

OCUL-IR Open Access Working Group Report

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Overview

Open Access (OA) has repeatedly been identified as a priority by OCUL-IR. Several membership programs that support OA, including DOAJ, PhilPapers, and Bioline are licensed consorcially, and IR representatives share perspectives on OA infrastructure projects (e.g., Knowledge Unlatched, Open Library of the Humanities) on the OCUL-IR list. OCUL libraries license publisher content, while authors pay OA fees (APCs) to these same publishers. Although support for OA typically comes from multiple departments in our libraries, OCUL-IR has a role where consorcial discounts can be negotiated, and where support for specific initiatives draws on funds normally allocated to collections. The OCUL-IR Open Access Working Group (OAWG) was formed at the October 2014 OCUL-IR meeting to gather information about existing activities at member schools and to recommend actions to OCUL-IR. In the summer of 2015, the group surveyed OCUL institutions in order to gain a better understanding of what OCUL libraries are already doing to support OA and to identify members' priorities. This report details the methodology and results of the survey and presents recommendations for OCUL-IR.

Survey Methodology

The survey attempted to capture a more complete picture of OCUL member attitudes and behaviours towards OA including:

- Current support for OA (e.g. memberships, authors' funds)
- Past support for OA and reasons for discontinuing support for these venues
- Future plans for OA support
- Actions that OCUL-IR could take to support OA OCUL-ly and locally

The survey was designed using Google Forms and was tested prior to circulation. It was distributed via the OCUL-IR list on August 7, 2015. Recognizing that OCUL-IR members may not be able to answer all the questions, respondents were invited to involve the other staff involved in scholarly communications at their institution when answering this survey. Periodic reminders were distributed until the survey closed on August 31.

The response rate was good, 16 of 21 OCUL members responded¹. These results, aggregated in Appendix A, will not be formally published but are available to OCUL via this report.

¹ Note that one school answered twice.

Survey Discussion

Summary of OCUL support for different OA models:

OA Memberships

Support for memberships that provide discounts on APCs (Article Processing Charges) is on the wane. Currently 7 of 17 respondents provide OA support through APC memberships, but, in the past, 12 OCUL institutions subscribed to such services. BioMed Central is the most funded membership now, but has also been dropped by the most institutions because they deemed the costs weren't worth the benefits.

OA ventures

Support for OA ventures seems steady. All 15 respondents to this question currently support an OA venture, while only 2 libraries report cancelling an OA venture subscription. DOAJ, an OCUL "deal" is the most popularly supported OA venture.

Author's Funds

Support for Author's Funds is strong but not consistent. Many respondents have or have had an Author's Fund in the past but amounts and criteria vary greatly. Most report that Author's Funds provide good political capital but that they are vulnerable to cancellation when money is tight. In most cases the Authors Funds are administered by the library but there are collaborative approaches with units outside the library and in some cases it is administered by a unit outside of the library. Across respondents, 8 institutions reported having current Author's Funds, and 3 have cancelled their program.

Overall Support for OA at OCUL institutions:

While only 3 of the 17 respondents report that their institution has an OA mandate, only 1 respondent of the 17 believes that their senior management was *not* inclined to support OA. Support for OA at libraries seems particularly strong: 83% of respondents scored library support for OA at 7 out of 10 or higher. While most indicate that the Tri-Council mandate has had an impact on the library in some way with 14 of 17 respondents indicating that OA has gained some support since the mandate and most indicating that the library has taken on some kind of role in assist faculty in complying with the mandate; the role the library plays varies. 11 of the respondents report that the library's role is in maintaining the IR and in providing some kind of specialized, active support such as doing outreach to faculty and offering workshops. Other roles the library plays are responding to faculty questions, hosting OA journals, and providing some kind of information on a web page. Only 1 library reported not playing any role.

