Advocacy for the Open Access mandates implementation at the University of Pretoria : a case study

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Introduction

This paper will describe the advocacy campaign for the implementation of the Open Access mandates at the University of Pretoria.

The University of Pretoria & Open Access

The University of Pretoria embraced the Open Access movement with enthusiasm as it enhances the visibility and impact of an institution and its authors. The University of Pretoria supports Open Access to research information for all researchers worldwide and takes responsibility for the dissemination of its research outputs.

The two repositories

According to Alma Swan (Swan 2011) a digital repository is a "critically important tool for managing a university's image and impact on a global scale." The Department of Library Services at the University of Pretoria realized the value of archiving the staff and students'research outputs in a repository thereby enabling global usage.

The University of Pretoria's first repository UPeTD was implemented in 2000 and involved the submission of electronic theses and dissertations. In 2003 it became mandatory for all students to hand in electronic versions of their theses and dissertations. By 1 September 2011 UPeTD provides access to 4736 Master's dissertations and 1882 Doctoral theses – a total of 6618 items. In the July 2011 Ranking Web of World Repositories UPeTD is ranked at number 162 on global visibility and impact – the first in Africa and South Africa. The next South African repository listed is the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research Space which is ranked at number 214. In July 2011 the top ranked item, *The role of Human Resource Management and the Human Resource Professional in the new economy* by MCom student Wendy Helen Rennie had been accessed 30 384 times. In the period September 2010 to August 2011, 7168441 files were downloaded in UPeTD.

The second institutional repository UPSpace, was implemented in 2006 using DSpace software and the Open Scholarship Office immediately started experimenting with the submission of research articles. The policy for mandatory submission of research papers of University of Pretoria staff, students and other affiliates was formally adopted by Senate in May 2009 – the first in Africa. The policy states that each staff member or student is required to submit the peer-reviewed post-prints of their articles and published conference

papers to UPSpace, the University's institutional repository. The current total of research articles in the UPSpace repository's openUP collection is 6332.

Some of the benefits of these repositories for the University of Pretoria are as follows: (Swan 2011)

- Opens up the UP output for the whole world

- Maximizes the visibility and impact of these outputs

- Can be utilized as a promotional tool to showcase the output to prospective staff, students, funders and other stakeholders

- Collects, curates and preserves UP intellectual output

- Manages and measures research

What is advocacy?

According to the ALA website, advocacy is defined as "the process of turning passive support into educated action by stakeholders" and the Canadian Association of Public Libraries defines it as "a planned, deliberate, sustained effort to raise awareness of an issue. It's an ongoing process in which support and understanding are built incrementally over an extended period of time and using a wide variety of marketing and public relations tools."

Why is advocacy necessary?

Armbruster (2010) rightfully mentions that the implementation of Open Access is a "tough job". To write and plan a mandatory policy for the submission of theses, dissertations and research articles is the easy part, but it is more difficult to put those plans in action. Unfortunately students and researchers need to be persuaded at University of Pretoria to support the Open Scholarship initiatives.

Surveys conducted by some (Rowlands et al 2004; Swan & Brown 2005) reveal that researchers experience the following problems:

- They are unfamiliar with self-archiving

- They are very concerned about the copyright implications

- They are just too busy to participate

Recent research conducted by the Council on Higher Education (Higher Education Monitor no.7: Postgraduate Studies in South Africa A Statistical Profile - A report commissioned by the Council on Higher Education 2009) and the Academy of Science of South Africa (The PhD study 2010) indicate the following problems that graduates experience which also impact on students' self-archiving behaviour of theses and dissertations:

- Most M and D students interrupt their studies after their Bachelors or Honours degrees and due to career and family commitments and lack of preparedness they take longer to complete their postgraduate degrees. This will definitely impact on their willingness to self-archive their theses and dissertations.

- There is also a high increase in enrolments from SADC countries and computer access and even literacy still poses a problem for these students.

Researchers and postgraduate students still play a limited role in the process of enhancing their visibility through self-archiving their research papers, theses and dissertations in UPeTD and UPSpace. According to the statistics of the past two years the self-archiving behaviour of postgraduate students in UPeTD and researchers in UPSpace was respectively as follows 18% and 3%.

4P's essential for advocacy

Ghosh (Ghosh 2011) identified 4 P's that are essential for advocacy:

- Passion : commitment to meeting the audience needs

- Purpose : setting goals by defining problems, causes and solutions

- People : Identifying and analysing role players

- Persuasion : Developing messages and selecting strategies and tools.

Advocacy in practice

At UP these elements were implemented as follows:

Passion

The Open Scholarship Office is a dedicated unit with staff members (3 full-time and 2 contract staff members) that manages the implementation of the Open Scholarship initiatives on campus. An Open Scholarship manager was appointed to drive the following sub-programmes:

- Mandated submission of theses and dissertations (UPeTD)

- Mandated submission of research papers (openUP)

- Collaboration with the Department Research and Innovation Support on the linking of the university's annual Research Reports to the articles in UPSpace

- Advice and facilitation of Open Access journal initiatives on campus

- Planning of the annual global Open Access week celebrations on campus

In order to showcase the benefits of the Open Access research outputs and to meet the needs of our students and researchers, the Open Scholarship Office submits electronic theses and dissertations as well as research articles on behalf of the students and authors. This is called the mediated depositing method and is popular in some institutional repositories (Devakos 2006).

