

## **Open Scholarship and Research Reporting in tandem: creating more value for the University of Pretoria**

### **Abstract**

#### **Purpose**

*The purpose of this paper is to provide an overview of the collaboration between the University of Pretoria's (UP) Open Scholarship Office, housed in the Department of Library Services, and the Department of Research and Innovation Support, which resulted in the successful linking of the research articles in the institutional repository UPSpace with the 2007 annual research report.*

#### **Design/methodology/approach**

*This is a narrative account of the development of the openUP collection as well as a description of the UP Research Information System (RIS) and the current relationship between the Open Scholarship Office and the Department of Research and Innovation Support.*

#### **Findings**

*The shared goals (of enhancing UP research outputs) of the two departments resulted in a new co-operative strategy that proved to be mutually beneficial. The Department of Research and Innovation Support provided the Open Scholarship Office with a complete record of the institution's research output in a specific academic year. The Open Scholarship Office supplied URL links to the articles already submitted to UPSpace and also identified a total of 21 articles, which were not initially captured on the RIS by the relevant departments. As a result, additional funding was awarded to the University by the Department of Education (DoE).*

#### **Originality and value**

*UP is the first institution of higher learning in Africa to achieve this milestone. This new collaborative effort between the Open Scholarship Office and the Department of Research and Innovation Support created value in enhancing the research report and making the UP research more visible.*

## **Introduction**

Globally libraries are reconsidering their position in the local and national research information network (Joint 2008). Universities provide output in the form of research articles and more and more libraries are now setting up online repositories in order to manage and disseminate their institution's research output (Hubbard 2004). According to Joint (Joint 2008) universities should manage their research activity more effectively and libraries should play a more effective role in the total research process.

### **UPSpace and openUP – the tandem's front drive**

UPSpace is the open access digital research repository of the University of Pretoria (UP), which was officially launched in 2006. UPSpace houses a variety of material including technical papers, conference papers and presentations, chapters from books, speeches, reports and research articles.

openUP is the short name for the University's Open Scholarship Programme and research article collection. The aim of this programme is to change scholarship practice at UP towards becoming an open scholarship institution and to provide open access to its research and scholarship. An open scholarship institution has the following characteristics:

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

- Research and conference papers are openly available online and researchers actively contribute based on a policy of mandatory submission
- Researchers and students actively use open access material
- Researchers publish in available accredited 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 mode 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 strategy

We subscribe to the Wellcome Trust's viewpoint that "***the job of research is only half-done if the results of that research cannot reach the widest audience***".

The openUP collection forms part of UPSPACE and offers open access to the full text of research articles published by staff, students and affiliates of UP. A research article is first submitted to the relevant department's research article collection and is then mapped (or linked) to the openUP collection. This collection can be used as a single entry point and gives free and unrestricted access to UP research articles.

There are currently 2 291 items in this collection and the submission of research articles started in 2006. An Open Scholarship office was established in 2007 to manage the submission process and executive quality control. The research articles in openUP are identical to the output in the Research Information System (RIS).

From the very beginning the Open Scholarship office envisaged the linking of the research articles to the University's annual research report. In order to make this a reality, the Open Scholarship office approached the Department of Research and Innovation Support who is responsible for the management of the RIS. The RIS is an extensive database that is used to record all research related activities at the University during a specific academic year.

### **RIS and the research report – the tandem's back drive**

It is a legal requirement that universities have to give account of their research output to the Department of Education (DoE). According to the Higher Education Act, 1997 (Act No. 101 of 1997) ***Policy and Procedures for measurement of research output of public higher education institutions***, recognized research output comprises journals, books and conference proceedings. Higher education institutions accrue units based on productivity within subsidized research output for the reporting year. The allocation of units is determined by the type of research output and the institutional affiliation of the authors.

Institutions must submit their research output annually for the preceding year for each reporting year under the signature of the Vice Chancellor, the Deputy Vice Chancellor of Research or the Director of Research. The DoE establishes an evaluation panel of senior professionals for each reporting year. The panel comprises members of the higher education community. Their task is to evaluate all submissions by claiming institutions on or before 15 May. Institutions must establish internal evaluation panels for screening research output in terms of the policy prior to submission to the DoE.

