



Removing barriers: Open Access strategy at the SFU Library January 2010

This document outlines support for Open Access publishing being undertaken by the SFU Library. In addition to describing current activities, it considers and recommends additional directions. Input was gathered from SFU librarians, and the strategy was unanimously supported by the Senate Library Committee at its meeting January 18, 2010.

Rationale

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Open Access Mandate

Summary of Recommendations

1. The Library should continue to actively support and promote the Public Knowledge Project through externally realized funding.
2. The Library should investigate the best software options for the IR, including supported file formats, streamlined deposit, stable architecture, and ease of use.
3. In cooperation with the SFU Office of Research Services, the Library should work to raise awareness and understanding of funder Open Access (OA) mandates.
4. The Library should continue its program of actively making OA journals accessible and discoverable to SFU readers.
5. The Library should continue to support a variety of OA publishing ventures in as broad a range of disciplines as possible.
6. The Library should reinstate a full pre-pay membership in BioMed Central in 2010.
7. On behalf of SFU, the Library should establish a central fund to cover Article Processing Charges (APC) for SFU authors publishing in OA journals.

Rationale

Like many research libraries the SFU Library has been aware for several years that an increasingly large portion of our budget is devoted to packages of online journals published by a decreasing number of commercial publishers. For the first time in 2008/09, more than one third of the library collections budget was spent on renewal of publisher packages of e-journals. While not all of these are from commercial publishers making large profits from academic publishing, a significant portion are. The Library licenses these resources consortially to achieve the best terms possible, but much of this money is also tied up in multi-year deals. This trend leaves less and less of the acquisitions budget each year to purchase monographs and to maintain subscriptions to smaller, independently published journals.

Since one of the central goals of the Library is to provide access to scholarly literature, we continue to renew the large publisher packages while carefully tracking usage to see that these journals are still in demand. At the same time we recognize that reform of scholarly publishing is imperative; the current system is not sustainable in an environment where the university is unable to devote an ever larger share of its budget to library acquisitions each year. As stewards of the library collection in this environment we are compelled to use the leverage we have to move scholarly publishing toward a more equitable model.

This document outlines various activities of the SFU Library that support one arm of that transformation, Open Access publishing. In addition to describing activities that are already established and well developed, it also describes areas of nascent activity and recommends development of new support activities.

Open Access publishing is well documented and so, except for the briefest definition, will not be explained here. There is a large body of literature describing the trend toward Open Access and the debate surrounding it.¹

For the purposes of this document we are using a working definition of Open Access from the [Budapest Open Access declaration](#):

[The] free availability [of scholarly literature] on the public internet, permitting any users to read, download, copy, distribute, print, search, or link to the full texts of these articles, crawl them for indexing, pass them as data to software, or use them for any other lawful purpose, without financial, legal, or technical barriers other than those inseparable from gaining access to the internet itself. The only constraint on reproduction and distribution, and the only role for copyright in this domain, should be to give authors control over the integrity of their work and the right to be properly acknowledged and cited.

This publishing model implies significant changes to the way scholarly publishing is funded and accessed. Because academic publishing is also closely linked to the tenure and promotion system, rigorous peer review will continue to be vitally important. To be clear, nothing in the transition to Open Access will affect the role of peer review. Given this definition and these assumptions, there are a variety of suitable roles for the Library at SFU.

Public Knowledge Project

<http://pkp.sfu.ca>

Since 2005 the SFU Library has been a partner in the Public Knowledge Project, together with Stanford University, the Canadian Centre for Studies in Publishing at SFU, and the UBC Faculty of Education.

The PKP has developed free, open source software for the management, publishing, and indexing of journals and conferences. [Open Journal Systems](#) and [Open Conference Systems](#) increase access to knowledge, improve management, and reduce publishing costs. The [PKP Open Archives Harvester](#) allows the creation of centralized search services on metadata from Open Archives Initiative-compliant databases. Software development is done at the SFU Library and has gained application internationally, now used by more than 5000 journals worldwide. The SFU Library also hosts over 200 OJS journals, and is actively canvassing the campus community to make journal editors and other potential OJS users aware of this resource. Along with PKP partners, SFU Library has hosted two international PKP conferences (2007 & 2009), bringing together editors, developers, librarians and scholars.

