



INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF LIBRARY ASSOCIATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS  
FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DES ASSOCIATIONS DE BIBLIOTHECAIRES ET DES BIBLIOTHEQUES  
INTERNATIONALER VERBAND DER BIBLIOTHEKARISCHEN VEREINE UND INSTITUTIONEN  
FEDERACION INTERNACIONAL DE ASOCIACIONES DE BIBLIOTECARIOS Y BIBLIOTECAS  
МЕЖДУНАРОДНАЯ ФЕДЕРАЦИЯ БИБЛИОТЕЧНЫХ АССОЦИАЦИЙ И УЧРЕЖДЕНИЙ  
国际图书馆协会与机构联合会

الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات ومؤسسات المكتبات

Ms. Farida Shaheed  
Independent Expert in the field of cultural rights  
OHCHR – Palais Wilson  
United Nations Office at Geneva  
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Switzerland

December 16<sup>th</sup> 2011

Dear Ms. Shaheed

I am pleased to submit the response of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) to the OHCHR's public consultation on "The right to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and its applications". This submission was prepared by the IFLA Open Access Taskforce and has been endorsed by the IFLA Governing Board.

For any further information, the contact persons in relation to this submission are Lars Bjornshauge, Chair of the IFLA Open Access Taskforce (email: [elbjoern0603@gmail.com](mailto:elbjoern0603@gmail.com)) and the IFLA Director of Policy and Advocacy, Stuart Hamilton (email: [stuart.hamilton@ifla.org](mailto:stuart.hamilton@ifla.org)).

Yours sincerely,

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## Response to the Consultation on the right to enjoy benefits of scientific progress and its applications

Submitted by the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA)

December 16, 2011

### Introductory Comments

We would like to thank the UN Independent Expert in the field of cultural rights for the opportunity to provide our response to the Questionnaire on the Right to Enjoy the Benefits of Scientific Progress and its Applications.

We welcome the Question 5. *What legal, administrative, policy or other measures have been adopted/are under consideration to eliminate barriers to scientific communication and collaboration, such as censorship, restrictions on access to the Internet or on free availability of scientific literature and journals?* And we would like to provide our response to it.

We do not have any objections with regard to our reply being posted on the OHCHR website.

The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA <http://www.ifla.org/>) is the leading international body representing the interests of library and information services and their users. We now have 1600 Members in approximately 150 countries around the world. IFLA is committed to the principles of freedom of access to information and the belief that universal and equitable access to information is vital for the social, educational, cultural, democratic, and economic well-being of people, communities, and organizations.

### **Question 5. What legal, administrative, policy or other measures have been adopted/are under consideration to eliminate barriers to scientific communication and collaboration, such as censorship, restrictions on access to the Internet or on free availability of scientific literature and journals?**

We would like to focus on free availability of scientific literature and journals. Open access is the now known name for a concept, a movement and a business model whose goal is to provide free access and re-use of scientific knowledge in the form of research articles, monographs, data and related materials. Open access does this by shifting today's prevalent business models of after-publication payment by subscribers to a funding model that does not charge readers or their institutions for access.

We adhere to the definition of open access used in the Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge in the Sciences and Humanities<sup>1</sup>:

*Establishing open access as a worthwhile procedure ideally requires the active commitment of each and every individual producer of scientific knowledge and holder of cultural heritage. Open access contributions include original scientific research results, raw data and metadata, source materials, digital representations of pictorial and graphical materials and scholarly multimedia material.*

*Open access contributions must satisfy two conditions:*

- 1. The author(s) and right holder(s) of such contributions grant(s) to all users a free, irrevocable, worldwide, right of access to, and a license to copy, use, distribute, transmit and display the work publicly and to make and distribute derivative works, in any digital medium for any responsible purpose, subject to proper attribution of authorship (community standards, will continue to provide the mechanism for enforcement of proper attribution and responsible use of the published work, as they do now), as well as the right to make small numbers of printed copies for their personal use.*
- 2. A complete version of the work and all supplemental materials, including a copy of the permission as stated above, in an appropriate standard electronic format is deposited (and thus published) in at least one online repository using*

<sup>1</sup> <http://oa.mpg.de/berlin-prozess/berliner-erklarung/>



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*suitable technical standards (such as the Open Archive definitions) that is supported and maintained by an academic institution, scholarly society, government agency, or other well-established organization that seeks to enable open access, unrestricted distribution, inter-operability, and long-term archiving.”*

As the rate and amount of research publication in various forms is rapidly expanding, the current predominant scholarly communication model – via scholarly journals subscriptions – is hardly sustainable and not working effectively in the interests of the global community. Scholarly journals are subject to rapid price escalations and there are no clear and consistent correlations between price, quality and impact. Even the most well-endowed research library cannot afford to purchase all of the content requested by its faculty and students.

