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HUNOR: The Collaboration of Hungarian Open Access Repositories

Gyongyi Karacsony*

*University and National Library, University of Debrecen, 4032 Debrecen, Hungary

Abstract

The HUNOR (HUNgarian Open Access Repositories) consortium was established in 2008 by the libraries of Hungarian higher education institutions and the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences to advance national open access practices. The members of HUNOR are dedicated to promoting Hungarian research both nationally and internationally and to achieving effective dissemination of scientific outputs through the implementation of a national infrastructure of open access repositories. Other proposed activities include the organization of a methodology centre, adopting international know-how and standards, the establishment of complementary scientific communication channels, and international relations.
As coordinator of HUNOR, the author presents an overview of the Hungarian research repository infrastructure, the achievements, difficulties and goals of the HUNOR Collaboration.

Keywords: open acces;, institutional repositories; scholarly communication

1. Introduction: Global Trends in Scholarly Communication

The formal system of scholarly publishing is being replaced by new models based on different attitudes in financing, technology, management, rights and access. We are living in an age of radical transition, where all stakeholders are forced to face the change and work out their own solutions. The years of harmonizing these concepts are yet to come.

After some years of strong opposition, international for-profit-publishers have started to acknowledge open access and its strategies by publishing their policies on author self-archiving and by offering author-pay-options (Open Choice, etc.) for researchers.

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* Corresponding author: Gyongyi Karacsony. Tel.: +36-52-518-502; fax: +36-52-518-605.
E-mail address: gyk@lib.unideb.hu

Research funders are deeply interested in OA and they have issued mandates to increase researcher involvement and available OA content.

Scholars as readers are the main beneficiaries of openly available publications and scientific data, and they use it - even if not knowingly. The scholar-as-author attitudes, however, vary widely among fields of science and geographical regions. There is a growing general awareness of open access detectable among researchers, but the practical details of the ways and strategies, subject and institutional repositories, rights, duties and opportunities remain unknown for them.

Research libraries are playing an intensive role on the OA stage. They have integrated institutional repositories (IRs) into their service portfolio and they perform massive advocacy programs to inform university administration and to get authors involved in open access projects.

2. The National Research Environment in Hungary

2.1. Research institutions

The global transformation of scholarly communication is penetrating into the scientific communities of Eastern and Central Europe.

Although the concept of open access was born in Budapest ten years ago, Hungarian research institutions are slow in reacting to the changes it implies. Research libraries are getting ready to take the opportunity of becoming the centers of scholarly communication in their institutions.

Hungarian research institutions are organized into two groups:

-70 higher education institutions (19 state universities, 7 non-state universities, 10 state colleges, and 34 non-state colleges)

-The Hungarian Academy of Sciences and its research institutes. The Academy maintains 48 research institutes and other institutions (libraries, archives, information systems, etc.) assisting their work.

2.2. Major research funders

The Hungarian Scientific Research Fund (Hungarian abbreviation: OTKA) has been the major funding agency of basic science and scholarship since 1986 when the transition to competitive research funding started in the country. The principles of operation were modelled on the practice of German and American research. Today OTKA is an independent non-profit organization „with the objectives to provide independent support to scientific research activities and infrastructure, to promote scientific achievements of international standards, and to provide assistance to young researchers."(http://www.otka.hu/?akt_menu=991&set_lang=991)

The European Commission has a growing share in funding national and international projects through consecutive Framework Programs. Several scholars in STM are involved in large scale projects supported by global funders like the Wellcome Trust, the National Institutes of Health, and CERN.

2.3. Mandates

OTKA signed the Berlin Declaration in 2008. Since then, a paragraph is included on OA in the OTKA Grant Agreement, but the Fund has not introduced a monitoring system on author compliance.

A Government Decree in 2001 mandated the open availability of PhD theses in the country (51/2001. (IV. 3.)). A subsequent Decree in 2007 (33/2007. (III. 7.)) assigned this responsibility to universities and their doctoral schools. Further regulation from the Hungarian Doctoral Council (http://www.doktori.hu/index.php?menuid=103&lang=EN) reinforces the Decree on the practical level.

2.4. Research Libraries

Similarly to global trends, the role of Hungarian research libraries is changing. University presses and museums have been integrated into the libraries' organizations, and research libraries are assigned new tasks in the scholarly communication process. There is a growing demand for bibliometric and scientometric services from university administration, departments and from researchers alike. Several university projects aim at the dissemination of the universities' scholarly output where libraries are actively involved.

3. HUNOR: From Conception to Operation

3.1. Perspectives

Hungarian research librarians have always followed the global movement and events in scholarly communication. Open access, however, has not received attention in the national discourse, which blocked the development of a broader collaboration of all stakeholders.

