

THE WORKING GROUP ON SCIENCE PUBLISHING

An overview, 2005–2006

A REPORT on the Group activities, up to January 2006, was presented in EUROSCIENCE News 34 (April 2006). The Group work continued on the same lines, preparation of ESOF2006, study, through its discussion list, of issues in publishing and, for French members, continued action towards members of French Parliament to improve the copyright law draft. The following lines are taken from the Group page on the EUROSCIENCE website and update it.

1 A symposium "Open Access -threat or blessing?" took place in Munich on 16 July within ESOF2006, as a round table discussion. It was centred on "Open Archives", moderated by Stevan Harnad (University of Southampton and Université du Québec). Panellists were: Eloy Rodriguez: (University of Minho, Portugal), Alma Swan (Key perspectives LTD, United

Kingdom) and Eberhard Hilf (Institute for Science Networking Oldenburg, Germany). The programme was designed towards the base researchers, to make them aware of the benefits to be drawn from self archiving their articles on dedicated public servers (Open Archives), following the example set, some 10 years ago, by ArXiv, the widely popular and successful repository for physics. The programme can be accessed on the ESOF 2006 web site (<http://www.esof2006.org/programme2.php4>). A more detailed account is presented below.

2 In March 2006, the European Commission published a Study on "The Economic and Technical Evolution of the Scientific Publication Markets in Europe". (http://ec.europa.eu/research/science-society/pdf/scientific-publication-study_en.pdf)

PUBLISH OR PERISH

As Science is mere structured common sense, her means but trial-and-error made intense, the only virtue setting her apart, and raising her above (some think) mere Art, Is her convergence ever on consensus: collective, self-corrective her defenses. A flagellant, she boldly does defy Reality her schemes to falsify.

And yet this noble jousting were in vain, and all this pain would yield no grain of gain if Science were content, a shrinking violet, her works from all the world 'ere to keep private. Instead, performance public and artistic, restraining all propensities autistic, perhaps less out of error-making dread, than banal need to earn her daily bread. For showbiz being what it is today, work's not enough, you've got to make it pay. What ratings, sweeps and polls count for our actors, no less than our elected benefactors, for Science the commensurate equation s not just publication but citation. The more your work is accessed, read and used, the higher then is reckoned its just dues. Sounds crass, but there may be some consolation, where there's still some residual motivation to make a difference, not just make a fee: the World Wide Web at last can make Science free.

Stevan Harnad

The verses have been wittily illustrated in a series of cartoons by Judith Economos.

The EC solicited comments on its recommendations. Our working group focussed on EC recommendation A1: "Guarantee public access to publicly-funded research results shortly after publication", focussed on Open Archives.

Through exchanges within the discussion list, several specific suggestions were drafted for sharpening and strengthening recommendation A1 so as to maximise its likelihood of being adopted and achieving its objectives. Our report received the support of EUROSCIENCE president Jean-Patrick Connerade and was submitted to the EC on behalf of EUROSCIENCE. (http://www.euro-science.org/WGROUPS/SC_PUBLISHING/euro_rec_final_210506.pdf)



De ses trouvailles le monde de priver

Her works from all the World e'er to keep private

3 In France, the subject of intellectual property and copyright was in the forefront of actuality, because of the debates in the National Assembly (December 2005 through March 2006) and in the Senate (May-June 2006) of a new law, as reported in ES News 34. The text voted by the National Assembly refused the "education and research exceptions" to allow copying (downloading or photocopy), even though they were included in the 2001 EU directive which the new law should transpose in national laws. We continued our action towards legislators, in tune with other organisations (Associations of librarians, Conference of University Presidents) to have these



Au d'là d'être publié c'est d'être cité:

Is not just Publication but Citation

exceptions written in the law. P. Baruch, F. Laloë and F. Praderie met Senator J. Valade, Chairman of the Senate Commission for Cultural Affairs, and presented him the specific needs of research. The meeting was fruitful, our arguments for allowing these exceptions for scientific purposes were well received. Senator Valade, a chemist and former Minister of research knew already of this issue and assured us that he would support the scientists views. Indeed, an amendment in this direction, although somewhat restrictive, was voted by the Senate. A joint commission met to smoothen discrepancies between the two assemblies and accepted the exceptions (June 2006). The amended bill was finally voted by Parliament in June 2006, after being screened by the "Conseil Constitutionnel", which rejected some articles, especially about the scale of penalties for illegal downloading, reverting to the current, very repressive, legislation,

The discussions, both in the Parliament and in the medias, were dominated by the problems relevant to reproduction of audiovisual (mostly musical) works; other issues, such as education, research, open-source



Une Science enfin en-ligne libérée

The world wide web at last can make Science free

software were not in the forefront. The new law is too much restrictive in many fields, has obscurities and does not respond fully to the expectations. Still, many obstacles are avoided, but the law in its

present form will be difficult to enforce and will certainly need some revision. Apparently, no other organisation led the fight to defend the interests of science in these debates. We feel that

EUROSCIENCE played here its statutory role of representing the "voice of researchers in Europe".

