OAR@UoM – University of Malta Library's Institutional Repository

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a. <u>What is OA and what are its benefits?</u>

"Open Access" (OA) to information is the free, immediate, online access to the results of scholarly research, and the right to use and re-use those results as needed as long as the creators are acknowledged. OA is a concept, a movement and an economic model that refers to work that is freely available to users via the internet without financial cost and without economic, legal or technical barriers other than those intrinsic to the internet (Drott, 2006). According to the Budapest Open Access Initiative (BOAI, Open Society Institute, 2001), removing access barriers to this literature will accelerate research, enrich education, share the learning of the information rich with the information poor and vice versa, make this literature as useful as it can be, and lay the foundation for uniting humanity in a common intellectual conversation and quest for knowledge.

OA has the power to transform the way research and scientific inquiry is conducted. It has direct and widespread implications for academia, medicine, science, industry and for society as a whole. OA has the potential to maximize research investments, increase the exposure and use of published research, facilitate the ability to conduct research across available literature and enhance the overall advancement of scholarship. Increased access to research output may potentially increase the use of the published works, the visibility of the author and/or institution, and therefore the impact and citations, especially for higher quality, hence more citable articles are created which creates more research (Brody, Harnad & Carr, 2006; Gargouri et al., 2010; Swan, 2010; Hitchcock, 2011). OA increases the potential to collaborate and also the "social value of science". Research is done by researchers, for the uptake by other researchers and even the public (Salager-Meyer, 2012). Publications in OA permit others to identify errors, to reject or refine theories and to reuse data more openly and effectively (Boulton, 2012).

i. <u>OA as a tool that enables Open innovation and Open education</u>

Open innovation is a strategic game for big companies and one of the most important moves to consider for their innovation leaders is the allocation of funds and resources in the context of open innovation. Henry Chesbrough (2003) in Open Innovation: The new imperative for creating and profiting from technology, discusses companies that must increase the "metabolic rate" at which they access, digest, and utilize knowledge in order to stay competitive and strong in a dynamic market. OA aids this process by providing access to scientific research at no extra costs to businesses.

OA is a fundemental enabler of Open Innovation because research can be carried out more effectively by reducing duplication and allowing for viewing by a larger audience. This audience can further replicate studies to provide more evidence or disproving research more easily. The whole community benefits from OA as research is widely more accessible and researchers have a higher chance of being accredited for their work. Instead of their work being exclusive, OA allows for their work to be visible globally. In a study published in 2008 by Harnard (The University's Mandate to Mandate Open Access) it was shown that OA can increase citations from 25% to over 250%. Intellectual property rights are respected and the authors/creators still holds the copyrights of their work. Since plagiarism checker technologies such as Turn-it-in can search through OA material, having material in OA increases the chances of detecting plagiarism.

OA in a university setting allows for a more effective use of research funds and this brings with it an increase in the visibility of the institution. Since more interdisciplinary areas are being researched, this will allow the university to diversify its human resources and reduce the chances of faculties researching the same topic at the same time using limited sources of funding. OA brings effective management of research funds. A problem at the University of Malta was that research funded by the university was published in various journals, which the university had to pay to have access to. The university was consequently paying for the research and it had to pay again to view the results of that research and have it available for the UoM community.

At its core, OA creates a cycle of information that can only grow by time. A researcher who publishes research in OA will be contributing to the scholarly and scientific community in general. The researcher will also provide other researchers with areas and topics for further research either directly or indirectly, thus research creates more research. This will benefit, the researcher, the institution, the academic community, and the wider world.

OA in academia can eventually result in Open Education (OE). People want to learn. The description of OE from openeducationweek.org describes how OA to knowledge makes it easier for everyone to gain knowledge and improve their environment, both in academic and also in social contexts. The website explains how:

> "By providing free and open access to education and knowledge, we help create a world where students can get additional information, viewpoints and materials to help them succeed. Workers can learn things that will help them on the job. Faculty can draw on resources from all around the world. Researchers can share data and develop new networks. Teachers can find new ways to help students learn. People can connect with others they wouldn't otherwise meet to share ideas and information. Materials can be translated, mixed together, broken apart and openly shared again, increasing access and inviting fresh approaches. Anyone can access educational materials, scholarly articles, and supportive learning communities anytime they want to. Education is available, accessible, modifiable and free." (openeducationweek, 2015)

b. <u>Developing an OA Policy for the UoM</u>

i. <u>The Horizon 2020 framework</u>

Horizon 2020 is the biggest EU Research and Innovation programme ever with nearly €80 billion of funding available over 7 years (2014 to 2020). Horizon 2020 is the financial instrument implementing the Innovation Union, a Europe 2020 flagship initiative aimed at securing Europe's global competitiveness (The European Commission, 2015). According to Horizon 2020 policies research funded by public funds/EU funds must be published in open access after peer-review. This does not specify or suggest whether it should be gold - publication (by journal) of peer-reviewed or final version of research published in open access by a publisher (OA Journals); usually involving article processing charges (APCS), or green OA - researchers/academics submit an electronic copy of peer or non-peer reviewed work in an insitution repository, which provide OA with a stipulated embargo period. It also does not force researchers to submit within their institution's repository.

