

OpenUCT at the Berlin 11 Satellite Conference

The [Berlin 11 Satellite Conference](#) for students and early stage researchers, funded by the Max-Planck Society, kicked off on the 18th of November. Sixty delegates from 35 different countries convened at The New Malthouse in Berlin to discuss our involvement in making scholarly and scientific research more easily accessible online. The central objective of the conference was to highlight the current state of open access and to map the way forward.

Heather Joseph, Executive Director of SPARC, began the meeting by contextualizing the current state of open access and what can be done to increase involvement. She stated that if open access is to become the norm then we need to create the infrastructure to make this possible because the current system does not support openness.

Unsurprisingly, the issue of quality assurance in open access journals arose as a discussion point. It was suggested that open access journals must either come up to par with the standards associated with closed journals or be removed from the marketplace.

Though some closed journals have begun considering open access terms in an attempt to evolve with market demands a level of rhetoric befalls this developing dialogue. Elsevier's CC-NC license was criticised for not fully supporting the open access agenda, which instead requires a CC-BY license. Cameron Neylon, Director of Public Library of Science, points out that merely having access to read an article is not enough, re-use is equally important. We have to remember that public access to research is not open access and allowing publishers to define the language of open access will dilute the process altogether. This raises the point that open access literacy is a fundamental building block in the development of openness.



So how can we promote open access? As mentioned above we need to **understand** what open access means before we can take the process further. Once we have fully grasped the meaning, requirements and goals of open access then we should **educate** colleagues, friends and especially our institutions and universities as they have the power to **adopt** open access policies that will have a mass effect. Finally, ongoing advocacy is necessary to stimulate the spread of open access. Long-term commitments to **advocacy** will keep the lobbyists at bay. It was noted that even though powerful industries and companies fund anti-open access lobbyists we have strength in numbers to fight back. We can act together with communal activities like the Open Access Button, as well as acting apart by driving the open access agenda in our respective institutions and countries.

The conference established a stronger network among open access proponents and allowed for the sharing of ideas and collaboration on future projects. We were reminded that if we stand united in our cause the push for open access would inevitably be more powerful in the coming years.

by Uvania Naidoo

[Blog post](#)



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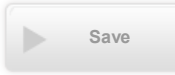
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