

Perspectives on Open Access: Open-Access News Around the Net

By the Numbers

As of 6 March 2006, the online Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) listed 2081 journals. There were 511 journals searchable at article level and 83,524 articles included in the DOAJ service. In the 30 days preceding those counts, 65 journals had been added. New journals are as varied as the *Journal of the Iranian Chemical Society*, *Reflecting Education* by the Institute of Education (University of London), and *Trials* by BioMed Central on cardiovascular medicine.

From the *Directory of Open Access Journals*,
www.doaj.org

Statistics Show Low Compliance with Open Access at National Institutes of Health

A report from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in January 2006 gave the status of its open-access (OA) policy, which requests that NIH-funded investigators deposit their peer-reviewed articles in PubMed Central. Of an estimated 43,000 papers eligible for deposit in the period 2 May to 31 December 2005, 1636 (only 3.8%) were deposited. The voluntary policy also requests that articles be openly available as soon as possible, but delays of up to 12 months are allowed. Of the deposited articles, 60% were open immediately, 5% after 1 to 3 months, 11% after 4 to 6 months, 1% after 7 to 9 months, and 23% after 10 to 12 months.

From Report on the NIH Public Access Policy by the National Institutes of Health, January 2006, publicaccess.nih.gov/Final_Report_20060201.pdf

US CURES Act Would Mandate Open Access

Senator Joe Lieberman (D-CT) introduced a bill into the US Senate in December that would mandate OA to the bulk of federally funded medical research. Called the American Center for CURES Act of 2005 (S 2104), it is cosponsored by Thad Cochran (R-MS), Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-TX), and Thomas Carper (D-DE). "The CURES Act would create a new agency within the NIH, the American

Center for Cures, whose primary mission would be to translate fundamental research into therapies. The bill is large and covers a lot of territory" but includes Section 499H with an OA mandate and related provisions. "The OA mandate covers research funded by the Department of Health and Human Services." The bill goes beyond the NIH public-access policy in several important ways:

"(1) It requires free online access and does not merely request it.

"(2) It requires deposit at the time of acceptance by a journal.

"(3) It shortens to six months the permissible delay or embargo between deposit and free online access.

"(4) It extends the OA policy beyond the NIH to the other agencies within the Department of Health and Human Services, including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Agency for Healthcare Research.

"(5) It explicitly says that non-compliance may be grounds for the funding agency to refuse future funding.

"(6) It explicitly relies on the existing government purpose license (45 CFR 74.36) instead of publisher consent as the legal basis for disseminating the research results. The NIH acknowledges that the license exists but decided to rely instead on publisher consent, at least for now. By shifting from publisher consent to the regulatory license, the CURES Act will not accommodate publisher resistance."

The text of the bill is posted at thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/D?c109:1:/temp/~c109Pg5YDV.

From SPARC Open Access Newsletter,
Issue 93, 2 January 2006,
www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/newsletter/01-02-06.htm#cures

Hindawi Converts 13 Non Open- Access Journals to Open Access

In February, Hindawi Publishing Corporation converted 13 of its subscription-based journals to OA. Using an author-pays model, "Hindawi now has 25 OA journals, the second-largest set after BioMed Central, and the largest set not

limited to biomedicine. Hindawi publishes OA journals in mathematics, engineering, biology, medicine, and chemistry. This is the largest bulk-conversion of non-OA journals to OA in the history of OA.”

From SPARC Open Access Newsletter, Issue 95, 2 March 2006
www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/newsletter/03-02-06.htm

Indian Academy of Sciences Journals Are “Open Access”

Indian Academy of Sciences publications are OA with full text available as PDF files on each journal’s Web site. Authors are not charged for publishing papers, but there is a charge for print versions of subscriptions. For more information and a list of journals, see the Indian Academy of Sciences Web site, www.ias.ac.in.

New Public Library of Science Journal: Clinical Trials

A new journal of the Public Library of Science (PLOS), PLoS Clinical Trials, is accepting submission of papers. The decision to publish a paper will be based on the quality of reporting rather than results, size, or perceived importance of a trial. PLoS welcomes reports of recently completed clinical trials, earlier unpublished trials of any size or outcome, and planned followup analyses. For more information, see clinicaltrials.plosjournals.org.

