

OPEN ACCESS POLICIES AND THE SUPPORTING INFRASTRUCTURE: STATUS IN DENMARK

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June 2012 was an important year for Open Access in Denmark. In June the five major public research funders released their Open Access policies covering all their future grants. [<http://fivu.dk/forskning-og-innovation/rad-og-udvalg/det-frie-forskningsrad/open-access-politik>]. From 2013 the first grants with the Open Access policy are coming in effect. Are universities and their libraries ready take this opportunity and support their researchers?

If 2012 was important in the sense that the public research funders finally released their Open Access policy - after a yearlong prelude that started with the release of the "Recommendations for implementation of Open Access in Denmark" March 2011

[<http://fivu.dk/en/publications/2011/recommendation-s-for-implementation-of-open-access-in-denmark/>].

While the committee behind the report recommended that the Ministry, the research councils and funders, universities and other research institutions all implemented Open Access policies it was only the research councils and funders that acted and established policies as a result of the recommendations.

2013 might prove to be the real test for all supporters of Open Access. It's from the current year that the first grants from the Danish research councils will be signed and the policy will come into effect.

Now principal investigators (PIs) and Coordinators of grants around Danish research institutions are asking themselves: what implications does this policy have for them, what are the obligations for consortia members to comply with the policy.

A question that needs to be asked is, are the employers of PIs ready to support researchers who have been so competent and fortunate that they've been granted a large sum of money to do what they do best, which is research?

To support the PIs Open Access obligation infrastructures and services need to be in place. Years of focus on research assessment at Danish universities, in which the repository or CRIS system Pure has

played an pivotal role, has taken away the focus from Open Access and that repositories and libraries play an important role in the global Open Access infrastructure.

Lessons learnt from the big Open Access pilot in FP7 (special clause 39) showed that if researchers are left alone to comply with an OA-policy then it is likely to fail. First of all, policies from research councils must be aligned with the requirements for publishing that researchers meet at their own institutions. Secondly, the research institutions must support their faculty to ensure compliance in every way, so that compliance does not interfere or take away time from what researchers do best, namely conduct research. Or thirdly, the policy must be so strict and have financial sanctions or other strong incentives (sticks). However the latter is probably neither politically possible nor desirable.

Taking Denmark as a case study, the OA-pilot has proved that getting the support of individual research institutions can be difficult - not because the research administrative staff, namely librarians, lack positive attitudes: no, it is because of other more important agendas - such as money driven performance goals like the National Bibliometric Research Indicator (BFI). Since 2008 BFI has in many ways formed the development of the CRIS infrastructure in Denmark and the processes around it and left the development of infrastructures for Open Access to the few actors in this field. And the willingness to support the implementation of the European OA policy at a minimum level has been very low. Denmark has the infrastructure: it has CRIS's with a high coverage and high quality metadata, but however there is no focus on using this advantage to leapfrog Denmark's position globally when it comes to Open Access.

To be fair, some universities and research institutions in Denmark have made a great effort to establish smart procedures, effective policies and worked hard to make

their institutions' research as Open Access as possible. But they are the minority. Also, there are pertinent people at almost all the universities that work hard everyday to advocate for Open Access and help their faculty to make their research Open Access, but they all miss support from the top level.

A lesson to be taken from the implementation of BFI, is that publicity and visibility of performance changes behaviour and priorities. So this author's solution to the uneven support for Open Access at the Danish universities and research institutions, is to make a national score board for Open Access. If a fair measurement of the universities' and research institutions' Open Access performance is publicised and given media attention, policy attention will be established and a prioritization of services and the further development of infrastructures for Open Access will follow.

The first thing that must be done and can drive this development is the creation of digital, online reporting of the grants to the Danish research councils and funders. This includes uniquely and globally identifying the funders and embracing international initiatives like FundRef, making requirements for beneficiaries of the funds to include the funding information in their publications when submitting to journals - i.e. FundRef information plus a unique number, and that funders require and supports the delivery of project reporting in an international standard format such as CERIF-XML.

Secondly, the national research councils and funders must request that all grantees are provide their global researchers ID's - like ORCID - in their grant proposals and that they will use these ORCID's to identify themselves within all outputs of their grant, including publications and datasets.

Thirdly, that all public outcomes of the grant are uniquely identifiable with a digital identifier such as a DOI or similar.

Fourthly, that all outcomes of the project that should be taken into account in an evaluation, must be accessible through single access point such as a CRIS based on Pure - not necessarily with full texts within

the CRIS but with metadata that describes the accessibility and provides a link directly to the sources.

Finally, a national research portal, such as the Danish National Research Database, must provide an overview of not only the published output of universities and research institutions in Denmark. It must also provide a more detailed overview of the Danish research output that includes an overview of all grants given to public research institutions and not only universities. From the grants it should be possible to see who was been funded (institutions, and people), the related outcomes of the grant including publications and their full text either in a repository (like Pure) or through a link to an Open Access version at a publisher. Statistics should then be provided that would show, amongst many other interesting statistics, how much is Open Access nationally and from different institutions and how much of the output of different grants is Open Access.

The potential benefits of all this are many, and include more transparency, more public access to the outcomes of the publically funded research and possible benchmarking options that would drive research institutions and universities to improve their local support and infrastructures for Open Access. This might sound like a far away and an almost non-reachable utopia. But the reality is that the tools are right here within our reach to grab and utilize. Pure needs to be enhanced, the Danish National Research Database needs a reconstruction and relaunch, funders need to open up their systems and make their data accessible and interoperable. Best practices and regulations to grantees must be established - there might be some objections and resistance in the short run - but in the long run all these actions will make life easier for everyone.

The problem is that even if it is relatively easy to realize, it will never happen in an orchestrated fashion, as long as it is not on the political agenda and attention of the Minister of Science, Innovation and Higher Education. We are missing a chance that could leapfrog Denmark's position as a leading knowledge economy.



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