A NORWEIGAN RoMEO
Jan Erik Frantsvåg

Most readers will know that Romeo didn't come from Norway, but lived in Italy. Despite this, NORA members University of Bergen, University College of Telemark and University of Tromsø together applied for funding for the project "RoMEO for Norway" to ABM-U, the Norwegian Archive, Library and Museum Authority.

The idea was that there are numerous Norwegian journals, serials and publishers, about whom there is little or no information in the international Sherpa/RoMEO service operated by the University of Nottingham. Some information about Norwegian journals had been collected and presented on the openaccess.no wiki, but only for a handful of journals.

We also found that the usefulness of a local collection of such information would be limited. The "service level" of such a service would be lower than that of the Sherpa service, and users would search RoMEO and forget that a Norwegian service existed. Non-Norwegian users wouldn't even be aware of the existence of such a service. We concluded that in order to succeed, information had to be incorporated in the Sherpa/RoMEO service.

According to Ulrich, there are about 120 peer-reviewed journals based in Norway, and about 440 academic serials overall. They are published by some 230 publishers, 70 of which publish more than one serial.

The goal of the project is to contact all publishers publishing more than one serial, and in addition to contact the publishers of all serials accredited in the Norwegian financing model, i.e. that publishing in these serials will give extra money to the author's institution.

The project is still in an early phase, but we already have noted that it will not be an easy task, for three reasons mainly:

1. It can be difficult to identify whom to contact for information
2. Most e-mails remain unanswered
3. If e-mails are answered, the answers are often unclear and imprecise, and we have to get back to clarify them.

An early conclusion is that self-archiving policies clearly are not high on the agenda of most scholarly serials and journals.

We still think that the idea of acquiring information for Sherpa/RoMEO, and not to create a local resource, is a good idea. Sherpa have been very co-operative and the problems in the project lie not with them, but with the local journals and serials.

We hope to come back with an extensive report once the project is finished.

Postscript

After writing this article, news reached us that a similar Portuguese project, co-operating with Sherpa, has started up. The principle of contributing to a common, international database instead of creating a local competitor seems logical to the Portuguese, too. The Portuguese project includes translations of the user interface and standard information to Portuguese; this is not included in our project. See http://tinyurl.com/2u99gvd for more information.

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