

# Report of the ORA Seminar

## Priorities for MPLS, Social Sciences and Humanities

8<sup>th</sup> April 2008

Summary of reported topics discussed by each speaker:

- Mr. Richard Ovenden: Reasons for creating ORA at Oxford – open access movement – benefits of ORA to Oxford and to individuals.
- Dr. Eric Meyer: Reasons for using ORA – an existing and centrally supported system – publications in a single location – scholarly communication and dissemination – ORA for multidisciplinary work and for leveraging new technologies – tensions including deposit in ORA
- Dr. Antony Eagle: argues the ethical case for adding research to ORA – archival function of ORA – the case for open access
- Dr Glenn Swafford: research income of Oxford – research funders' requirements – universities should be able to report research output
- Sally Rumsey and Ben O'Steen: ORA in context – new features of the service

### **Mr. Richard Ovenden (Keeper of Special Collections, Associate Director OULS)**

The seminar was introduced and chaired by Mr. Richard Ovenden, OULS Keeper of Special Collections (Associate Director). He explained how the ELISO<sup>1</sup> project had been the starting point for a repository for research materials for Oxford and had prompted the appointment of staff to undertake this task. One early driver of such repositories was the open access (OA) movement, influenced by the rise of electronic publishing and publishers' regimes to charge significant subscriptions to journal content. These 'big deals' proved increasingly expensive for institutions to finance subscriptions to them. In the US and Europe subject based repositories began to appear, the most famous of which is the physics repository, ArXiv. These early repositories became very successful and the OA movement began to mature. Additionally, funding bodies such as the Wellcome Trust began to mandate deposit of research that they have funded and so we have seen the rise of services such as PubMedCentral and BioMedCentral.

Universities began to see the possibilities of managing and disseminating research produced by their own academics. This includes not just pre-prints but also theses, research data and so on. The JISC (Joint Information Systems Committee) has provided substantial funding over last 3 years to enable universities to build the capacity to provide repositories for themselves. All members of the Russell group of universities now have (or are developing) their own repository. Southampton and UCL and to some extent Harvard now mandate deposit of research into their own repositories

The Oxford repository for research materials, ORA (Oxford University Research Archive) will be moving from a project to production service later this year. The ORA Steering Group is chaired by Ken Fleming and members include other senior Oxford staff. ORA adds visibility to research materials and enables the sharing of research materials at different stages of the research cycle. It allows faculty to showcase research as a body of materials, not just as individual items and it provides the infrastructure for preservation of materials. Such services would be costly for individuals so central provision is important. Also ORA provides the technical structure for linking to other repositories at a scale difficult for an individual and the infrastructure to satisfy funding bodies' requirements for access to research materials.

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<sup>1</sup>Electronic Library and Information Service for the University of Oxford see <http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/users/millsr/committee/041117/eliso.pdf>

## **Dr. Eric Meyer (Oxford Internet Institute, OII)**

The OII had been casting about for a repository for its research materials and to make research more visible. Such a repository was seen as a way to highlight the presence of OII research: people looking for OII papers were having to go to the OII website and hunt around. Whilst the Institute was considering using an eprints solution, ORA came along and offered a means of providing the technical development which OII did not want to undertake locally. The Institute wants to be an early adopter of ORA. A couple of projects will be used as very early adopters and these include the OII e-social science project.

Dr Meyer explained that as a new arrival in the OII he wanted to read papers produced by members of the Institute. This proved more difficult than he had anticipated. The OII is therefore now committed to collecting and putting its research materials into ORA. Such materials might include those produced by research students. Up until now there has been no single place to look for what the e-Social Science project has done in last few years. This ability to hold research output all in one location is a very attractive feature of ORA.

One of the main reasons the OII wants to use ORA is for the purpose of scholarly communication. Dr Meyer introduced the idea of a 'guild publishing model.' This is similar to the ancient guilds where a guarantee of quality is assured by limiting membership. This can already be seen at Oxford, where the very fact that an academic is a member of staff here gives an immediate expectation of high quality based on Oxford's reputation. ORA could be used for say a working paper series produced by academics, but equally for materials produced by DPhil students or junior faculty.

Dr Meyer believes that OA is good for one's scholarly career: having research available in such a way on the web is good for increasing access to it. Items can be picked up by services such as Google Scholar. In comparison, Web of Science doesn't index websites, but Google Scholar does. Provision of items on the web means they become more visible, and are therefore more likely to be found and cited. The open access physics repository, ArXiv, has proved to be very successful although it basically reinforced and made easier an existing behaviour of sharing papers. Such a cultural shift might present a challenge for disciplines not already using this model of sharing research. Discipline differences need to be taken into consideration.