In accordance with the Horizon 2020 policies, the research must be in OA and the following must be included:

- The terms ["European Union (EU)" and "Horizon 2020"]["Euratom" and Euratom research and training programme 2014-2018"];
- The name of the action, acronym and grant number;
- The publication date, and length of embargo period (in the case of green open access), and
- A persistent identifier.
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The policy should mandate researchers/UoM Academics to submit research created by UoM/EU or Public funds on OAR@UoM (Open access repository at the University of Malta). This will provide Open Access to research created by UoM. A waiver option should be restrictive as much as possible. Instead of Waiver options Embargo periods should be favored. This will restrict academics to opt out of the Policy. Embargo periods should not be more than 12 months (ideally not more than 6 months where the research is of scientific nature).

The Policy should clearly state that once the research is published it should automatically be submitted on the IR. The OA policy should also supersede Publisher policies. Researchers/academics should be aware that the OA policy of the institution will legally bind them with submissions on the IR.

ii.   The UoM OA Policy

The UoM launched OAR@UoM, its Institutional Repository (IR), in September 2014. Institutional repositories (IRs) are major players in the OA movement because for research institutions, IRs provide a platform where OA can be implemented. Through OAR@UoM, the UoM Library's goal is to bring together the Maltese research community by enhancing their awareness on OA; however, in order to guarantee that researchers submit material onto the IR in OA, the UoM has to issue a mandate that clearly outlines the responsibly involved with such an obligation. Hence the development of an OA policy at the institutional level is needed. For this reason a committee was formed by a number of librarians from the UoM Library to develop an OA Policy that requires research being created at the UoM to be publicly available on OAR@UoM. Five major tasks were identified for this to happen. Task 1 required all the librarians involved to familiarize themselves with the OA movement and examine examples of other OA Policies from other universities or research institutions. Task 2 was to identify the main themes and compiling a first draft. Using the Horizon 2020 framework as guidelines and looking at other Open Access Repositories directories like ROARMAP and OpenDOAR several themes for an OA Policy were identified.

It was decided that the OA Policy shall reflect such themes by dividing the policy in different sections. The first section deals with clear definitions of OA, peer-review material and non-peer-reviewed material. This needs to be clear as to provide guidance on what will be and will not be accepted as submissions. The next section deals with an outline of responsibilities of stakeholders. For example, the UoM should provide an OA platform for researchers and also provide support regarding copyrights.

The authors/researchers must ensure compliance with the OA Policy while also making sure that they own the copyrights of their submitted material. They can further request embargoes instead of waiver options/opting out except specific cases which need to be tackled on a case by case basis. The Library will be dealing primarily with Green OA, where no charges are imposed on submitters to make research submitted OA compliant. The other type of OA is Gold, where an article processing charge needs to be paid by the submitter to the journal in order for the research to be published in OA.

The Library shall manage the IR, provide training to submitters about OAR@UoM, review the metadata of submissions and also be responsible of marketing and promotional campaigns about OAR@UoM. The third section is all about copyright issues. Each submitter will retain the copyright on their submissions. Furthermore, the mandatory OA policy will mandate that every research funded or supported by the University, either in full or in part, must deposit the final research paper/report in OAR@UoM. This mandate will take priority over publisher's agreements unless the research was published in OA journals that allow for IR submissions. The final section of the policy will tackle the waiver options and embargo periods. The policy will force researchers/UoM Academics to submit research on OAR@UoM and provide OA to their research created/funded by the UoM or the EU.

During Task 3 the draft will be refined and reviewed by the UoM Legal Executive Dr Ruth Baldacchino to iron out any legal discrepancies. Dr Ruth Baldacchino will also make sure that there are no inconsistencies within the policy and other UoM policies. Once approved the draft Policy will be forwarded to the University of Minho in Portugal for their review and comparison with their own Policies. The University of Minho was chosen as it has a very solid OA policy and the UoM Library already has good connection with the institution. Once reviewed and approved Task 4 and 5 required a presentation to be delivered to the Library Committee. Once approved by the Library Committee, the Policy would be forwarded to the Registrar's office to be approved by the UoM Senate.

c. <u>How will this affect research created by the University of Malta?</u>

The OA Policy aims to inspire more research to be proposed and carried out at the UoM. With the IR in place and a Policy that mandates submission in the IR, researchers will be able to see this as an opportunity to become more visible thanks to the benefits attributed to the OA IR, OAR@UoM. This also impacts the university as a whole due to the fact that research produced will be more visible and also preserved in one location. The OA Policy aids in developing a broader and more accessible understanding about research and education where the main beneficiaries are students and people interesting in learning and/or creating more research.

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