From Public Library of Science,
www.plos.org

National Center for Biotechnology Information Encourages Common Format for DTD

“The National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI), a center of the National Library of Medicine (NLM), created the Journal Publishing Document Type Definition (DTD) with the intent of providing a common format for the creation of journal content in XML. For journals that have not selected an SGML/XML model, NCBI will encourage the use of this DTD to define the incoming data for PubMed Central, the US National Library of Medicine’s digital archive of life

sciences journal literature.”

From dtd.nlm.nih.gov/publishing

Ukrainian Parliament Recommends an Open-Access Mandate to Publicly Funded Research

On 1 December 2005, the Ukrainian Parliament passed a resolution identifying OA as a matter of high national priority. The resolution asks the appropriate government ministers to launch OA repositories, create OA “national electronic information resources especially with scientific-technical and economical information”, and make deposit in an OA repository a condition of state funding of research grants.

From Open Access News, Thursday, 22 December 2005,
www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/2005_12_18_fosblogarchive.html

Independent Survey Characterizes Author Views on Open Access

A report commissioned by the Publishers Association and the International Association of Scientific, Technical and Medical Publishers gives insight into researcher awareness of and views on OA. Produced by CIBER, an independent publishing think tank based at City University in London, the report, “New Journal Publishing Models: An International Survey of Senior Researchers”, was published in September 2005. It is based on a survey of 5513 authors—typically principal investigators or research-group leaders—who had published in an ISI-indexed journal during 2004, and it is the follow-up of a previous CIBER study conducted in 2004. Ian Rowlands and Dave Nicholas, the authors of the report, found that the research community is now much more aware of the OA issue. From 2004 to 2005, the proportion of researchers who said they knew quite a lot or a lot about OA went from 18% to 30%, and those saying that they know nothing at all about OA went from 34% to 19%. Peer review remains highly valued, and copyright and permission to preprint or postprint on the

Web were found not to be major factors in determining where to publish. Senior authors and researchers believe downloads to be a slightly more credible measure of the usefulness of research than traditional citations, although impact factor remains an important criterion for choosing where to submit a paper. Also, although more than half of authors believed that mass migration to OA would undermine scholarly publishing, a good proportion of them thought that that would probably be a good thing. The report also found that about 8% of respondents were “OA enthusiasts”, and these people were concentrated among the young and people from Asia, Africa, and Eastern Europe and had a tendency toward more applied and clinical fields.

The full report is available from CIBER's Web site at www.ucl.ac.uk/ciber/ciber_2005_survey_final.pdf

Comparing Different Forms of Open-Access Publishing

A study, “The Facts About Open Access”, presents the first substantial body of data about different forms of OA publishing and a baseline for comparison with traditional subscription publishing. For a news release about the study, see www.aaas.org/news/releases/2005/1011access.shtml. Read the full study—sponsored by the American Association for the Advancement of Science, HighWire Press, and the Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers—at www.alpsp.org.

2005 Biggest Year for Book Scanning and Digitization

2005 was the biggest year to date for book scanning and digitization, according to the SPARC OA newsletter. Google received more headlines than all the other projects combined, but “other big projects in 2005 were the Open Content Alliance (including the Internet Archive, Yahoo, and Microsoft), the EU (i2010 Digital Libraries Project), the Library of Congress, Amazon, the Million Book Project, and some private scanning projects by individual book publishers”. According to the article, “together, the projects drew atten-

tion to the value of indexing all information, the fuzziness of fair use, the evidence that free online full-text increases net sales of print editions (at least for some kinds of books), and the urgency of protecting the public domain from further shrinkage and encroachments”.

From SPARC Open Access Newsletter, Issue 93, 2 January 2006, www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/newsletter/01-02-06.htm

CERN Launches an Open-Access Task Force

“On December 14, CERN launched an OA task force to coordinate actions by a group of physics publishers, laboratories, and learned societies, funding agencies, and individual researchers. The task force mandate is to bring about action, not resolutions, and to do so by 2007. In its public statement, CERN noted that its research output was already OA through its institutional repository, but said that ‘this is only a partial solution. We wish for the publishing and archiving systems to converge for a more efficient solution which will benefit the global particle physics community.’” Also see mx2.arl.org/Lists/SPARC-OAForum/Message/2622.html.

From SPARC Open Access Newsletter, Issue 93, 2 January 2006, www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/newsletter/01-02-06.htm