



BLUEPRINT FOR SUCCESS

Developing a Library Research Support Strategy



Claire Sewell
Research Support Skills Coordinator
Office of Scholarly Communication
Cambridge University Library

ces43@cam.ac.uk
@ces43



CAMBRIDGE LIBRARIES

>100 libraries

University Library

Legal deposit/Research library

Faculty & Departments

Covering 70+ disciplines

Colleges

39 College libraries

Connected libraries

20+ connected institutions

WHO IS THE CAMBRIDGE RESEARCHER?

- Cover a vast range of subjects
- Highly motivated
- Expect the best experience
- Extremely time poor



CAMBRIDGE EXPERIENCE

OSC est. 2015

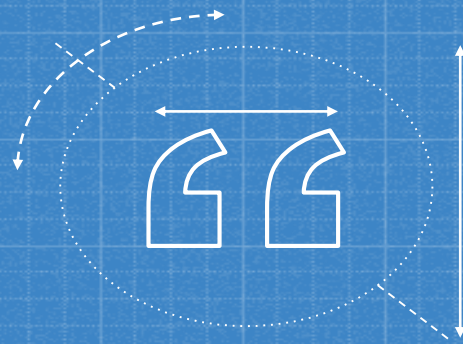
University Library &
Research Office

Growing team

Large Open Access team and
several specialist roles

Diverse user base

Researchers, librarians,
academics, support staff



STEPS TO BUILD YOUR STRATEGY

FIND OUT ABOUT YOUR RESEARCH COMMUNITY

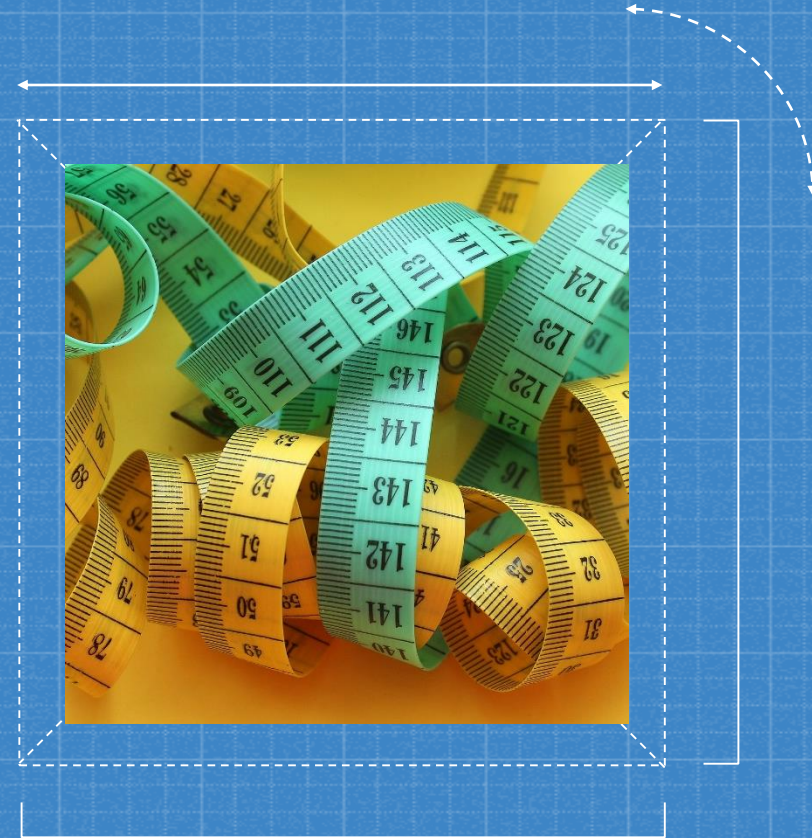
- Who are they?
- What do they need from you?
- What do they want from you?