General comments:

1. Most of us seem generally unaware of other OA activity at our Universities;
2. Support for OA as a principle seems good but funding for it does not always seem to be;
3. Most institutions seem to look to their libraries to provide some kind of support of the Tri-Council mandate;
4. Most respondents believe that there is a role for OCUL IR

Recommendations to OCUL-IR

Given that the work of each OCUL Library must conform to the priorities of their institution and that OCUL IR must conform to its mandate and the priorities of OCUL,

Given that OCUL-IR is experienced in licensing and price negotiations with many of the same publishers that have OA products,

Given that OCUL-IR is a major stakeholder in the scholarly publishing market,

Given that OCUL-IR is a long-standing player in OA and is continually looking for the most efficient and effective ways to leverage its purchasing power and relationship with vendors,

We recommend that OCUL-IR remain deeply involved in OA activities by:

- finding ways to reach out to other OCUL members and groups (such as the OCUL Publishing Community)
- maintaining OA as a priority within OCUL-IR
- leveraging our existing knowledge and contacts with vendors to further OA activities at our member institutions and within OCUL-IR
- evaluating and assessing OA initiatives (whether infrastructure or other) using our existing expertise and relationship with vendors
- continuing to follow the developments of other consortia around OA

Some specific recommendations for the Projects Officer or for those negotiating OCUL deals are:

- To advocate with publishers/vendors for more information/transparency surrounding OA and especially APCs.
- To negotiate discounts on APCs
- To emphasize the need for APC discounts to be applied automatically. When faculty must self-identify, it results in missed opportunities

Conclusion

What was made clear through this Working Group is the desire for more clarity around APC transactions in which collections librarians have an important role to play. Open Access has been and continues to be a priority for OCUL-IR. The survey revealed a complex state of OA support within OCUL-IR. The strong commitment to OA within OCUL-IR and OCUL schools more broadly indicates a desire to continue to engage with dissemination mechanisms and economics of scholarly output. The situation continues to evolve as new models are tried and new policies are implemented.

Appendix A: OAWG Survey Results

OCUL-IR Survey: Support for OA at OCUL Institutions
August 2015

Section 1: Questions about Subscription Support for OA

1a) Does your library subscribe to any memberships that provide discounts or direct billing on Article Processing Charges (APCs) (e.g. BioMed Central)

Yes - 7 (41%)

NRC Research Press - 3

No - 10 (59%)

Hindawi - 2

1b) If yes, which ones?

Sage Open - 2

BioMed Central - 6

PLOS - 2

Springer Open - 2

Frontiers - 1

Royal Society of Chemistry - 2

PeerJ - 1

1c) Has your library paid for any APC memberships in the past?

Yes - 12

No - 5

1d) If yes, which ones did you pay for in the past and why did you cancel?

BMC - 8 - costs weren't worth it

PLOS - 1 - PLOS replaced discount membership with direct billing which wasn't palatable

Frontiers, Elsevier (pure OA only),

MDPI - 1

1e) Do any other departments/units/faculties at your institution also support APCs by purchasing memberships?

Yes - 2

No - 6

I don't know - 9

Comments:

who should pay? and what should we be paying for?

2x we don't know of any other support on campus

2a) Does your library support any OA ventures?

15 yes (all respondents)

2b) If yes, which?

DOAJ - 13

Philpapers

OJS - 9

arXiv

Open Library of the Humanities - 8

bioline

Knowledge Unlatched - 5

Dataverse

IR - 2

2c) Has your library cancelled any OA venture in the past?

yes - 2

no - 10

I don't know - 2

no response - 1

2d) If yes, which?

One response - OA author fund suspended

2e) Do any other departments/units/faculties at your institution support OA ventures through subscription?

yes - 1

no - 7

I don't know - 7

2f) Comments?

Section 2: Questions about Author's Funds

3a) Does your institution/library support OA through an author's fund?

Through the Library – 5

Through the Institution – 3

No – 6

I don't know – 1

Other - few requests; Library & Institution

3b) Is your Institution/library thinking about setting up an Author's Fund?

Yes – 3

No – 7

Other: Reinstating

3c) Did your institution/library have a fund and cancel the program?

Yes – 3

No – 13

Other: We have supported a couple of requests but never had a regular program.

Comments:

3d) If you have a fund, when did you start the fund?

2013

2012

Feb 2014

2013

2012

Pilot 2014-15

2012

3e) If you have a fund, who administers the Author's Fund?