Certain groups of the Hungarian research community are aware of open access and its benefits, but they are still reluctant to provide open access to their publications. The main obstacles are a lack of knowledge about relevant copyright issues and the resistance by researchers to allocate time and effort to the depositing process. Advocacy programs (attached to a network of institutional repositories) by higher education libraries could be an effective way of increasing national research visibility and impact.

On the basis of their international contacts and involvement in the DRIVER Community, research librarians realized the need for a national cooperation in the following areas of open access: infrastructure and technology, strategy, advocacy, coordination, and 'presence' both nationally and internationally. A Consortium Agreement was signed by all Hungarian university libraries and the Library of the Academy of Sciences in December 2008.

The members of the HUNOR (HUNgarian Open Access Repositories) consortium are dedicated to promoting Hungarian research both nationally and internationally and to achieving effective dissemination of scientific outputs through the implementation of a national infrastructure of open access repositories. Other proposed activities include the organization of a methodology centre, adopting international know-how and standards, the establishment of complementary scientific communication channels, and international relations.

3.2. Activities and results

Member institutions delegate colleagues to the HUNOR meetings, working groups and mailing list. HUNOR is coordinated and the necessary infrastructure is provided by the National and University Library of the University of Debrecen.

The first delivery of HUNOR as a project was the Hungarian language information portal www.open-access.hu to satisfy the need for a point of reference for the different disciplines and stakeholders. The first version of the portal was a simple translation of the German www.open-access.net website, but regular revisions of the pages make them more and more tailor-made for the Hungarian research community.

Having established the necessary communication channels, we conducted a survey among research libraries in early 2009 to create a map of the existing infrastructure. Survey questions were based on „The European Repository Landscape: Inventory study into present type and level of OAI compliant Digital Repository activities in the EU" (http://dare.uva.nl/aup/nl/record/260225).

14 repositories in 9 institutions were reported in the survey, where many of the 'repositories' were based on bibliographic databases (with or without full-text attached), and only four of them were OAI-PMH compliant. Most of the articles in these repositories were final published versions (publishers' PDF) in the human and social

sciences. These repositories function as archives for departmental and society journals. No significant signs of self-archiving open access post-print material could be detected.

Further actions of HUNOR were based on te findings of the survey, namely: guidance in choice of software and other technical issues, case studies, best practices, advocacy, education, tutorials, copyright issues, involvement in international projects and co-operations. Some references were also made to the need for a repository manager community.

In the past three years we managed to allocate resources to maintaining the open-access.hu portal, which does serve as a point of reference for researchers, librarians, administrators and OTKA as well. We translated the DRIVER Guidelines into Hungarian to provide aid in setting up and maintaining repository services.

HUNOR serves as a methodology center for those interested in repositories, scholarly journals & publishing, and open access in general. The HUNOR Technical Working Group members have presented several tutorials and presentations on OA-related technical issues.

The Hungarian version of the SHERPA/RoMEO database was published in May 2012, and we have started to feed it with Hungarian publishers' data.

University of Debrecen represents HUNOR in the PEER (www.peerproject.eu), OpenAIRE and OpenAIREplus (www.openaire.eu) projects, and provides National Helpdesk services in the FP7 Open Access Pilot. Three HUNOR member institutions represent the country in COAR, the Coalition of Open Access Repositories. Dissertations from a growing number of HUNOR partners are harvested by the DART-Europe (www.dart-europe.eu) portal. We are also represented in LIBER and actively involved in projects on unique identification of European researchers.

There is a growing need for help and advice concerning OA journals. Therefore we successfully established a direct contact with the DOAJ (www.doaj.org) team. More and more Hungarian departmental and society journals sense the need for international visibility and turn to HUNOR for guidance.

3.3. Plans

HUNOR partners have taken action to establish an OA culture in Hungary. Further expansion of our community will lead us to the next phase of this process. An active involvement of govermental and university administration would result in institutional mandates, central support and finance for national OA projects. Until then, we are working on a substantial revision and upgrade of the open-access.hu information portal both in content and design. As a result of EC commitment to the open availability of research outputs (http://ec.europa.eu/research/science-society/index.cfm?fuseaction=public.topic&id=1301), there is an increasing demand on behalf of the researchers to use the available repository infrastructure to archive their research results. After the achievement of a critical mass of available content in institutional repositories, a central national aggregator service is a must in the next three to five years.

4. Conclusion

The HUNgarian Open Repositories consortium is an initiation of research libraries in the country. In the past three years we have established a professional network of librarians who consult regularly and exchange views and experiences. I believe that we have had a positive impact on the growing number of repositories in research institutions.

Our first inventory of what we had at the beginning contained only a few items, so we were free to follow a demand-driven work-plan. Our strategy resulted in Hungarian documents, advocacy materials, and an information portal that are available for everybody.

We have built a solid basis for a wider national consultation and have taken the preliminary steps for the active involvement of more stakeholders.

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