REMEMBER THAT THESE MAY
NOT BE THE SAME THING



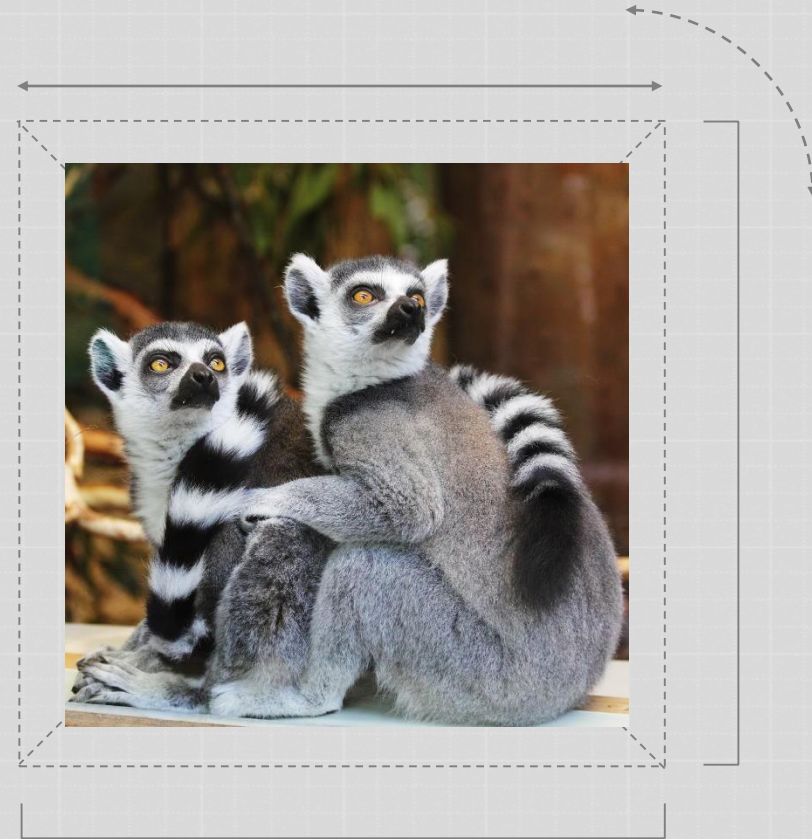
AUDIT YOUR CURRENT SERVICES

- Assess how you are currently supporting your researchers
- Which services are you offering?
- Create a map of current research support
- Be very broad in your scope



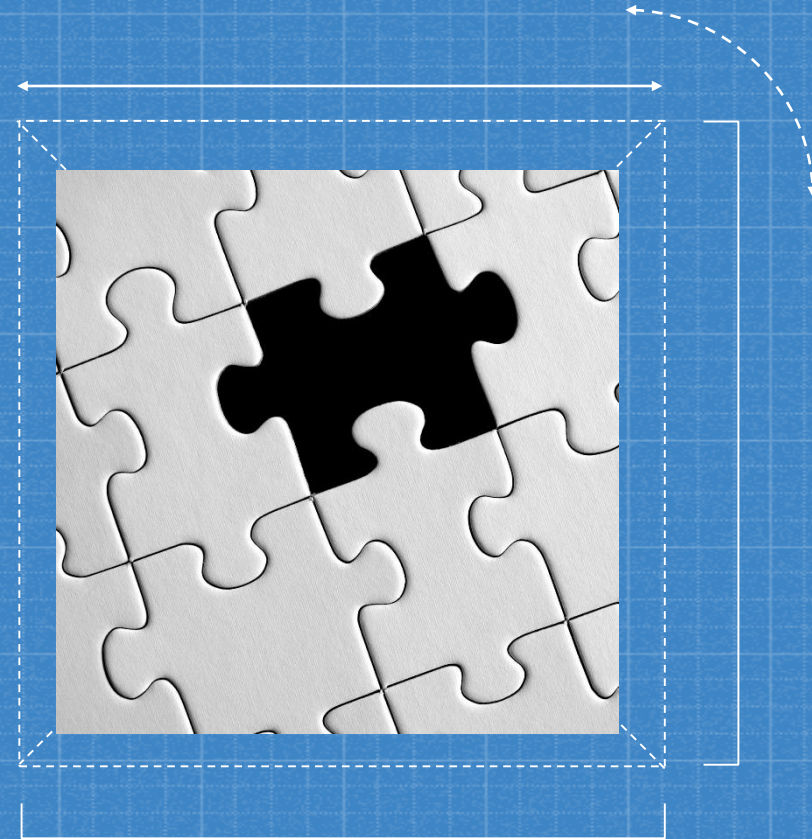
LOOK AT WHAT OTHERS ARE DOING

- Utilise your network
- Are there areas you can adapt?
- Are there opportunities for collaboration?
- Align with your wider institutional strategy



