference.

How to submit a proposal

Proposals should be submitted via [this form](#) by 14th March 2025. They will be reviewed and selected by a panel of members of the organising committee. Decisions on proposals will be sent by the end of *April 2025*. Please note there is a limit of two presenters per submission (except for panel discussions).

You will be asked to answer a short set of questions, which will be combined to form an abstract which will be included in the conference programme if accepted.

Selection Criteria

All proposals will be marked according to the following criteria:

1. Relevance of submission
 - Does the submission address the themes of the conference?
2. Benefits to delegates
 - Does the proposal state what attendees will gain from the session and why they should attend? If the proposal is for a workshop or other interactive session then how does it seek to engage and interact with attendees?
3. Clarity of submission
 - Is the submission clearly and unambiguously worded? Is the method of presentation appropriate for delivering the content?
4. Currency of submission
 - Is your submission related to an up-to-date or current discussion or topic?

Help and Support

We understand submitting a proposal can be a daunting task! We have created this [resource](#) to support you when developing your proposal. This is aimed in particular at first time presenters, but everyone is welcome to view it. *It will give you an idea of what ALN is looking for from conference contributors and provide you with top tips for writing conference submissions and presenting at the ALN conference.*

If you have any queries or questions about submitting a proposal, please contact alnconferenceteam@gmail.com. The conference committee is keen to support colleagues with their proposals, so you are welcome to get in touch for a friendly and supportive chat about your submission.

Academic Libraries North 2025 Conference Committee

Conference: [Academic Libraries North Conference 2025](#)

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