

OPEN RESEARCH STEERING COMMITTEE

Minutes for Thursday 25 May 2023, 15:00–16:30
MS Teams

Present: Steve Russell (Chair), Stephen Eglen, Alastair Flett, Jess Gardner, Peter Hedges, Amy Orben, David Owen, John Perry, Siddharth Soni, Ben Steventon, Debbie Hansen (Secretary).

In attendance: Niamh Malin, Sam Moore, Mandy Wigdorowitz.

Apologies: Marta Costa, Emma Gilby, Sara Hennessy, Mandy Hill, Ian Leslie, Liz Simmonds.

Steve Russell welcomed the group to the meeting. In particular, he welcomed Professor John Perry, the new ORSC member representing the School of Clinical Medicine. He thanked David Owen, the outgoing representative of this School, for his service and invaluable contributions over the years. He also welcomed Sam Moore, Niamh Malin and Mandy Wigdorowitz for attending today's meeting to present papers.

1 Declaration of interests

Steve Russell invited the group to make any declarations at the start of relevant agenda items as appropriate.

2 Minutes of previous meeting (26 January 2023)**— ORSC-104**

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

3 Matters arising**— ORSC-105**

Steve Russell briefly updated the group on the actions outstanding from the last meeting and that have now all been completed. He thanked all School and postdoctoral committee members for responding regarding committee membership and thanked those remaining on the committee for another term. He gave an update on DORA implementation in the different schools: the School of Technology response is currently being handled by the Research Policy Committee and feedback is awaited; the Schools of Humanities and Social Sciences and Physical Sciences are aiming to have School-specific policies in place for the next Academic Career Pathway (ACP) round; the Schools of Biological Science and Clinical Medicine DORA Working Group is currently collecting feedback from their DORA implementation during the last ACP round - looking at how the approach was perceived by committees and applicants with a view to making recommendations for changes.

Jess Gardner mentioned that UKRI released an update to their open access policy requirements the previous day and a policy briefing will be presented at the next ORSC meeting. There is confirmation that there will be a continuation of the open access block grant for 2024/2025 and any changes to payments for transitional agreements will apply after this.

Alistair Flett commented that Niamh Tumelty, our previous Head of Open Research Services has now left the University for her new role as Director of London School of Economics Library. There has been a competitive internal recruitment for an Interim Head of Open

Research Services and Dr Sacha Jones has been appointed. Sacha will join the committee at our next meeting.

Amy Orben provided an update on the UK Reproducibility Network (UKRN). She has taken on the lead for the Cambridge Hub from Florian Markowitz. She has met with Mandy Wigdorowitz and they will scope out developments, also working with Sacha Jones and Liz Simmonds, with the aim of strengthening the affiliation. They will bring a formalised case for research policy discussion to ORSC. Steve Russell mentioned the positive timeliness of this in relation to the recent House of Commons report on reproducibility and thanked Amy for taking on this role and for the leadership she has developed in this area.

4 Self-Archiving Policy update

Sam Moore provided a brief update on the University's Self-Archiving Policy, which came into effect on 1st April 2023. Communications about the new policy were via usual channels and there was a low uptake for briefings. No major problems have arisen. The main issue has been confusion by some researchers over whether to include a rights retention statement in their submitted manuscript. The policy was designed so they don't have to, but there will be a small minority of cases where they will need to as the publisher will not have had prior notification about the policy from the University. Sam is working on notifying more publishers. To date 90% of publishers, that our researchers have recently published with, have been notified. There is a list of 150 more publishers to contact, which will boost this to 98%. 2% may remain unnotified. The Frequently Asked Questions on the open access website will be updated. Springer Nature have asked for a rights retention statement to be removed before the article was published, but this is not an issue. If any departments are interested, a briefing can be offered. A question was asked whether there is an available evaluation of the pilot, for example an estimate of take-up numbers in the first year. Sam confirmed that around 500 signed up but that it is hard to know whether relevant deposited articles had rights retained because of the pilot or because of funder requirements. Analysis of the pilot data was stopped to devote time to turning the pilot into policy, but the data can be looked at.

Action: Sam Moore to investigate analysing the pilot data.

