

# Helping a Regional University Promote Its Wealth of Research Output to the World



An interview with Margaret Pembroke, Library Systems and Copyright Librarian,  
Southern Cross University

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### **About Southern Cross University**

Southern Cross University is a dynamic university with a vibrant and innovative research program that focuses on issues that are both regionally relevant and globally significant. We work closely with industry, the government sectors, and our community to fulfil this program.

The University is home to nine research centres, all with deep connections to the communities they serve and a commitment to research output that has global relevance, be it marine ecology, organic agriculture, plant and geoscience, adolescent development or flood mitigation. Southern Cross has been ranked in the top 100 young universities in the world by the Times Higher Education World University Rankings.

In the 2018 Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) report, Southern Cross University (SCU) was rated as “well above world standard” in 14 research areas. “For a regional university, we punch well above our weight as far as research goes,” declares Margaret Pembroke of the Southern Cross University Library. “Even though we are a regional university, we collaborate with international organisations such as UNICEF, and our research into climate change, forestry, geoscience and plant science benefits the entire Asia Pacific region. I want to be able to show that and share it with the rest of the world.” To accomplish that, the Southern Cross University Library and Office of Research are looking to automate their highly manual processes with Esploro, the Ex Libris research services solution.

As Pembroke explains, while the Library functions as the repository for the research papers generated within Southern Cross, the Office of Research is responsible for the government reporting to ERA and maintains the research management system. “This leads to duplication of effort and we are always seeking to streamline and look for efficiencies,” she says. “We want to move away from manual processes and lots of spreadsheets and make the process of reporting so much simpler.”

Esploro will not only search the discovery indexes and external sources to capture the University’s research output, but also automatically populate the item record with the available metadata. “When we did a demonstration for stakeholders, showed entering the DOI, and then all the metadata automatically populated, there were some very excited faces in the room,” recalls Pembroke. “We’re hoping to take the manual labor out of the process and save the researcher’s time, save the Library’s time, and save the Office of Research’s time. Then, share a clean, accurate data set with everything they need for ERA or any other reporting, however often they would like it, so we can ensure we have as complete a picture of our research outputs as possible.”

Esploro will also link the published research with any supporting data sets to facilitate making the entire body of work publicly available — another government requirement for publicly-funded research. “With our current system, there’s no linking the publication with other assets that are associated with it,” Pembroke says. “Esploro is going to give us a much richer picture of the progress of the entire project, and a much more connected view of what the research assets represent.” Another aspect of automation enabled by Esploro is

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generating researcher profiles. "We have roughly 800 researchers, and only about 350 of them have profiles," states Pembroke. "If someone comes to us to ask for a profile, they send us their bibliography and, hopefully, there are items that we already have in the repository. Sometimes there are not. A new researcher might have 300 publications that have to be entered manually. It's very, very labor intensive. It can take weeks. With Esploro, we're going to be able to automatically give a researcher a profile, do a search and harvest automatically. That's going to be magic."

In addition, some of the researchers maintain profile pages on sites outside of the University, such as disciplinary-specific sites. "I can't wait to give them a feed based on their School, their research, or themselves as a researcher, and embed that on their page. Easy. Not realising it's all happening automatically, they'll be saying 'The Library is wonderful. I only just published that and there it is.' That will really position the Library as actively supporting research."

Measuring engagement and impact with published research is becoming increasingly important for

government funding, and for the researchers themselves. Furnishing altmetrics is another way Esploro will help the Library. "We have a team of librarians who each have a School or a research centre to look after. Often, they are asked to put together an impact profile, which the academic will use in their promotion portfolio. If the metrics that are on Esploro can be used for documenting impact that will be another huge time saving for us."

The efficiencies gained through Esploro contribute to a much larger goal, as Pembroke explains. "We try to paint as comprehensive a picture of each of our centres and Schools as we can. With Esploro, we will be harvesting from the whole of the internet to paint that picture. It will encompass all Southern Cross University research, and the connectedness our research centres and researchers have with collaborations across the world."

"For years, I've been looking for a system that did everything I wanted. The ability to create different levels of profiles. To harvest information about your School and your research from anywhere, and share it. When I saw the first demonstration for Esploro, I was incredibly excited. This is how it should be. Yeah, I'm pretty excited about it."



### **About Ex Libris**

Ex Libris, a ProQuest company, is a leading global provider of cloud-based solutions that enable institutions and their users to create, manage, and share knowledge. In close collaboration with its customers and the broader community, Ex Libris develops solutions that increase library productivity, maximize the impact of research activities, enhance teaching and learning, and drive student mobile engagement. Ex Libris serves over 7,500 customers in 90 countries. For more information, see our [website](#) and join us on [LinkedIn](#), [YouTube](#), [Facebook](#), and [Twitter](#).