Institutions must submit, on or before 15 May of each reporting year, an audited subsidy claim to the DoE for research output appearing in journals listed in the following indices:

- Science Citation Index Expanded® (Web of Science)
- Social Sciences Citation Index® (Web of Science)

- Arts & Humanities Citation Index® (Web of Science)
- IBSS Journal List
- Approved South African Journals

The DoE issues on its web site on or before 31 January of each calendar year, an official list of journals for each of the above indices.

The auditors' report must contain the following information:

- The name of the institution
- The reporting year
- The number of units being claimed for journal output, listed separately for each of the above indices, for the preceding year
- The number of units being claimed for journal output for the year, listed separately for each of the above indices. The auditor must also certify that such outputs have not previously been claimed

Institutions may only use registered external auditors to audit their research output. The auditors' report must be issued on the auditors' official letterhead and addressed to the Director General of Education. The auditor must express his opinion on the institution's subsidy claim for the research output. The allocations of units are calculated according to the stipulations of the policy.

All the departments of UP provide the information contained in the electronic and hard copy versions of the annual research report via the Research Information System (RIS). Every year the deans in each faculty appoint RIS coordinators who take responsibility for scientific quality control which entails:

- Coordination of the capture process in the faculty
- Ensuring the completeness and the correctness of the captured data

The data fields of the refereed research articles are prescribed by the DoE and researchers need to supply the following information:

- Names of all the authors with their affiliations
- Published title of the article
- Name of the journal as it appeared in the accredited lists of the DoE
- ISSN number of the journal
- Year of publication
- Volume, number and month
- Page numbers of the article
- Main departmental research field of the article
- Institutes or centres linked to the article
- Hardcopy of the article
- Outside cover of the accredited journal
- Complete table of contents

### **The research report – the drive chain**

During 2007 the Open Scholarship office approached the Department of Research and Innovation Support and suggested a new co-operative strategy which could enhance the annual research report. The Department of Research and Innovation Support has as its core function the provision of a range of support services aimed at promoting research development. The Open Scholarship office on the other hand aims at opening access to UP research.

The Department of Research and Innovation Support agreed to make the research output provided by the departments available to the Open Scholarship office in an Excel spreadsheet. The Open Scholarship office was tasked to:

- Check the list obtained from the Department of Research and Innovation Support against the current available research articles in UPSpace
- Add the articles' Uniform Resource Identifier (URI) (or web addresses) to the list
- Report missing data from the Excel list and report additional articles traced in UPSpace which were not in the original list

This list was provided to the Open Scholarship office and a team of 19 library staff members and students immediately started working on the list. During this process the team identified 21 articles which were available in openUP, but were not captured on the RIS database. Accordingly an additional audit certificate was sent off resulting in an additional 13.83 units allocated to the University. The total number of peer-reviewed articles detailed in the research report was 1 531 and the Open Scholarship office managed to add URLs to 863 of these items – a total of 56%.

### **Conclusion – the road ahead**

The two departments' shared goals of maximizing research impact by maximizing access to research output resulted in a new co-operative strategy that proved to be mutually beneficial. The Department of Research and Innovation Support received additional funding for the articles traced by the Open Scholarship office and the records of many articles were improved with the metadata in UPSpace, which also enhances the visibility of the University's research output. We believe that this will result in increased citations (Eysenbach 2006, Antelman 2004; Harnad & Brody 2004).

This project clearly indicates that collaboration between departments can lead to:

- More effective and less cumbersome research reporting
- Repositories can become valuable tools in the research infrastructure
- Enhancing research access and visibility

Future plans include the linking of the theses and dissertations of students and staff, the strengthening of ties with the data capturers in the various departments and the automatic exchange of data between the RIMS system and UPSpace, which could lead to the linking of scholarly publications in UPSpace and research performance assessment.

Other universities such as Glasgow University, Southampton University and Kingston University are already successfully using their repositories as gateways to their RIS system (Joint 2008). According to Joint (Joint 2008), it is essential to share data between the two systems in order to avoid duplication of efforts. A single point of entry is recommended – whether the research articles are first submitted to the repository and then pushed to the RIS database or first submitted to the RIS system and then pushed to the repository.

UP is the first institution of higher learning in Africa to achieve this milestone. This new collaborative effort between the Open Scholarship Office and the Department of Research and Innovation Support created more value for the University. Hopefully the Open Scholarship Office will strengthen their ties with the Department of Research and Innovation Support and play an even more effective role in the research reporting process with the integration of UPSpace in the RIS system. Although we fulfill different roles, they are still complementary and this relationship can be of significant value in the UP research arena.

## Bibliography

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