There is an increasing prevalence of teams conducting research across all disciplines. In the sciences, output across disciplines is being made available on the web forming an e-scholarly publication layer. One fast moving development is the introduction of open lab notebooks and blogs of research results. An interesting example of an open access journal, JOVE (Journal Of Visualised Experience) is publishing in ways that are not possible in print. Services such as MyExperiment are enabling the sharing of workflows. Repositories such as ORA help leverage the advantages of these services. In the past Oxford has lagged behind in getting materials 'out there,' however being late developers means we can learn from the mistakes of others.

The OII views ORA as a means to solving problems. For example, it provides a 'one stop shop' for research materials; it is a means of organising research papers; conference papers such as those expected for an OII conference in September can be included, a feature which is attractive to conference organisers and speakers. Without the use of ORA, individual researchers have papers strewn about everywhere: ORA enables ones' work to be located in one spot.

However, some tensions such as IPR and different versions exist. There are tensions between academics and publishers. Scholars are currently giving away their work. It is not such a huge leap to give it away in different ways.

There is a certain tension about being academics being organised enough to add to their papers to ORA. This will only be tackled if researchers are regular users of ORA because they find it of value. A real danger is not to reach a critical mass of content in ORA. Without this, no-one will use it as a means of finding Oxford papers. As well as being a large enough resource, it must be indexed by Google Scholar etc to make the content findable. The OII will monitor this and wants to improve the discovery and access to its materials by using ORA.

### **Dr. Antony Eagle (Philosophy)**

Dr Eagle's motivations for adding work to ORA are to maximise the visibility and accessibility of his work. In addition to the well-rehearsed practical reasons, he spoke about the ethical obligation for using ORA. He suggested that philosophers are more closely aligned to scientists in the way they work, than they are to other humanities subject areas. Those working in disciplines such as the philosophy of science, physics and maths tend to have more contact with scientists, physicists and mathematicians. The Philosophy of Science Archive is a popular first choice for deposit of papers although is it narrowly subject specific.

Dr Eagle used to use his personal web space for access to his work, but space was becoming a problem. Increasingly funding bodies require public accessibility of work which they fund. Open access boosts citation rates and like others and he is not averse to this idea.

Past philosophical works remain relevant and so the archival aspect of ORA may appeal to philosophers more than to other disciplines. ORA provides a stable place to archive and access work. Philosophers thrive on debate, which requires access to other academics' work, so it is preferable not to put barriers in the way of access to materials.

Authors *can* make materials available in an archive although some humanities researchers are sceptical. Dr Eagle argued that responsibility for research falls to researchers, not publishers and therefore he should be able to make his work available in any way he wants. This is part of the argument for the ethics of open access: researchers should have the right to do as they wish with their research. Simply funding a piece of research does not entitle the funder to ownership of it.

The question is *should* the researcher make their work available in such a way? Dr Eagle argued that doing this for tax payers or funding bodies are bad reasons. Neither position gives those groups entitlement to own research. The public and other groups shouldn't be deluged with minute details of research. One point of caution is that of reflexivity where making research available to people who are subjects of that research may alter their behaviour: this can undermine research. Of course people who pay should have access to research publications. So should academics add research to ORA for the rest of the research community? Most in the community has access anyway even if there are payment problems. But it is 'nice' to give access to developing countries and universities who don't already have it. It is 'nice' but only that: it is altruistic above and beyond what's required by duty. A better argument is needed because it is only people who are 'nice' that will do this.

One consideration that should move people is 'why share knowledge at all?' Sharing knowledge avoids duplication of effort. People act in a way influenced by what they know, so having knowledge has value. Some people share, some don't and can be described as free-riders. The existence of free-riders will cause some more altruistic people to give up. The optimal stable solution is sharing when all can reap the benefits. Why researchers publish at all is to push back the boundaries of knowledge more quickly. There is nothing to say authors should only publish in journals behind payment walls. There is an urge to publish, so items should be put in ORA. Quality can be assured: most items in ORA have been peer reviewed, and also academics go through a selection process before being employed by the University of Oxford giving an indication of quality. Dr Eagle supported a mandate for open access. Some distinguished journals that are high impact are already open access. The more that

open access becomes available the more it looks like a viable model. The familiar people become with open access, the more they will trust and download items from an archive.

### **Dr. Glenn Swafford (Director of Research Services)**

Dr. Swafford gave details of the size of public investment in HE in the UK and the breakdown of Oxford's research income which comes mainly from government and from the charitable sector.

