

Find it, Get it, Use it, Store it – A Report from the 5th UNICA Scholarly Communication Seminar

A Report by Karin Ludewig, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin

karin.ludewig@ibi.hu-berlin.de

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On 7–9 November 2010 the 5th Scholarly Communication Seminar of UNICA, the Network of Universities from the Capitals of Europe, took place in the Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Lisbon, Portugal (<http://www.unica-network.eu/event/5th-unica-scholarly-communication-seminar-%E2%80%9Cfind-it-get-it-use-it-store-it%E2%80%9D>). The conference was entitled “Find it, Get it, Use it, Store it”; this title went to the heart of the actions that scholars want to undertake when doing and communicating their research.

UNICA’s achievements

The director of the Universidade Nova de Lisboa opened the conference by presenting his university. Stavros A. Zenios, the president of UNICA, also welcomed the participants; he gave an impressive overview of what UNICA has achieved over the last few years: He mentioned the new UNI-Capital Platform, which is meant to enhance the dialogue between the city/regional representatives and the universities in order to create opportunities for cooperation in the areas of knowledge regions, innovation, research and entrepreneurship, citizenship, mobility and migration, urban issues, link university-enterprise, internationalization and sustainable development and sustainable cities. Mr Zenios stated that the new EU Commissioner for Education and Culture, Ms Androulla Vassiliou, welcomed him on the first day when she came in office. He mentioned the participation of UNICA in the EU programme TEMPUS, the project PRIUM (Promoting a model of Integrated University in the FYR of Macedonia) and EUA-CDE (European University Association – Council for Doctoral Education). The mission of the latter is to contribute to the development, advancement and improvement of doctoral education and research training in Europe. He mentioned the IRO meeting which took place on 5-7 May 2010 at the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin and presented the 10th Bologna Lab Coordinators Meeting in Stockholm University “Learning from Stockholm University and from each other. Developing the UNICA European Campus”, 30 November – 1 December 2009. He pointed out that MATILDA, the first Joint European Master Degree programme in Women's and Gender History, is being set up by a consortium of five European universities. He talked about the participation of UNICA in U.C.E.U., the Union of Capitals of the EU and could finally conclude from all the presented projects that UNICA was a very active network. More than 300 students from 39 UNICA universities attended the students’ conference 2010 in Rome and last, but not least, the UNICA president was proud to say that the UNICA finances are, thanks to Uwe Nagel from Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, robust and solid!

EU's Open Access policy

Celina Ramjoué, policy officer at the EU Commission, Directorate-General for Research, held the first talk; she presented the EU policy with regard to Open Access (OA). According to her, the EU Commission highly estimates Open Access as being very important for the European Research Area (ERA); policy makers of the EU are managing funds, e.g. in the 7th Framework Programme (FP7), to support Open Access; but they'll also find it important to assure a return of investment. Discussing the articles 179, 180c and 183 of the Lisbon Treaty she outlined the importance of Open Access to the EU policy and demonstrated, how this policy is implemented by the Commission, for example through Europe 2020, the EU's growth strategy for the coming decade, or the Digital Agenda. OA is supported by several programs of FP7; hereby the funders insist on the reimbursement of publication costs and the fact, that research data should be available OA no later than 6 months after publication. She mentioned the EU-funded projects OpenAIRE, SOAP, PEER, OAPEN, NECOBELAC and EUROCANCERCOMS; some of these were later going to be presented in detail in the 3rd session of the conference.

Session 1: Digitized content

Paul Ayris, director of University College London Library Services chaired the first session on "Digitized Content"; he himself presented instead of Wouter Schallier, LIBER Executive Director, who was tied up with business. He presented the activities of EuropeanaTravel, a project funded by the European Commission within the area of Digital Libraries of the eContentplus Programme. The content is meant to be made available via EUROPEANA. The project is about making digitized content relevant to scholars. According to him, crucial in gaining EU funding was the audience analysis. *Early European Books* is another project which he presented to the audience; it provides scholars with new ways of accessing and exploring the printed record of early modern Europe, drawing together a diverse array of printed sources from the 15th, 16th, and 17th centuries. He also presented DART, the Europe E-theses Portal, which is about improving global access to European research theses. Jan Molendijk from the EUROPEANA FOUNDATION presented all the very many activities undertaken by EUROPEANA to make the European cultural heritage available online. He mentioned a project ("The Great War Archives") which is meant to contain both UK and German personal memories about the First World War. Karin Ludewig from the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin focused on the difficulties set up by international and national copyright laws when it comes to finding, getting, using and storing information for scholarly communication. She outlined the problems of cross-border virtual research environments with regard to copyright restrictions. Today there are altogether 162 different exceptions to copyright for the purposes of education and research in European legislations. She suggested to consider the introduction of a mandatory general exception for the purpose of scholarship into the EU directive of 2001. She thereby presented the European Network for Copyright in Support of Education and Science (ENCES), which is the association of the pan-European scholarship sector which lobbies for a scholarship-friendly copyright vis-à-vis the EU bodies. The participants of the conferences reacted very positively towards the ENCES association and showed great interest in participating. The representative of the EU Commission, Celina Ramjoué, was also interested to hear about ENCES.