The PKP also has software in development for publishing online books, [Open Monograph Press](#). According to the PKP, “plans for OMP also include the potential for users to set up a Social Networking Incubator and Workspace system that would enable editors to create a workspace for authors who have a potential monograph project in hand to develop ideas within an invited or more open community, before moving into a formal book proposal and submission process.” Attention to new publishing options for scholarly monographs has the potential to serve book-oriented disciplines in the social sciences and humanities especially well.

The Library should continue to actively support and promote the PKP through externally realized funding. [[Recommendation 1](#)]

Institutional repository

<http://ir.lib.sfu.ca/>

Open digital repositories are a vital part of a fully functioning system of Open Access publishing. Here authors can make research outputs, including published articles, raw data, and other web objects openly available on the web. Deposit of materials in an institutional repository removes the author’s obligation to maintain the integrity of the research outputs over time. The SFU institutional repository has the Library’s commitment to preservation of files in standardized formats. It also conforms to international standards for [Open Archives harvesters](#), making the material more discoverable on the web, thereby increasing its visibility and impact.

SFU Library developed an institutional repository in 2005 and continues to support it. Although the systems infrastructure has been in place for several years, it is still fairly sparsely populated. Beginning in December 2009 a librarian has been assigned specific responsibility on a part-time basis for project management of the IR, to work with liaison librarians and faculty members on content recruitment and to provide support for authors wishing to deposit material in the repository. As part of this renewed commitment, the Library should investigate the best software options for the IR, including supported file formats, streamlined deposit, stable architecture, and ease of use. [[Recommendation 2](#)]

The repository also provides an institutionally supported place for researchers to deposit material that is required by funder mandate to be made openly accessible. This trend among research funders is growing—for example, the Canadian Institute for Health Research, the Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research, and the US National Institute of Health all have Open Access mandates. See [Sherpa Juliet](#) for details. As an area of growth, the Library should cooperate with the SFU Office of Research Services to raise awareness and understanding of these mandates. [[Recommendation 3](#)]

Open SFU Theses

<http://ir.lib.sfu.ca/handle/1892/112>

The theses and dissertations produced at a university represent a significant body of intellectual output. SFU Library has been a pioneer in digitizing the backfile of all SFU theses and dissertations and making them openly accessible on the web. Locally digitized and with few exceptions, the full corpus of SFU theses are available in the institutional repository, discoverable on the web and via links in the SFU Library catalogue.

Synergies

<http://alpha.synergiescanada.org/>

Synergies is a not-for-profit platform for the publication and the dissemination of research results in social sciences and humanities published in Canada. This national project funded by the Canada Foundation for Innovation aggregates the outputs of Canadian SSH research, providing access to several types of documents, including journals, books, proceedings, theses, and other research data. SFU Library hosts the BC node of the project, one of five in the country. The SFU Library's leadership on this project, and much of the resulting infrastructure, helps to move Canadian social science and humanities publishing more fully into the online realm, with the possibility of Open Access options for publishers and scholarly societies.

Access to OA journals

In addition to supporting the conversion, publishing and production of Open Access journals, the Library also actively promotes the discovery and use of OA journals by the readers of the SFU Library. Open Access journals that meet the Library's standard selection policy are added to our [e-journals list](#) and library catalogue. As part of our management of electronic resources, the Library also maintains lists of Open Access journals and shares these with other cooperating libraries. The SFU Library is a member and active supporter of the [Directory of Open Access Journals](#) (DOAJ). The Library should continue its program of actively making OA journals accessible and discoverable to SFU readers.

[[Recommendation 4](#)]

SFU Authors and Editors

The Library occupies a singular role in the university as a Faculty-neutral academic hub with connections in virtually every department, school and Faculty. In this unique role, we are positioned to bring together authors and editors from diverse parts of the university who share similar interests but might not otherwise find each other. The Library has hosted a campus-wide forum for journal editors to discuss their concerns, including questions about Open Access, aggregation by third party re-sellers, business models, and publishing software. The Library provides support for authors through its liaison librarian program, referring to the SPARC and CARL [author addenda](#) to secure author's rights. Liaison librarians

routinely provide support to faculty members in their role as authors, responding to questions about copyright, instructions for authors, author's rights, publisher reputations and more. Further suggestions from the campus community in this regard would be welcome.