Policy agencies and research funders are not keen to engage in the problems with open access (e.g. copyright). They state their requirements and policies in their Terms & Conditions and leave the researchers and their institutions to deal with the rest.

How Oxford preserves and makes its research available is up to us for example, the choice between subject and institutional repositories. Immediate deposit of research data and output is desirable. Even if the full text can't be made available (for copyright reasons), there would be a single reference point or list of an academic's work.

Resources such as SHERPA/Juliet help us to understand the requirements and the situation and Dr. Swafford commended it to the audience.

It should be noted that some departments initially collected up to 34 different publication types at Oxford for the last RAE so the issue is not confined to one of making available journal articles.

When considering access to research data and research records one question is where should *research data* reside? There are a number of people concerned and this is becoming more of an issue. Also the question of how long primary research data should be kept.

Universities are not in a position to complain about how to comply with requirements for REF. There is a reasonable expectation by HEFCE that a university should have a list of its own publications, and that in order to be credible, academics should be able to find and record their research publications. The REF as currently proposed will use numbers of citations as a metric and repositories are of benefit in this process. Oxford should define how its data and publications should be managed: soundings about policy and direction are currently underway.

The EPSRC is now the only UKRC research council without a policy on access to research materials. Oxford was sent a survey from EPSRC on this topic before Easter, but with a very short deadline. The university responded by strongly recommending consultation with the community.

A further indication of how important public access to research at universities is regarded comes from the draft supplementary guidance for consultation on 'Public Benefit and the Advancement of Education' under the Charities Act 2006. It is suggested that "research is only charitable if its useful results are made available to the public ... what is important is that it is published and placed in the public domain so that everyone who is capable of understanding it has access to it, and its benefits or usefulness are available to everyone." If the draft Guidance were enacted, the charitable status of universities could be questioned unless such an access regime applied.

Immediate deposit and optional access: HEFCE will expect us to deposit data and outputs immediately. Open access however could be optional for example if there is not a means to make final version available. The researcher should be able to show in the repository that the research was produced. In an ideal world Dr Swafford would like to see a complete listing of published outputs in all their forms. We can then work through copyright issues so that a larger proportion can be made available.

One important question is how to link to and from discipline repositories. How we make ORA useful in both the political and research senses. We need to understand what this open access movement is all about then listen to what we're being told and influence what we can and should do.

### **Sally Rumsey (ORA Service & Development Manager)**

Sally gave an outline of the context of ORA, examples of similar repositories at Cambridge, LSE and Imperial College and the news of the Harvard Faculty of Arts and Sciences policy to retain copyright and make Harvard articles freely available via their repository. She covered the benefits of ORA for the different groups of users and demonstrated a selection of items using the new ORA interface (due to be released in the next week or so). These included:

- A journal article showing the reference and persistent link
- A collection page with an added logo (Young Lives project)
- A conference with its papers listed and linked
- A book with navigation using chapters and showing the use of thumbnails for the images of the pages
- A book where each page is accessible from the book home page

### **Ben O'Steen (ORA Software Developer)**

Ben demonstrated some of the features that have been built into the new ORA interface. These included:

- Use of UUIDs (Universal Unique Identifiers) which should aid discovery and identification of ORA items on the web for the long-term future.
- Faceted search and browse for improved search.
- 'Ping-backs' to record citation of ORA items on the web. This currently is automatically available in some blogs and content management systems. The citation is 'pinged' back to ORA and the citation recorded on the item.

### **Questions**

A concern was raised about the use of UUIDs for items in ORA and how their use might result in a dual identifier system with DOIs. Ben explained that, although widely used by publishers, DOIs use a commercial system and so there is no guarantee of longevity<sup>2</sup> (ie it will last as long as it is commercially viable) and is reliant on publishers. This dual system certainly causes us some concern at ORA, but we want to use a system that is as 'future-proof' as possible. ORA already records DOIs (where assigned).

There was a request for the ability to make some items available for Oxford-only access. We can investigate this service and how it might be used.

The problem of authors wishing to deposit items in subject repositories instead of, or as well as, ORA was raised. This is a known difficulty and we will be attempting to find ways to resolve that problem. The situation is affected by author preferences, funder requirements, longevity of external services and digital preservation.

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<sup>2</sup> By coincidence, there have been reports on the JISC repositories mailing list of the problem of 'dead' DOI links since the ORA seminar. One problem is when publishers buy-out other publishers and re-direct URLs.