Purpose

The Open Scholarship office has a clearly defined purpose: to change scholarship practice at the University of Pretoria towards becoming an Open Scholarship institution with these characteristics:

- Theses and dissertations are available online and Open Access based on a policy of mandatory submission

- Research and conference papers are available online and Open Access and researchers actively contribute based on a policy of mandatory submission

- Researchers and students actively use Open Access material

- Researchers publish in available Open Access journals and the institution has policy and financial support in place for that

- Researchers actively manage the copyright of their publications, inter alia with addenda to their contracts or using Creative Commons contracts, and the necessary policy exists

- Publications from the institution's press/publishing house are available in Open Access based on policy

- The institution publishes its own online Open Access journals OR provides infrastructure and support for members of its community who are involved with society publishing

- Dissemination forms part of its publication strategies

After numerous informal conversations with and presentations to researchers the Open Scholarship office has identified copyright and the interpretation of journals' archiving policies a huge barrier to researchers. In addition to the mediated approach of submission the Open Scholarship office takes the responsibility for clearing copyright with publishers and interpreting the archiving conditions for researchers.

People

Different stakeholders have been identified and are involved in the UP advocacy process.

Internally on campus : Library staff

According to Helieisar (Helieisar 2008), advocacy also needs the commitment and cooperation of other librarians. From the beginning the Department of Library Services' information specialists were identified as important role-players and advocacy efforts are also targeted towards them to stay up to date with new developments in the Open Access arena. Newsworthy information is circulated regularly via the library's listserv and during an Executive meeting each Faculty Library manager was issued with a memory stick containing a generic presentation on the Open Access mandate implementation on campus. Information specialists are invited to presentations in departments and to all the Open Access events planned on campus. Some of the information specialists have also played an active role in the submission of research articles.

Externally on campus : UP executive and researchers

Even before the acceptance of the mandate prominent researchers were targeted and personalized collections were created in UPSpace such as the [Jonathan Jansen Collection](#) or the [Johann Kirsten Collection](#). All the Deans and Research coordinators of the faculties were involved in the acceptance of the mandate before it was tabled and accepted by Senate in 2009. Presentations are regularly presented to departments on invitation and they are reminded of the possibilities of linking the submitted articles to their researcher profiles on the UP web as well as their CVs. An attempt is made to recruit departmental submitters to assist with the annual archiving of research articles. Recently a prominent researcher and Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences, Prof Brenda Wingfield was approached to become the first video voice promoting Open Access and the UP mandate. Each year during Open Access week (which has been celebrated on campus since 2007) a special programme is planned to introduce researchers to the concept of Open Access and the benefits of publishing in Open Access journals.

Externally on campus: Department of Research and Innovation

The Department of Research and Innovation is an important partner in the implementation of the research article mandate. This division is responsible for the database of Research Information at UP (RIS) which results in research subsidy claims at the Department of Higher Education. The Open Scholarship realized the common goals of these two divisions and approached them with the proposal to enhance the annual electronic Research Reports by adding the submitted article links in UPSpace to the report. This has resulted in a process of data exchange and the added benefits of annual research finds by the Open Scholarship office. The gradual article finds by the Open Scholarship Office has been 13.83 units (2007), 44.25 units (2008), 73.82 units (2009) and 62.44 units (2010). Each unit equals approximately R100 000 for the University. The annual Research Reports have been linked to the research articles in UPSpace since 2007 and for the 2010 output 68% of the articles are linked to the full-text version.

Externally on campus: Student advocacy

The international Sparky Awards - organized by SPARC, the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition - was advertised on the library web in an attempt to attract student participation. The Sparky awards is a video contest for students in which they show why Open Access matters to them. One of the lecturers from the Department of Information Science responded by giving this as a class assignment and for the first time ever one of the UP students, Joshua Goodman, was awarded the Best Live Action award winner, titled [Breaking News: Open Access Wave Sweeps World](). Hopefully this initiative will be the beginning of more student participation on campus!

Persuasion

A variety of strategies and tools are utilized in the advocacy campaign. The Open Scholarship office gives support in the form of:

- Submission guides and training material (which are also available in electronic format)

- Web support ([http://www.library.up.ac.za/openup/index.htm]())

- The compilation of an Accredited list of Open Access Journals, AOAJSA [http://www.library.up.ac.za/aoajsa.htm]()

- Openup & UPeTD postbox which handles queries ([openup@up.ac.za]() and [upetd@up.ac.za]())

- Tools such as the university's electronically Campus News newsletter, library web page ([http://www.library.up.ac.za/]()), Facebook and Twitter are used to communicate Open Scholarship developments and news.

<u>**Conclusion**</u>

Librarians can play a leading role in developing an Open Access culture at their institutions. Open Access campus advocacy is an ongoing and continuous process and mandate implementation is a challenging endeavour which involves time, commitment and cooperation from various stakeholders. Repository and Open Scholarship managers need to heed Xia's warning (Xia 2010) - they need to understand the concerns and problems of their students and researchers and adapt their strategies to populate their repositories to suit these needs. If not, we will see an increase in repositories but not content.

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