AUL Collections, Electronic Resources Librarian, Scholarly Resources Manager

Librarians

Scholarly Communications and Copyright Office

The Scholarly Communications Librarian

Digital Initiatives Librarian

Research Office

Jointly by Library and Office of Research, International through Scholarly Communications Committee

Library

Jointly administered by Library and the University Research office

Senate Research Committee

3f) If you have a fund, how much money do you set aside to pay Author's fees.

\$5,000-\$10,000 – 2

\$10,001-\$25,000 – 3

\$25,001-\$50,000 – 2

\$50,001-\$100,000 – 2

\$100,000+ - 1

3g) Has the fund increased or decreased in size since it started?

Increased – 3

Same – 3

Decreased – 1

Library contribution is consistent but partner contributions are more irregular

Note there were 3 no's , one of which I could figure out was the same but not sure about the other two.

3h) What criteria have you included in deciding who gets money? (check all that apply)

Must be a fully OA journal (no hybrids) - 9

Must be under a certain \$\$ - 7

Authors can only apply a limited number of times - 7

Preference for authors without other funding- 8

Preference for early career researchers - 2

Preference for graduate students - 1

Other

Author must be first or corresponding – 2

Yearly cap on costs – 2

One grant/author

Author's must retain copyright

Must acknowledge grant in article

Must provide copy to IR

One application/ article

Article published in last 2 years

Acknowledgement of affiliation

3e) Do you consider the fund a success?

Yes – 6

Both – 3

I don't know - 1

Comments

Section 3: Questions about your institution's OA attitude

4a) Does your school have an OA mandate that requires deposit of articles in your Institutional Repository?

Yes - 3

No - 14

4b) Is it your impression that your library is inclined to support OA either through an author's fund or by subscribing to APC memberships or participating in other OA ventures?

I don't know - 2

Yes - memberships - 3

Yes - infrastructure - 7

Yes - combination - 9

Yes - authors funds - 2

4c) Do any departments or faculties in your school have an OA mandate for article deposit or are more inclined to support OA initiatives?

6 - positive responses:

4d) If yes, please name the departments

Physics - 2

the Library - 2

One mention of each of the following:

Chemistry, Psychology, Business, Enviro Studies, Human Kinetics, Math, Computer Science, and "other" sciences.

4e) Is it your impression that your institution's senior management is inclined to support OA?

Yes - 12

No - 1

I don't know - 4

4f) Where does your library rate the importance of supporting OA?

rating of 5 - 1

rating of 6 - 1

rating of 7 - 3

rating of 8 - 5

rating of 9 - 5

rating of 10 - 1

4g) Has support for OA gained importance since the Tri-Council mandate? within the library? within the institution? from faculty?

Characterized as fitting into one of the following 5 categories:

Enthusiastic Yes - 7

Cautious Yes - 3

Getting there - 4

Not Yet - 1

There is resistance - 1

4h) What if any is your library's role in assisting faculty in complying with the Tri-Council mandate?

Characterized as fitting into one of the following 5 categories:

IR - 11

active specialized support (outreach, workshops, visiting faculty etc..) - 11

passive specialized support (webpages, when asked) - 10

host OA journals - 2 (I suspect many forgot that they do this)

Not one thing - 1

Section 4: Questions about what OCUL IR can do to help

5a) What would make supporting OA more attractive

negotiate with publishers for discounts on APCs - 11

work towards automated discounts versus having to self-identify - 13

availability of additional accounting information (e.g. how many APCs your researchers have paid) -16

Comments:

Publishers should be able to identify authors institutions and report back to us easily

More equitable funding model for OA rather than subscriptions; make Gold OA stats more available and transparent; extend grant funding to cover publication that occurs after the term of the grant;

5b) Please list anything else that might make it more worthwhile for the library to support OA subscriptions/memberships

more transparency with respect to validity, credentials of OA organization i.e. almost a ranking system

less aggressive marketing e.g. Bio Med Central is now owned by Springer - is this truly OA?

Faculty pressure on us to do so. Memberships aren't really the way we might want to go though; I'd like to see more mega-journals.

Section 5: Comments

6) Please add any other comments that you may have about Open Access and OCUL-IRs role.

OCUL-IR is on the right track by offering opportunities to support infrastructure.

