

Prof. G. Stock

**10th Anniversary of the Berlin Declaration on Open Access
Berlin Open Access Conference**

19. November 2013 (13.00 Uhr, BBAW, Leibniz-Saal)

– Welcome Speech –

State Secretary Schütte,
Director Genet,
President Gruss,
Ladies and Gentlemen, dear colleagues,

On behalf of the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, let me welcome you all here in Berlin to the “*Berlin Open Access Conference*”.

Our *Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge in the Sciences and Humanities* initiated ten years ago has now become probably one of the most important declarations on this issue. During the last ten years, more than 430 institutions signed this declaration. It was an initiative in a time when many researchers felt that the way how to publish their scientific manuscripts, articles and contributions had to be changed. And the Budapest Open Access Initiative, the ECHO-Charta and the Bethesda-Statement on Open Access Publishing were issued in exactly the same spirit.

Luckily – and this is probably the most important characteristic – the “*Berlin Declaration*” included also our cultural heritage which is of great importance for academies like ours but also for museums, libraries and archives. It was probably this inclusiveness which made our “*Berlin Declaration*” so successful.

There were several lines of reasons to start with *Open Access*:

First of all, there were reasons within the science system itself – the need to disseminate scientific results within a relatively short period of time instead of waiting longtime, sometimes more than a year for publication.

Second, the desire to make the new information publicly and globally known – that means independent of the availability of scientific journals in libraries and,

Third, to reuse the data and publications, if needed, in a different and alternative context.

In some cases it was also felt that the peer review process albeit of elementary importance in some cases showed some weaknesses. On the one side the limitation of some scientific journals concerning content of course led to a variety and a multiplicity of journals but still for some contributions the fit was not always perfect. The second line of arguments was concentrated on financial issues, because not all authors could afford the fee to publishing, not all libraries could afford to buy the journals, and sometimes it was even asked if the practice that publicly funded results should be the source of private earnings of the publishers is correct.

Looking back, the concentration on inner-science reasons, such as availability, speed and distribution could and should have led to better communication and joint actions of publishers and scientists, could have led earlier to agreements which now seem more feasible. At least I believe so!

There are a few issues which still need clarification: It is not clarified yet that the producer of the data, the scientist, has the right to reuse the published data – if needed – without highly sophisticated time restrictions – one year and up to three years when it comes to the publications in journals or books.

The second point is long-term archiving and accessibility of all the published material. This asks for a tremendous effort which cannot be solved at an institutional or national level. Here we need international, at least European initiatives.

There is apart from these more practical issues an interesting theoretical issue concerning impact factors etc.: How long will the today used impact factors prevail? There are efforts on the way which clearly predict the end of this instrument to measure reputation, and there are ideas that this would be replaced by the opinion of the many who would immediately react on *Open Access* Publications, comment on and prove their “*new*” value. So the impact factor would be linked to the individual publication and not being derived from the prestige of the journal.

We as Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities but also as a representative of ALLEA, the federation of all European Academies, fully support Open Access and we have pointed that clearly out in our recent statement on this issue which you will find here!!

ALLEA makes clear that it fully supports and encourages the European Commission to assess *Open Access* Policies and also to provide the much needed funds in order to move towards Open Access and its implementation. And we have made recommendations for a growing transparency regarding the terms and conditions negotiated between publishers and public institutions which foster research. We are encouraging institutions to include in the career evaluation of researchers not only traditional publications in peer reviewed journals but also publications in *Open Mode*, and we are asking for guidelines to train, to inform and to instruct authors about open access policies, copyright issues and contracts with publishers.

Our postulates second the objectives expressed in the February 2013 memorandum of the Obama Administration which demand that full public access to the meta data of publications is ensured without charge upon first publication in the data format that provides for inter-operability with current and future search technologies. And the publications need to be properly stored for long-term preservation and access to the content without charge, according to widely agreed standards.

Ladies and gentlemen, looking back at the development of scientific publishing, the ten years of the *Berlin Declaration on Open Access* movement have initiated a re-thinking of how we publish and has also given an opportunity for a much needed instantaneous dialogue of scientific results on a global level. Open access allows the accessibility of scientific data at a speed in which scientific data are created.

And we are still in the process of learning that the principles for *Open Access* can differ between different research areas. But the development has shown that we can comply with these different needs and necessities.

Open Access, ladies and gentlemen, and this is a conviction of ALLEA – *All European Academies* and also of my academy, the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, is probably the best way not only to demonstrate but also to realize what we call global partnership in science.

Welcome to this conference and keep going strong and fast!