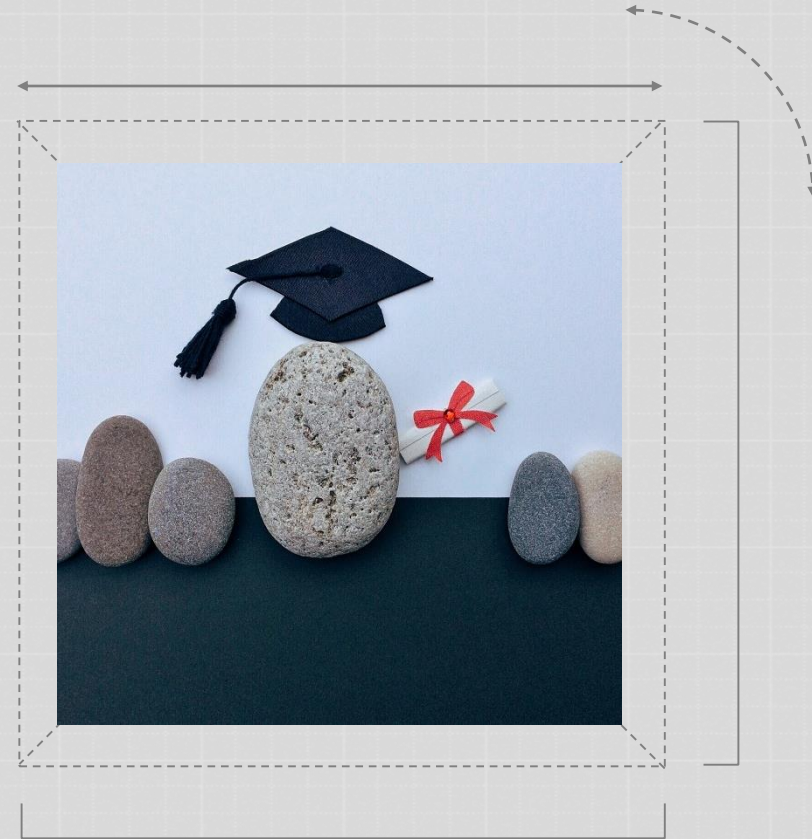
IDENTIFY THE GAPS

- What are the gaps between what researchers want and what you are offering?
- What are comparable institutions doing that you are not doing?
- How can you fill these gaps?



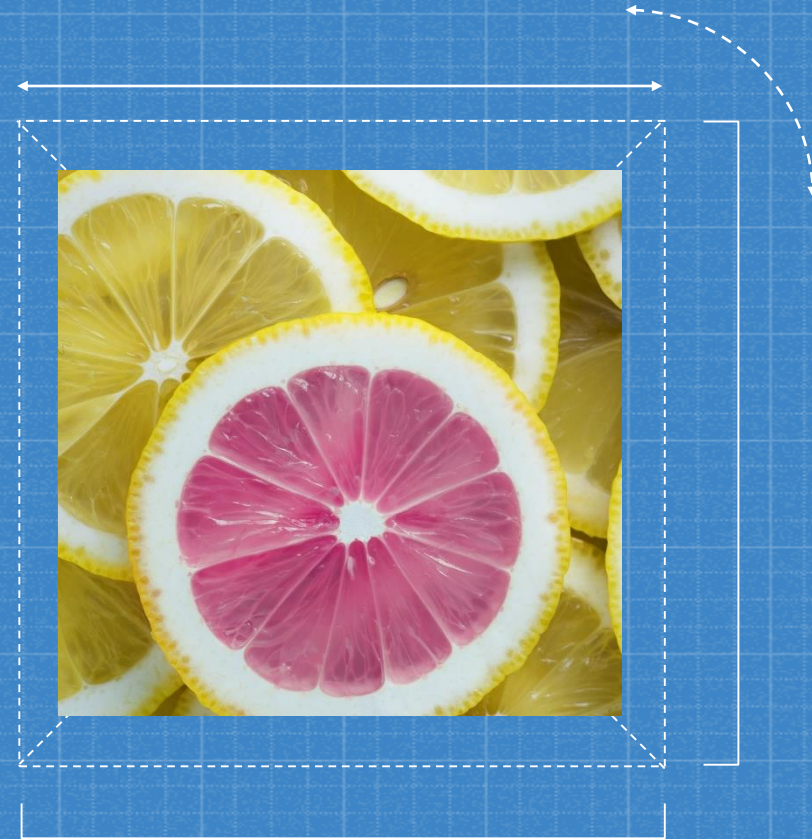
UPSKILL YOUR STAFF

- Your staff are your most important resource
- Look at local expertise
 - Both within the library and outside
- Right people in the right roles
 - Aptitude and skill



DISCOVER YOUR USP

- What can the library bring to research support that no one else can?
- How can you solve the problems of your research community?
- How can you help your library stand out?



SHOUT ABOUT IT!

- Tell your research community
- Tell your colleagues around the institution
- Tell those at other libraries
- Tell everyone!



HORIZON SCAN

- Keep up to date with the latest changes
- What are the likely factors influencing your services and your users?
- How can you address these?



RESPOND TO CHANGE



Research support is a fast moving area

= can be hard to plan

Many external influences

Adapt your strategy over time

BE AGILE!



QUESTIONS

Thanks for listening

You can find me at:
ces43@cam.ac.uk
[@ces43](#)