Responding Schools (voluntary question)

Brock	Toronto
Carleton	Trent
Lakehead	UOIT
Laurentian	Waterloo
McMaster	Western
Ottawa	Windsor
Queen's	WLU
Ryerson	York

Appendix B: OCUL IR Survey: Support for OA at OCUL Institutions

This survey is intended to capture OCUL-IR thoughts on Open Access, though we strongly encourage you to consult with your Scholarly Communications Librarian.

These results will not be published but aggregated results will be presented to OCUL.

The survey is divided into 5 sections:

1. Questions about subscription support for OA;
2. Questions about an Author's Fund;
3. Questions about your institutions OA attitude;
4. Questions about what OCUL IR can do to help;
5. Comments 0) Please identify your school (optional).

Section 1: Questions about Subscription Support for OA

1a) Does your library subscribe to any memberships that provide discounts or direct billing on Article Processing Charges (APCs) (e.g. BioMed Central)

Yes

No

I don't know

1b) If yes, which ones?

Springer Open

Hindawi

BioMed Central

PLOS

Frontier

Peer J

Sage Open

Cogent OA

Other:

1c) Has your library paid for any APC memberships in the past?

Yes

No

I don't know

1d) If yes, which ones did you pay for in the past and why did you cancel?

1e) Do any other departments/units/faculties at your institution also support APCs by purchasing memberships?

Yes

No

I don't know

Comments on any of the above:

2a) Does your library support any OA ventures (such as DOAJ and OJS)

Yes

No

I don't know

2b) If yes, which ones?

DOAJ

OJS

Open Library of the Humanities

Knowledge Unlatched

Other:

Additional Comments:

2c) Has your library cancelled any OA venture in the past?

Yes

No
I don't know

2d) If yes, which ones and why did you cancel?

2e) Do any other departments/units/faculties at your institution support OA ventures through subscription?

Yes
No
I don't know
Comments

Section 2: Questions about Author's Funds

3a) Does your institution/library support OA through an author's fund?

Yes, through the Library
Yes, through the institution
No
I don't know
Other:

3b) Is your institution/library thinking about setting up an Author's Fund?

Yes
No
Other:
Comments

3c) Did your institution/library have a fund and cancel the program?

Yes
No
Other:
Comments

3d) If you have a fund, when did you start the fund?

3e) If you have a fund, who administers the Author's Fund?

3f) If you have a fund, how much money do you set aside to pay Author's fees?

\$5,000 - \$10,000
\$10,001 - \$25,000
\$25,001 - \$50,000
\$50,000 - \$100,000
\$100,000+

3g) Has the fund increased or decreased in size since it was started?

3h) What criteria have you included in deciding who gets money? (check all that apply)

must be a fully OA journal (no hybrids)
must be under a certain \$\$
authors can only apply a limited number of times
preference for authors without other funding
preference for early career researchers
preference for graduate students
Other:

3i) Do you consider the fund a success?

Yes
No
Both
I don't know

Comments

Section 3: Questions about your institution's OA attitude

4a) Does your school have an OA mandate that requires deposit of articles in your Institutional Repository?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

4b) Is it your impression that your library is inclined to support OA either through an author's fund or by subscribing to APC memberships or participating in other OA ventures?

- Yes, through author fund
- Yes, through memberships
- Yes, through infrastructure
- Yes, through some combination
- No
- I don't know.
- Comments:

4c) Do any departments or faculties in your school have an OA mandate for article deposit or are more inclined to support OA initiatives?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know
- Additional Comments:

4d) If yes, please name the departments

4e) Is it your impression that your institution's senior management is inclined to support OA?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know
- Other:

4f) Where does your library rate the importance of supporting OA?

- 1 is low 10 is high.
- Low 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 High

4g) Has support for OA gained importance since the Tri-Council mandate? within the Library? within the institution? from faculty?

4h) What if any is your library's role in assisting faculty in complying with the Tri-Council mandate?

Section 4: Questions about what OCUL IR can do to help

5) What would make supporting OA more attractive

- negotiate with publishers for discounts on APCs
- work towards automated discounts versus having to self-identify
- availability of additional accounting information (e.g. how many APCs your researchers have paid)
- Comments:

Please list anything else that might make it more worthwhile for the library to support OA subscriptions/memberships

Section 5: Comments

Please add any other comments you may have about Open Access and OCUL-IRs role.