

# THE ROAD TO OPEN ACCESS

## *A guide to the implementation of the Berlin Declaration*

### **Preamble**

The signatories of the Berlin Declaration <http://www.zim.mpg.de/openaccess-berlin/berlindeclaration.html> are committed to achieving full open access to scholarly communication in order to realize the benefits of world-wide access to knowledge.

*In order to implement the Berlin Declaration institutions should*

*1) Implement a policy to require their researchers to deposit a copy of all their published articles in an open access repository.*

*and*

*2) Encourage their researchers to publish their research articles in open access journals where a suitable journal exists and provide the support to enable that to happen.*

### **1. Where we start from.**

- The opportunity for universal access to the results of academic research provided by the availability of the internet and the WWW
- The superior capabilities of the digital medium for scholarly communication
- The need for rigorous quality assessment of research
- The benefits from the inter-connection of publications with immediate access to primary source data
- The academic community's need to drive future developments in scholarly communication

### **2. Where we aim to be.**

- The publication of the work of researchers according to the principles of open access as defined in the Berlin Declaration
- The evaluation of open access content according to the highest standards of quality assurance

- The universal availability of a comprehensive source of human knowledge and cultural heritage that has been approved by the academic community

### **3. First steps along the road (already taken).**

- The definition of goals in the Berlin Declaration
- The commitment of signatory organizations to promote the goals identified in the Berlin Declaration
- The announcement of the Berlin Declaration together with an invitation to other research organizations to declare their support
- The design of a “roadmap” to assist organizations in planning their strategy in relation to the principles of the Berlin Declaration
- BUT many more steps need to be taken to achieve the Berlin Declaration goals
- These steps are a mix of immediate, medium-term and long-term actions

### **4. Raising awareness.**

- The design of an advocacy programme for internal communication within organizations addressed to researchers, to organizational leaders, and to research administrators
- The advocacy programme should identify the value added to the organization’s work through the implementation of open access
- Communication of the goals of the Berlin Declaration to political players together with a call for financial and legal conditions favourable to open access
- Encouragement to learned societies to support open access through permissions to deposit articles in repositories or through the conversion of journals to an open access business model

### **5. Organizational policy.**

- Each organization committing to the goals of the Berlin Declaration should formulate a policy identifying the steps to be taken in implementing the goals

- The policy should include steps which can be taken by all members of the organization's research staff to deposit research articles in the organizational repository with minimal additional time and effort on the part of the researcher
- The policy should also include financial support for the organization's research staff in meeting publication-charges for open access journals

## **6. Creating a sustainable infrastructure.**

- Organizations (both institutional and subject-based) committing to open access should establish an open web-site repository into which their researchers may deposit copies of journal articles and research reports
- The repository should be compliant with international standards for interoperability such as OAI-PMH and in particular use a metadata structure which meets the needs of the research community
- Quality assurance procedures should be adopted indicating to the reader the status of items in the repository
- The repository should adopt preservation techniques to ensure the long-term availability of the content it contains
- Appropriate search and retrieval tools should be adopted to facilitate access to the repository content
- Trustworthy statistics should be kept of the use of the repository content and incorporated in the organization's research evaluation exercises
- A sustainable financial and administrative structure should be set up for the organizational repository

## **7. Establishing a legal framework.**

- A legal framework should be established for the organizational repository governing the relationship with authors, publishers and users of the repository content
- The organization should make clear to researchers its policy on deposit in the repository, whether mandatory or recommended
- A scholarship-friendly licence such as Creative Commons should be adopted to govern the relationship with authors and with users of the content
- Publishers should be asked to accept the terms of the licence adopted by the repository for content they have published

- The liability for any infringement of third party rights should be set out in the licence adopted

## **8. Supporting open access journals.**

- The recognition within an organization's research strategy that the dissemination of research results is an indispensable element in the research process
- Signatory organizations may consider encouraging the use of research grants to pay open access publication-charges for their researchers
- Support for learned society publishers willing to transition to an open access business model
- Support for research into a business model ensuring the long-term viability of open access journals

## **9. Long-term organizational commitment.**

- Ensure that the Berlin Declaration principles are built into the organizational strategy
- Create a group or committee to oversee the organizational commitment to open access
- Assign specific responsibilities to specific members of staff
- Build repository costs and open access journal support into the organizational budget
- Maintain contact with other organizations implementing the Berlin Declaration and participate in working groups established to exchange experience on open access procedures and developments

## **10. Removing the barriers on the way.**

- Much has been achieved but much more remains to be achieved before we can say that we are close to reaching the goals set out in the Berlin Declaration
- We need to understand where the barriers lie
- Author motivation? (make deposit as easy as possible and make open access "respectable")
- Institutional motivation? (demonstrate benefits to the institution)
- Political support? (form alliances with powerful allies)

- Publisher/learned society fears? (demonstrate that open access is no threat to their survival)
- Barriers need to be removed at every stage along the road but the Berlin Declaration goals can be achieved through action by the research community at an organizational and at an individual level

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