

SWEDISH RESEARCHERS MEET OPEN ACCESS – Project Progress Report

Peter Linde

The project "Research Meetings on Open Access" was initiated, with funding from the program OpenAccess.se, as a continuation of the successful project "Open Access Education Package for Researchers" (2007)¹ which, on its part, had its origin in one of the SVEP project work packages (2005)² where the idea was to offer information about Open Access and local publishing alternatives foremost to librarians. Since then the idea of Open Access has gained a greater footing within the library world while the situation has been worse in regard to the document suppliers – the researchers. Thence the title and the continued focus on researchers in the current project.

"Research Meetings on OA" was initiated by a kick-off meeting in Karlskrona during the spring 2008. In substance the project contains three parts which will have been carried out no later than at the close of 2009:

- Organize 6 seminars on OA for researchers at 6 different Swedish universities/university colleges from north to south.
- Update and secure the administration and the continued existence of the Web information on the OA information pages (<http://www.searchguide.se/oa/>) and create a parallel site in English.
- Incorporation into the project of a selection of the partial projects of the application entitled "Open Access – A Media-Pedagogic Network".

The Seminar Part

At the publishing of this article, 4 seminars have been carried out. The two first ones were carried out at Malmö University, October 22, and at the Mid Sweden University, Sundsvall, November 20, 2008. Both seminars were well-attended with a majority of

researchers in the audience. This is how Jessica Lindholm, one of the organizers, reports from the Malmö seminar:

"Full room (ca. 75 persons – of whom 13 persons were from the library world, the rest were researchers & doctoral candidates), good discussions, our rector attended the whole time and was active... It feels great, thanks for initiating the whole thing through Jorgen's call to us a long time ago!". Presentations and video clips from the seminar can be found at <http://www.mah.se/oa08>.

The program, presentations and a video from the Sundsvall seminar are available at <http://www.bib.miun.se/publicera/openaccess/seminarium>.

The third and fourth seminars were organized at Umeå University on March 17 and the University of Kalmar in collaboration with Växjö University on April 28 this year. Here, also, the aim and direction has been to try to raise the level of awareness of local researchers regarding the ideas of the Open Access movement.

The seminar programs have been a mix of basic information about Open Access; testimonies of researcher experiences of OA publishing; discussions about how to locally manage, for example, self-archiving by means of the institute's own publishing system; how are bibliometrics measurements affected by Open Access and vice versa. The programs have varied but Open Access has always been the keynote.

The Grand Finale

The fifth seminar is under planning and will probably be organized at the university college of Dalarna in the autumn of 2009. For the concluding seminar in Gothenburg the preliminary date has been set to November 5. The Gothenburg seminar is planned as a major arrangement with 1 or 2 internationally known speakers. It is, in the first place, Birgitta Stevinger at the University of Gothenburg and Maria Kinger at Chalmers who will be organizing the seminar on premises at the University of Gothenburg.

In the project group we have discussed a preliminary program which will reflect the contents of the seminars that have been carried out throughout the country during the year even if we at this point are trying to lift our gaze and offer some international prospects. The working theme is: "Open Access – Visibility and

¹ Education Package on OA.

<http://www.kb.se/OpenAccess/nyheter/2007/Utbildningspaketom-OA/>

² SVEP - Samordning av den svenska högskolans elektroniska publicering [SVEP – Coordination of the electronic publishing of the Swedish universities/university colleges]. Final report project 3,4 and 5.

http://www.kb.se/Dokument/Bibliotek/projekt/svep_dp3_5_slutrapport.pdf

Impact". Our hopes are to get Jens Vigen, director of the CERN library, to give a presentation, and also to be able to invite a representative from the PLoS.

Open Access Information

In the project "OA Education Package for Researchers" we constructed an information platform based on the blog tool WordPress – Open Access Information (<http://www.searchguide.se/oa/>). English translations of the information texts which form part of this resource have through the new project been put up at a newly made parallel site in English (<http://www.searchguide.se/oa/eng/>).

We have decided to keep using the WordPress platform as it is free and easy to manage. The earlier interface has been entirely revised to increase accessibility. The texts on the sites have been updated. It is now up to each project member to go into WordPress and make changes when need arises. Passwords have been distributed and the updating is now such a simple process that each and everyone can manage this. What remains is a discussion about how the site should be managed regarding continuous updating after the close of the project. This discussion will be held on a running basis during 2009 before a final decision will be made regarding how administration, updating and ownership matters should finally be managed.

Teaching media on Sherpa/Romeo have been supplied lately. A PowerPoint presentation on DOAJ and Journal Info are now also available. A number of brief interviews with NCSC participants regarding OA matters, from the spring conference 2008 in Lund, have been put up on the site as well as on Youtube.com (<http://www.youtube.com/oascience>).