5 Springer and other publisher negotiations update

Alastair Flett gave an update about negotiations with publishers. The sector (Jisc and UK universities) recently agreed to accept the fifth Springer offer. This offer covers journals under the Springer, Palgrave and Nature Research umbrellas. It was unanimous that this offer should be accepted but one third of the sector, including University of Cambridge, had some serious concerns, which included the continued lack of transparency for how the high cost was reached. The whole negotiation exercise provoked fertile debate in the sector, was a huge amount of work and helped show the publisher what the sector wanted.

There was a comment on the disappointingly high number of researchers who continue to place value on a journal name; there is still more work to do to change this culture. There was a question about whether there is clarity (in writing) on whether Springer will allow a rights retention statement. Alastair will investigate and circulate the confirmation to the group.

Action: Alastair Flett to investigate whether Springer will allow a rights retention statement and circulate the outcome to the committee.

6 Open Access Monographs Working Group

— **ORSC-106**

Sam Moore introduced this item. He acknowledged that the working group had wanted to respond to detail provided by UKRI about their open access policy on long-form publications so the delay to UKRI publishing this information is frustrating. So, instead the work is framed as how support will be provided from within the library. A small percentage of research (~8%)

in the humanities is funded by UKRI so this gives time to get a service defined and correct first, with the opportunity to gather feedback. There was a query about the remaining 92%. Sam confirmed that if open access for monographs is required for REF it is likely that green open access will be the main route to follow and a robust green open access policy would be required. Peter Hedges mentioned that high level information, about a next research assessment exercise, from Research England may be published later in June. Whilst detail about open access is unlikely, it may give the direction of travel.

It was mentioned that most large grants in the arts, humanities and social science are from EU funding, but EU expectations on open access for monographs are unclear.

It was agreed that the approach defined by the working group Terms of Reference is sensible. Sam confirmed that engagement with the academic community will mainly be with those that have an interest in this space. For now, the working group will support monographs; it was noted that long form research outputs in trade publishing are exempt from the UKRI open access policy, unless the only output from the grant is a trade publication.

7 Responsible Metrics

— ORSC-107

Niamh Malin introduced the paper on Responsible Metrics, which she, as Data Analyst in the Office of Scholarly Communication (OSC), researched at the request of Niamh Tumelty. She thanked Steve Russell for helping to prepare the paper. The paper concludes with three proposed actions (to identify a lead for a project on responsible metrics, to create a task board of webpages to be created/updated, to assign tasks to teams/individuals). Steve Russell reinforced that it had been clear during the DORA consultation that many do not understand metrics and how they are applied. He thanked Niamh for the paper and added that effort needs to be put into this especially due to increased funder scrutiny in this area. There was a suggestion put forward for a live news page to report updates to what is happening in this area, to be kept regularly updated. Alastair Flett suggested that he and Niamh should work together to talk to institutions that are doing well around responsible metrics and assessment and bring a second paper back to the committee.

Action: Alastair Flett and Niamh Malin to talk to other institutions about their development of responsible metrics guidance and bring a second paper to the committee.

There was a discussion about whether the term *Responsible Metrics* should be used at all due to the flaws around judging research quality by numbers; it was confirmed that the term should be *Responsible Use of Metrics*. Regarding the question of how to create short lists when filtering applications it was suggested that agreeing assessing experts in advance with a defined narrow context of what is being sought should help restrict numbers of applicants. It is however recognised that many still lean on the prestige of a title and a change of culture needs to happen in this respect. There needs to be clear guidance on our website about what metrics are and what the problems are. Also, that Cambridge needs to be proactive in defining how metrics can and how they should not be used. DORA's [Project TARA](#) should be able to help with this too. The commercial side of metrics use was also briefly mentioned.

It was acknowledged that Early Career Researchers (ECRs), who may apply for positions in overseas institutions not yet pursuing DORA practices, need some consideration. Regarding UKRN affiliation for ECR stakeholders: in building the community it will be important to attract them and support them early on.

Niamh Malin left the meeting.