The situation is even more critical for smaller college and universities and largely unacceptable for institutions in the developing world, with severely limited or no budgets. Existing development initiatives to some extent compensate for the lack of access to crucial information, but these initiatives are dependent on publisher decisions, which are made unilaterally.

There is growing dissatisfaction among major players. Authors are concerned because their work is not seen by all their peers, they may not get the global recognition they seek, and often they continue, even unnecessarily, to transfer copyright, which limits the use and reuse of their own works. Readers cannot access all the scholarly literature they need, and thus their research activities can be less effective. Society as a whole suffers from inefficient communication channels that prevent innovations and development.

The widespread sharing of research results is an essential component of governments' investment in science. Faster and wider sharing of knowledge fuels the advancement of science and, accordingly, the return of health, economic, and social benefits back to the public.

Librarians have been amongst the most vocal advocates for open access. There are significant gains to making research and research results available without financial, legal and technical barriers to access. Researchers benefit from increased visibility, usage and impact for their work. Open access helps to publicise institutions' research strengths. For publishers, open access brings maximum visibility, increased readership and impact for the contents; it means that a greatly improved dissemination service is being provided for research. Open access enhances the flow of knowledge between North and South and also between South and South.

Libraries play an essential role in open access developments by their expertise in building infrastructure, in creating user-friendly services of high quality and in securing long-term access. Librarians have shown their support for open access by signing open access initiatives and petitions. They have educated faculty and administrators about evolving scholarly communication environment. Libraries have partnered with faculty and research managers to set up open access repositories and to help faculty and students deposit their research outputs. Librarians have provided support in research data curation and sharing. They have helped scholarly publishers to publish open access journals and books, and they have worked with educators to produce open educational resources ensuring the quality of digital content, its reuse and sharing. Open access has thus changed the profile of academic and research libraries. National libraries are involved in developing national open access policies and supporting national research infrastructures and open access to cultural heritage. Public libraries disseminate open access content targeted for their users. And, according to the IFLA World Report 2010, the vast majority of library associations support open access.

## Open Access Policies

Many research funding institutions already have open access policies and many are thinking about them. Universities, research organizations and research funders in Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, China, Colombia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kenya, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Russia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States, Venezuela and Vietnam, as well as European research funders such as European Commission and European Research Council, and international organizations such as Wellcome Trust, CERN, ICRISAT



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International Cross Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics and EUR-OCEANS Consortium have introduced open access policies (requiring mandatory deposition of research outputs in open access repositories). The list and overview of such policies are available in ROARMAP.<sup>2</sup>

There are roughly two options for creating open access policies. One option is when an author or an institution seeks permission from a publisher, and only distributes open access copies when they succeed in obtaining it. Second option is when an institution asks faculty to retain the right to provide open access (and grant the institution non-exclusive permission to provide open access), even if faculty transfer all their other rights to publishers.<sup>3</sup>

For those interested in introducing open access policies in their institutions recommendations and model documents are available.<sup>4</sup> And Enabling Open Scholarship (EOS) provided a selection of Case studies: mandatory university open access policies to demonstrate the benefits of introducing open access policies.<sup>5</sup>

We believe it is important to promote and advocate for open access to publicly funded research, educational resources and cultural heritage. Open access is required for the progress of science, the development of society and true citizenship. And open access provides users with the access they desire and enables libraries to maximize their role, thus improving global health and human well-being.

We are committed to promote open access in national policies; stimulate library members to promote open access in their communities and to implement measures to enlarge the impact of open access; enrich the local and national information infrastructure in order to stimulate open access; assist in the work for national policies regarding open access to knowledge, as well as to publicly funded research and cultural heritage; support organizations, programmes, initiatives and services that are working for the promotion of open access. And we encourage other like-minded organizations to follow our approach.

For further information, please contact:

- Lars Bjornshauge, Chair of the IFLA Open Access Taskforce ([elbjoern0603@gmail.com](mailto:elbjoern0603@gmail.com))
- IFLA Director of Policy and Advocacy, Stuart Hamilton ([stuart.hamilton@ifla.org](mailto:stuart.hamilton@ifla.org)).

<sup>2</sup> <http://roarmap.eprints.org/>

<sup>3</sup> Three principles for university open access policies by Peter Suber: <http://www.arl.org/sparc/advocacy/three-principles-for-univ.shtml>

<sup>4</sup> The Open Access Scholarly Information Sourcebook Institutional Policies section: <http://bit.ly/6beVmU>; The main issues to take into account in developing an institutional open access policy: <http://bit.ly/mRIqj4> and The Optimal Open Access Policy for Institutions: <http://bit.ly/tjmew1>

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.openscholarship.org/jcms/c\\_6225/case-studies-mandatory-university-open-access-policies](http://www.openscholarship.org/jcms/c_6225/case-studies-mandatory-university-open-access-policies)