CELEBRATING OPEN ACCESS WEEK

The week of October 19-23, 2015 finds organizations worldwide celebrating Open Access Week. During this week activities highlight the need to ensure that research is freely and openly accessible, without restrictions on reproduction or reuse. Traditional subscription models of access to research can limit not only the public’s ability to gain access but an author’s ability to re-use or share his/her own work. Open access models strengthen authors’ rights to retain, re-use, re-distribute, and share research without restrictions. Research that is made openly accessible can increase the visibility of an institution and highlight the research productivity of its faculty and students. Studies have shown that openly accessible research can be cited more frequently because the data is more easily available (Eysenbach, 2006).

Researchers have a variety of options available to help retain rights to their works. An author addendum can be added to publishing contracts to specify additional use rights. The Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC) offers one such addendum (http://www.sparc.arl.org/resources/authors/addendum-2007). Creative Commons (http://creativecommons.org/), a non-profit organization, offers licensing alternatives to authors and creators of works to determine how they want their creative efforts shared, re-used, or transformed for non-commercial and/or commercial purposes.

OPEN CONTENT TRENDS

Open access offers alternatives to costly teaching, learning and research resources. Open education resources (OER) are those that one may “freely use and reuse, without charge. That means they have been authored or created by an individual or organization that chooses to retain few, if any, ownership rights. For some of these resources, that means you can download the resource and share it with colleagues and students. For others, it may be that you can download a resource, edit it in some way, and then re-post it as a remixed work” (OER Commons. Retrieved from https://www.oercommons.org/about).

In the last decade, open access academic journal content has become a more recognized model to deliver scholarship and research. With recent directives to make federally funded research accessible to the public, the STEM disciplines are already familiar with this model. In the last five years, at least ten current RC faculty (representing 5 academic departments: Biology, Chemistry, Environmental Sciences, Math/Physics/CS, Psychology) have contributed freely available articles, secured for posterity, to a reliable digital repository. These articles can be discovered by searching sites which index high quality, peer-reviewed open access journals such as the Directory of Open Access Journals (www.doaj.org) and PubMed Central (http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/) – a repository for biosciences research funded by the National Institutes of Health.

To facilitate searching for an author’s research, a new solution is to use a persistent digital identifiers, or ORCID, for each researcher – the identifier is similar to an ISBN for books. Researchers can register for their ORCID number at www.orcid.org. ORCID is a non-profit organization supported by a global community of organizational members, including research organizations, publishers, funders, professional associations, etc. ORCID numbers distinguish one researcher from another. Through integration in key research workflows such as manuscript and grant submission, ORCID supports automated linkages between the researcher and his/her professional activities ensuring that one’s work is recognized.

Open access repositories serve as gateways to numerous types of research, scholarship, and learning tools that are freely available across a number of disciplines. Below is a list, though not comprehensive, of some discipline specific open access repositories. Start here if you’re looking for something specific, or if you just want to browse.

The first stop:

- **OpenDOAR** ([http://opendoar.org/](http://opendoar.org/)) is an authoritative directory of academic open access repositories with over 2,600 repositories.

For the Humanities, try these:

- **Folkstreams** ([http://www.folkstreams.net/](http://www.folkstreams.net/)) is a video streaming repository of documentary films, produced by independent filmmakers, about American folk or roots cultures. Folkstreams is a non-profit organization set up in the state of Virginia by the Dewey Ballantine Law firm in Washington, DC. The site is hosted by ibiblio.org, a public library and digital archive.
- **History Data Service (HDS)** ([http://diggingintodata.org/repositories/history-data-service-hds](http://diggingintodata.org/repositories/history-data-service-hds)) is housed at the University of Essex. According to the main page, HDS “collects, preserves, and promotes the use of digital resources, which result from or support historical research, learning and teaching.”
- **Open Language Archives Community (OLAC)** ([http://www.language-archives.org/](http://www.language-archives.org/)) is an international partnership of institutions and individuals who are creating a worldwide virtual library of language resources.
- **Oxford Text Archive (OTA)** ([http://ota.ox.ac.uk/](http://ota.ox.ac.uk/)) is hosted by Oxford University. From the site: “OTA develops, collects, catalogues and preserves electronic literary and linguistic resources for use in Higher Education, in research, teaching and learning. The OTA also gives advice on the creation and use of these resources, and is involved in the development of standards and infrastructure for electronic language resources.”

Seeking Social Sciences Open Access Repositories? Try these:

- **Social Science Research Network (SSRN)** ([http://ssrn.com/en/](http://ssrn.com/en/)) is composed of a number of specialized research networks in each of the social sciences. The SSRN eLibrary consists of two parts: an Abstract Database containing abstracts on over 629,200 scholarly working papers and forthcoming papers and an Electronic Paper Collection currently containing over 524,800 downloadable full text documents in Adobe Acrobat pdf format.
- **Research Papers in Economics (RePEc)** ([http://repec.org/](http://repec.org/)) is “a collaborative effort of hundreds of volunteers in 85 countries to enhance the dissemination of research in Economics and related sciences.”

And, in the Sciences? These are great:

- **PubMed Central** ([http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/)) is the U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH) free digital archive which provides open access to biomedical and life sciences journal literature, with 12 months embargo on some of them.

For more information:

- Ask your liaison — [http://libguides.roanoke.edu/faculty](http://libguides.roanoke.edu/faculty)
- Go to Creative Commons — [http://creativecommons.org/](http://creativecommons.org/)