A personal viewpoint, written by Pierre Baruch for Eberhard Hilf's blog, can be accessed at

<http://www.isn-oldenburg.de/~hilf/vortraege/baruch-frenchrights-2006.pdf>

Pierre Baruch
pierre.baruch@wanadoo.fr

OPEN ACCESS – THREAT OR BLESSING?

Round table ESOF2006, Munich, July 16th 2006–09–16 A report

THE OPEN ACCESS (OA) era is approaching rapidly. The European Commission, the national research funders of the UK, Germany and the US, and the national research institutes of France have proposed or already adopted an official policy of providing OA to all scientific publications on the Web.

The ESOF2006 symposium convened European scientists and the general public to inform them about these developments. International specialists described the various aspects of OA.

The panellists were introduced by Hélène Bosc of INRA (ret.), pioneer of OA in France, coordinator of the EUROSCIENCE Work Group on Science Publishing and organiser of the event.

The chairman, Stevan Harnad (Canada Research Chair, University of Quebec in Montreal, harnad@ecs.soton.ac.uk), summarised current OA developments: Universities, research institutions and research funding agencies are creating Institutional Repositories (IRs) as well as adopting policies of mandatory deposit (self-archiving) therein of all research articles immediately upon acceptance for publication. He summarised the reason why OA is optimal for sciences: the converging evidence that OA significantly enhances the

research impact of self-archived publications, compared to those that are not self-archived. He also touched on the subject of metrics – the indicators of scientific progress and performance such as download and citation counts, which OA increases at the same time as allowing them to be measured systematically.

Eloy Rodriguez, (U. Minho, Portugal, eloy@sdum.uminho.pt) described the pioneering and successful system that he established at his university, which facilitated the launching of its IR with a mandatory self-archiving policy coupled with incentives: a small initial financial reward for each article deposited as well as displayed statistics on its rate of use (earlier downloads are correlated with later citations). Two years after launching an IR with such a policy, the financial incentive is no longer necessary, because it becomes the increased scientific impact which motivates the researchers to self-archive.

Eberhard Hilf, (Institute for Science Networking GmbH, Carl von Ossietzky Universität, Oldenburg, Germany, hilf@isn-oldenburg.de) underscored the need for official self-archiving policies. He described the policy of Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG) and the official refereed certification scheme for institutional repositories offered

by Deutsche Initiative für Netzwerkinformation (DINI). He then described the benefits conferred by harvesting, search tools, and links to geographical information, as applied to the enhancement of PhysDoc, a retrieval system for Physics distributed documents across local research group websites and personal publication lists.

Alma Swan (Key Perspectives Ltd, Topsham, UK, aswan@key-perspectives.co.uk) summarized the results of her international surveys which have been so influential in the progress of OA: The surveys revealed that researchers do not self-archive spontaneously (c. 15%) but 95% will self-archive if and when their university or their funder adopts an official mandate to self-archive. The growing number of research institutes that have already adopted a mandatory self-archiving policy (such as CERN, U. Minho, U. Southampton, Queensland U. Technology, U. Tasmania) confirm the results of the surveys, with rates of self-archiving rapidly approaching 90% and higher. Dr. Swan also described her published analyses indicating that distributed local/institutional self-archiving – with all researchers depositing in their own IRs – is the optimal system for self-archiving, rather than depositing directly in a central repository: Then central collections can be harvested from the contents of the OAI-compliant network of distributed IRs.

The general discussion concentrated on policy implementation details, on legal questions (mostly not relevant, because 94% of peer-reviewed journals already endorse immediate self-archiving), and on questions about the future of scientific publication: all evidence to date indicates peaceful and

complementary coexistence between scientific publication and OA. In the OA era, "Publish or Perish" becomes "Self-Archive to Flourish" (Stevan Harnad). Eberhard R. Hilf has collated the presentations and produced an excellent summary of the event which can be found at <http://www.isn-oldenburg.de/~hilf/vortraege/esof06/> with links to the individual contributions.

Conclusions by the organiser
The round table attracted some 60 people, among them researchers, librarians, journalists, publishers (2) and two (or more!) delegates from the European Commission and FP6 committees.

Apparently, this facet of "Open Access" through self archiving is of much interest to the EC. Members of the Round Table are now getting many inquiries and requests for reports on this subject. They may be called upon to serve as specialists with future European projects.

This event had the merit of demonstrating to all, and primarily to policy makers, that Open Access through self archiving is not a threat for research, but, on the contrary, increases its impact. With so many important issues at stake, Europe will undoubtedly help in the development of projects, originating from Europe as well as elsewhere in the world.

A pleasant side effect was the award to our chairman, Stevan Harnad, of the ESOF2006 poetry prize (sponsored by the Andrea von Braun Stiftung) for his poem "Publish or Perish".

Hélène Bosc
Convenor of the Work Group
hbosc@tours.inra.fr