

Scholarly Society Journals in Transition to Open Access

Report on the workshop organized by the Knowledge Exchange Open Access Working Group, with the assistance of SPARC Europe and the Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association, held in Tallinn 21 September 2011

Report prepared by Drs Astrid van Wesenbeeck, Executive Director SPARC Europe, and Frederick Friend, Honorary Director Scholarly Communication UCL

Workshop objectives

The objectives Knowledge Exchange had in sponsoring the workshop were:

- to identify good practice in existing business models for scholarly society journals, particularly in relation to sustainability and the achievement of benefits to the scholarly community
- to discuss further actions Knowledge Exchange might take in collaboration with other organisations to support scholarly societies in a transition to open access.

The workshop was organised in conjunction with OASPA connecting with their COASP2011 conference. It was attended by 35 participants, who came from a variety of backgrounds and countries.

Key points from presentations

Seven speakers with experience in transitioning journals to open access identified key factors in the transition process. Key points from their presentations are summarised below.

Saskia Franken (Utrecht University): the transition has to be prepared and executed carefully, step by step, overcoming impediments and developing a sustainable business model, greater visibility being the biggest reward.

Seb Schmoller (ALT): talking to stakeholders pays off in a successful transition, while drafting a request for proposals from potential publishers and contract negotiation are essential features, and growth in esteem and use are key objectives

Helle Goldman (*Polar Research*): involve the editorial board in decision-making, allow time for the negotiation of termination with the existing publisher and for the process to choose a new publisher. This should yield the valuable result of a large increase in articles accessed.

Caroline Sutton (Co-Action Publishing): use the transition to review journal infrastructure and policies, plan on how to handle the journal archive and plan financially, and go for a maximum OA strategy

Kevin Stranack (PKP): using technology, increasing efficiencies can be gained through new economic models. Expand the conversation to develop relationships, and knowledge-sharing with and between the journal community

Eleonora Dagiene (VGTU Press): aim to be visible, use a different Open Journal (OJS) system for each journal. This will allow for different choices while allowing for a common style, and adopt DOI and other technologies to assist identification



**Helle Goldman
presenting**

General lessons were not to generalize and to raise awareness. It is valuable to explain and bring journal related people “on board”. The process involves a lot of talking and this requires a lot of time.

Workshop outcomes and next steps

The Workshop concluded with a discussion of “next steps”. Two ways forward were recommended to assist more scholarly societies in gaining the benefits of open access when transitioning from a subscription business model for their journals.

The two steps recommended for further discussion and action are:

1. To create a tool kit, which will act as a road map for societies in the transition to open access
2. To establish a system for measuring the impact of journals which have transitioned to open access.

Concept map: next steps to be taken

