



# Open Access Paper for the Information Futures Commission

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A PAPER FROM INFORMATION SERVICES

1. *The goal of open access is to grant anyone, anywhere and anytime, free access to the results of research and scholarship.*

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Academic libraries have a growing role in managing the scholarly output of their institutions. This role has gained in strength partly because of the growth of the open access movement. This movement has 5 strands which IS needs to consider and which are detailed below:

1. Institutional and disciplinary repositories of research output
2. Open access journals
3. Open access monographs
4. Open research data
5. Open courseware



## DISCUSSION ELABORATION

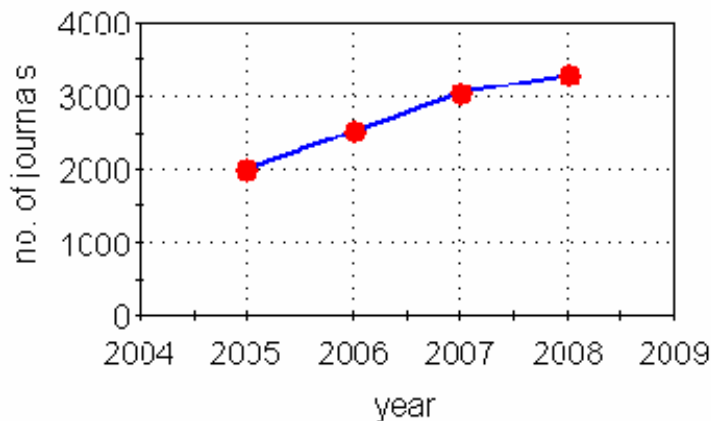
### Institutional and disciplinary repositories of research output

This paper will not discuss institutional or disciplinary repositories, as these are dealt with in the accompanying paper, *Repositories*.

### Open access journals

Open access journal numbers have grown, particularly over the past 2 years. More and more titles are being born as open access journals; many are changing from subscription based to open access, and many publishers, initially reluctant, are offering hybrid open access, where the author can choose to make the article available immediately after acceptance through payment of an author fee. Other publishers are providing a diluted form of open access by making materials available free after a defined period of subscription based access.

**Figure 1: Growth of Open Access – Directory of Open Access Journal (DOAJ) Statistics**



2005 = 1988 journals  
2006 = 2514 journals  
2007 = 3031 journals  
April 2008 = 3300 journals

Increase by approx. 500 titles per year  
26% growth last year  
(Source: Directory of Open Access Journals, <<http://www.doaj.org>>)

Universities can support open access journals in a variety of ways:

- Develop/publish OA Journals
- Fund OA Journals
- Publicise OA Journals

#### Develop/publish

This paper will not discuss this aspect, which is dealt with in the accompanying paper, *EPublishing*.



## Fund

While the majority of open access journals charge no publication fee, there are a significant number which do fund their publications through an article processing charge. These include solely open access publishers and those publishing subscription based titles who realise the need to offer open access as an author choice. Some open access publishers also offer the option of an institutional membership fee, which enables authors at the member institution to obtain a discount on the article processing charge. Examples are BioMed Central and Public Library of Science.

It has become common for research funding bodies such as the Australian Research Council (ARC) and the National Health and Medical Research Council (NH&MRC) to request that publications resulting from a grant should be made available on open access as soon as practicable. For authors to whom such grants are not accessible, many universities are establishing funds for authors to draw upon to pay article processing charges, e.g. University of Nottingham.

The University Library needs to do more to encourage University of Melbourne academics to publish in open access venues. Providing an institutional repository and an open access journal publishing platform helps, as will provision of funds to support payment of article processing charges. However, a concerted campaign would be helpful, supported by a scholarly communications website, linking to Creative Commons for author licensing options. The use of Creative Commons is an easy, effective way to express consent to open access (<<http://creativecommons.org>>). Romeo/Sherpa and OAKLaw provide access to publisher policies on copyright and open access options, and advice on issues of concern, for example. Many university libraries are already doing this (see <<http://www.library.cornell.edu/scholarlycomm>> for example), as are consortia such as the Association of Research Libraries, <<http://www.arl.org/sc/institute/index.shtml>>.

The Australian Government has expressed support in other ways than ARC and NH&MRC policies. For example, Kim Carr in an address to the Australian National University Senior Staff Forum on 7 February 2008, stated:

*We want the research conducted in universities and public research agencies to inspire and inform fresh thinking across the community. The more collaboration and interaction there is between researchers and the society around them, the better. It follows that research and research data should be widely disseminated and readily discoverable. The results of publicly funded research should be publicly available.*

## Publicise

Ensure their availability through the catalogue, federated search tools, and awareness through university newsletters, etc.

## **Open access monographs**

For the formal ePublishing side of this, see the accompanying *EPublishing* paper.

A number of universities and learned societies are making their monographs open access, such as University of California, <<http://www.ucpress.edu/digpub/>> and the American Historical Association, <<http://www.gutenberg-e.org/>>.

The other aspect is providing access to out of copyright books through digitising initiatives, either local, national or international. There are several digitising projects where academic libraries partner with commercial firms to make available online millions of books, those out of copyright



being available in full-text. Google Books and Open Content Alliance are two examples. Should we join any of these – or do we have no unique material to offer?

## Open research data

There are strong international moves towards making appropriate research data available on Open Access. We need to be part of this movement. Note: there will be data which needs to remain behind access barriers, for example patient data.

## Open courseware

Should we also join the movement to provide open courseware? MIT and the UK Open University are two examples of universities which have done this. We lose the possibility to gain revenue from sale of these products, but gain prestige and awareness of our brand by open availability. This may need to be offered on a departmental level, as it will suit some but not others.

## Conclusion

As the OECD remarks in its report, *Giving knowledge for free*, <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/35/7/38654317.pdf>, open access means broader and faster dissemination, with the result that more people are involved in problem-solving, which in turn means rapid quality improvement and faster technical and scientific development. Free sharing of software, scientific results and educational resources reinforces societal development and diminishes social inequality. Open sharing increases publicity, reputation and the pleasure of sharing with peers.

## Document Control

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