A user poll was carried out in the autumn 2008. The result shows that the respondents throughout are fairly satisfied with the improvements that have been made in the interface. A statistics module was introduced on October 20, 2008. A look at the statistics barely 6 months later (April 16, 2009) shows that the Swedish Open Access Information site has had ca. 13,000 visits of which ca. 2,400 were unique visitors. Resources that are frequently visited are, among others, "Goda exempel och länkar" [Good examples and links], "Vetenskaplig kommunikation – en bakgrund..." [Scientific communication – a background], "Ladda ner PowerPoints" [Download PowerPoints], "Handledning Sherpa/RoMEO" [Guidance Sherpa/RoMEO]... but it seems, generally, as if most resources, such as texts, PowerPoint and PDF files, have been utilized to the same high degree.

For the English site the numbers are somewhat lower. Ca. 8,000 visitors of which 1,500 unique visitors since October 20. Resources which are regularly used are "

The OAI-PMH Protocol and Search Services", "Publishing in Open Archives", "Introduction and Background to Open Access Journals" and "Good Examples and Links" together with "Download PowerPoints". About 200 unique visitors continuously per week has to be considered as okay given that we have not carried out any major marketing work. The fact that the project has achieved something that is really used, and not only by Swedes but by visitors from the whole world, is something that feels really good.

Oasis!

Initiated by, among others, Alma Swan, Key Perspectives and Leslie Chan there is now, at the University of Toronto in Canada, a project which to some extent resembles ours, with the attempt of building up an international information service about Open Access matters. We have contacted this sister project in Canada called "OASIS" via letters to Leslie Chan. In January 2009 he responded in the following way to the question whether they had found any water yet: "There is definitely water waiting to be unleashed! But as you noted, we have been working in the background mostly..."

The work with OASIS is in progress full steam. And it is an ambitious project based on non-profit work and donations. Presently they are working with the texts in the different sections. Leslie describes this work in the same letter: "You will see the full list of content and topics that we intend to cover. The librarians section is more fully developed at the moment, followed by the researchers section. Clearly there are areas of overlap with your project and it would be great if we could share resources and

cross-linking. As you will see the design of the site, we are trying to make the content more user specific, the assumption being that different communities have different motivation for engaging in OA and their involvement would also be different. If you go to our test site you will see what I mean:

<http://www.openoasis.org/test/>"

We will take contact again with Chan in order to follow up on the development and possibly see if we may offer anything within the framework of our project.

Open Access – A Media-Pedagogic Network

During the course of the project it has proven difficult to live up to the goal of incorporating into the project of Research Meetings the partial project "A Media-Pedagogic Network" which formed part of the Open.Access.se application. Only the idea of producing 2 brief video films has been carried out. The films "Open Access – vad är det" [Open Access – what is it] and "Open Access – parallellpublicering är

enkelt!” [Open Access – self-archiving is easy!] have been created in collaboration with Annika Koldenius, Digital Media at the University of Gothenburg. The original plan of 3 films at 3 minutes has been abandoned as the costs were too high. The two films are accessible from the Open Access Information site and from YouTube.com, and also from the DelaLika channel at UR access:

<http://uraccess.navicast.net/> (click on DelaLika); the OER Web site Digiref.se:

<http://www.digiref.se/> (search on, for example, "open access").

The study of accessibility to OA resources in collaboration with TPB has been discontinued.

The Drop and the Stone

The awareness among researchers of open access increases daily but from knowing about the phenomenon to actively engaging is still a long step. With the seminar series and the information site we believe that we have improved the starting point for the researchers who want to give it a try and who want to invest in an open distribution of their research results. For Open Access to become a dominating publishing form it is required that, as number one, the researchers know about the idea and the possibility. It is here that our project has been useful and this is also the crucial point - constant dripping wears away the stone!

Of course there also have to be guiding policy decisions from leaderships and authorities; tools that facilitate the actual publishing and national/international coordination of good forces. But this is something which we trustingly leave to other projects to deliver.

What remains to be done in this project is to discuss suitable forms for continuous operation and updating of our information site for open access. This discussion will be brought up during the autumn 2009 which is also the period for the realization of the last seminar, which we hope will turn into a "grand finale" with internationally known lecturers and many visitors. Be seeing you then!

Project participants

Peter Linde BTH (project leader)

Maria Kinger and Lars Kullman - Chalmers

Aina Svensson - Uppsala University

Helena Stjernberg and Jörgen Eriksson - Lund University

Linda Sohlberg - Växjö University

Thomas Lundén - University of Skövde

Birgitta Stevinger - University of Gothenburg

Mats Brenner - University of Gävle



Peter Linde Blekinge Institute of Technology, Karlskrona, Sweden