8 Future of Scholarly Communications

— ORSC-108

Sam Moore gave an update on some of the progress with each of the five key themes which had emerged from the three strategic workshops held in April and May of 2022 (more details are in

the paper tabled for this item):

- **Cambridge Convenes:** This is about having global conversations that move open scholarship forward and CRASSH are partnering with OSC staff on this.
- **Values and principles:** Since the University's Open Research statement was last updated (2019), the open access policy landscape has shifted to immediate open access. Sam and Alexia Sutton, the Open Access Service Manager, are looking at this and will bring a paper to a future meeting of ORSC.
- **Focus on People:** This was covered in the next agenda item, where Mandy Wigdorowitz introduced her new role.
- **Open publishing models:** The new self-archiving policy is part of this topic. Also, Sam is working with Dr Meg Westbury to gather information and understanding about diamond open access publishing.
- **Open research infrastructure:** Sam mentioned the recent (May 2023) award of the CoreTrustSeal Certification for Apollo, our institutional repository: this is an impressive achievement and confirms that Apollo meets the requirements of a trustworthy repository. There is collaboration in progress with CUP&A to explore diamond open access services.

Response from the committee to these and the documented updates was positive. The impressive pace of change was acknowledged, and Steve Russell thanked all involved. Debbie Hansen confirmed that Joanna Page from CRASSH will attend the November ORSC meeting to talk about Open Research at CRASSH. There was a question about whether there was a webpage, where progress in this space could be followed. Sam thought this a good idea and suggested discussing with Alastair Flett and Jess Gardner on how to approach this.

Action: Sam Moore to discuss with Alastair Flett and Jess Gardner how to communicate progress in this space.

9 Open Research: Community Manager role and proposals for conference — ORSC-109

Mandy Wigdorowitz introduced her role; this is a new role and sits within the OSC. She talked through the proposed priorities for the role, which fall under the headings of internal engagement, community building, external engagement, and advisory and support services. This plan was well received, with a comment that it is very much needed. Amy Orben acknowledged that there needs to be discussion and consideration over the best strategy for community building in a practical implementable way: e.g. how to move forward, integrating existing networks and champion schemes, using researcher perspectives, minimising overlap and without over burdening the system. Steve Russell confirmed that the plan is aligned with Sam and Amy's work and that, although aspects are tricky, progress is being made.

Mandy then introduced the plans for this year's Cambridge Open Research Conference. It is proposed that this will be a full day, hybrid event, intended to be impactful and a learning experience for attendees. She proposed some themes and invited recommendations from the committee. Suggestions from the committee included: some agreement with the theme Connections between Global South and Global North Scholars; advice to avoid the AI theme; tying the theme in with the five Future of Scholarly Communication key areas for consideration.

Regarding attendees, it was suggested that registration be offered to those both inside and outside of University of Cambridge. There was also a question about the intended audiences and what steps can be taken to reach 'dark spots' across the University. Could every department

be asked to send a representative? There was an observation that often, post-Covid, a proportion of people sign up for events but don't turn up; although it was noted that last year's event was well attended, with a broad diversity of people. A conference held in Digital Humanities about the future of monographs was mentioned, where academics were asked to come and present for five minutes on their monograph and the impact from open research; it was observed that academics may be excited by open research, but it is not generally an academic conversation.

Action: All to provide suggestions and continue discussions about the conference offline.

Action: Mandy Wigdorowitz have a call with Steve Russell and Jess Gardner about the conference offline.

10 Open Research Operational Group

Steve Russell confirmed that the Open Research Operational Group will reconvene with Sacha Jones as Interim Head of Open Research Services.

11 Items to be referred to the Research Policy Committee (RPC)

The following papers will be forwarded to the RPC:

1. The approved minutes from the last meeting.
2. A copy of these minutes once approved.

12 Any Other Business

Steve Russell thanked everyone and commented about the progress and tremendous change in this space. He suggested that members provide any further feedback to Sam, Niamh and Mandy on their papers.

Next Meeting: Thursday, 2 November 2023, 14:00–15:30, MS Teams.

Open Research Steering Committee Secretary:

Dr Debbie Hansen - dh554@cam.ac.uk

Office of Scholarly Communication, University Library, Cambridge, CB3 9DR.