Session 2: Extended Role of Libraries

The second session, which took place in the afternoon, concentrated on the extended role of libraries in the digital age. Ana Alves Pereira from the Universidade Nova chaired the session. Eloy Rodrigues from Universidade do Minho talked about how research data was made available. He outlined the development of open data from 2000 - 2010. He mentioned some data repositories and platforms like DSPACE, eSciDoc, EPrints and FEDORA. He stated that the copyright and intellectual property restrictions on data made the situation unclear for scholars and repository operators. Thomas Place from the University of Tilburg talked on the situation in economy and the social sciences. He presented ECONOMISTSONLINE, an online portal for information in economic studies. In analyzing why researchers are sometimes reluctant to freely share their data he explained that many are in doubt about the legal situation. Veera Ristikartano presented the OA policy of the University of Helsinki Library: the OA goals developed by the University of Helsinki serve as a model for Finland. The University of Helsinki is implementing an OA mandate for research outputs; any article (the final draft version) has to be deposited in CRIS, the university's new current research information system. Other Finnish universities do not mandate but only strongly recommend that the researchers publish their research outputs OA. THE RCAAP project manager João Mendes Moreira from FCCN presented the Portuguese OA Scientific Repository. It was set up in June 2008. A Portuguese version of SHERPA-RoMEO and a copyright policy is being developed. It is funded by the Ministry of Science, participates regularly in the international Open Access Week and cooperates with Brazil. In Portugal six mandate policies were implemented this year; the digital contents of the repository is retrievable via Google.

Social event in Lisbon

In the evening the participants of the conference were spoiled with a cultural moment of beautiful Spanish guitar music and a delicious dinner in an outstanding Portuguese restaurant. The next day, the participants were taken to the Southern side of the river Tejo to the Campus of Caparica, where the Faculty of Sciences and Technology of the Universidade Nova de Lisboa is situated. Everybody had some wonderful views from the bridge crossing the Tejo towards the Atlantic Ocean and the City of Lisbon.

Session 3: Digital publishing

The conference continued in the Library of the Campus de Campolide. The Dean of the Faculdade de Ciências e Tecnologia, Fernando Santana, welcomed the international guests and Clara Boavida from his faculty presented RUN, the Open Access repository of the Universidade Nova de Lisboa. In the following session, chaired by Françoise Vandooren from the Université libre de Bruxelles, four interesting projects on digital publishing were presented. David Nicholas from University College London presented the results of a JISC-funded research project on the use of e-textbooks by students. Taking into account the results of the study, he was optimistic about the future of e-books, as they were found to be consulted surprisingly often by scholars. However, the way of use of e-books seems to differ quite significantly from the way books were read in times of print copies. So the e-books were not read from the beginning through to the end by most users but only certain pages were visited and for very short time periods only. Eelco Ferwerda, project coordinator of OAPEN, an initiative of six university presses, supported by two universities and cofounded by the European Union, who is also Publisher of Digital Products at Amsterdam University Press, presented

well-calculated models for university publishers, which enable them to publish monographs in the humanities and social sciences. Simon Lambert from the Science and Technology Facilities Council presented some first results of SOAP, the FP7 project “Study of Open Access Publishing”. SOAP is currently evaluating a comprehensive survey of opinions and attitudes on open access of 50.000 researchers across all disciplines around the world. Finally Panagiotis Georgiou from the Library and Information Centre of the University of Patras presented the Open Journal Systems (OJS) platform, the digital archive for Greek scholarly journals and an e-publishing platform run by the Library and Information Center of the University of Patras in Greece.

Leaving Lisbon with new ideas and contacts

Unfortunately the author of this report had to leave the conference for the airport before lunch. She took home some wonderful impressions of Lisbon in Portugal and quite a few very helpful professional results. The Humboldt-Universität-based European network ENCES could profit considerably by the conference, because it received new ideas and high profile as well as new contacts and Europe-wide support. All in all, the UNICA network is a very helpful platform for scholars in a world of growing cross-border scholarly communication and increasingly international and collaborative research.