Memberships

As the budget has allowed, the SFU Library has supported organizations working toward similar goals in Open Access publishing. In some cases this contribution has taken the form of memberships in organizations that include tangible benefits, such as discounts for SFU authors on article processing fees. In other cases it has been financial support for publications exploring new business models for open access. A partial list of these includes:

- [BioMedCentral](#)
- Directory of Open Access Journals
- [Open Medicine](#)
- Public Library of Science
- [SPARC](#) The Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition
- Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy International Association

The [Library's Collection Development Policy](#) states that we will “support effective, sustainable and economically viable models of scholarly communication that provide barrier-free access to quality information...by actively investigating and supporting emerging Open Access publishing ventures, and investing in these financially when they are able to present a viable business case for support, and can demonstrate a sustainable financial alternative to existing commercial publishing models.” The Library should continue to support a variety of OA publishing ventures in as broad a range of disciplines as possible. [[Recommendation 5](#)]

In the case of BioMedCentral, the Library began with a supporter membership that provided a discount for article processing charges. In 2008 this membership was upgraded, at the request of SFU faculty members, to a “pre-pay membership” whereby the full cost of Article Processing Charges (APC) for SFU authors was covered for all articles accepted by BMC journals. However, the use of this fund far outstripped our predictions of its use. For budgetary reasons it was downgraded to a supporter membership that only offered a discount on APC, rather than full coverage of the fees.

Establishing a Central Fund for OA Fees

There are a [variety of business models](#) for Open Access journals.² In one common supply side model publishers charge Article Processing Charges to authors of papers accepted for publication. These fees typically range from a few hundred dollars to us\$3000 and more per article, sometimes with additional charges for long articles and enhanced features. SFU's experiment into supporting its authors with a pre-pay BioMedCentral membership had excellent take-up, with a fourfold increase in the number of [papers published by SFU authors in BMC journals](#). While the budget could not support this level of activity during the tight 2008/09 budget year, it is recommended that a full pre-pay BMC membership be reinstated in 2010 [[Recommendation 6](#)]. An analysis of the APC covered by this first year of pre-pay membership reveals that some were adjunct faculty whose primary affiliation was with another (non-BMC member) institution. BMC notifies the fund administrator (collections librarian) of each

submission that may qualify for coverage by SFU's membership. When the pre-pay membership is reinstated, the Library should agree to cover papers authored by SFU faculty and graduate students, and post doctoral fellows in good standing.

In addition a central fund should be established to cover article processing charges for SFU authors who are publishing in OA journals from other publishers. [Recommendation 7] The full cost of APC's should be covered without rations or evaluations in place, but with some rudimentary safeguards to prevent abuse of the fund. See Appendix 1 for additional details about how the central fund should be administered. [Many institutions](#) have set up central funds for OA support, including the University of California at Berkeley, University of Calgary, University of Nottingham, Cornell University, Harvard, and others.³

Open Access mandate

Although the current activities outlined above and the establishment of a central fund for Open Access article processing fees show solid support for OA publishing, some universities have gone further by passing an open access mandate, as recommended by the 2005 [Berlin Mandate](#). See, for example, [four departments at Harvard University](#) and the [institution-wide mandate at MIT](#).

A growing international directory of such mandates is available from [ROARmap](#). To date in Canada some departments (primarily libraries, and in November 2009 the School of Environmental Science at University of Guelph) have passed OA mandates. In December 2009 the University of Ottawa announced it was the [first Canadian university to sign](#) the [Compact for Open Access Publishing Equity \(COPE\)](#).

At SFU the decision about such a mandate would require Senate approval. The record shows that Open Access mandates are successful when initiated by faculty members, rather than by the library.⁴ While passing such a mandate would be a trailblazing step for SFU, further investigation, discussion and campus engagement would be required at SFU before such a step could be taken with confidence of passing through Senate.

If any departments or Faculties at SFU are interested, there are [abundant resources available to advocate for Open Access mandates](#) and the Library would provide support throughout the process. Until then the Library should continue with an active program of raising awareness, providing support for Open Access publishing on campus, and pursuing the other recommendations in this report.

Appendix 1 – Administration of Open Access Central Fund at SFU

Further to recommendation 7 in this report, here are additional details about the administration of the proposed OA Central Fund.

The 2010/2011 library materials budget should include **\$50,000** to support the central OA fund, including the BMC pre-pay membership, with an additional amount up to **\$50,000** available from a Library endowment if required. Drawing on the Library's endowments is not a sustainable strategy to support such a central fund. Therefore, during this time the Library should work with the university community and administration to identify other sources of funds, as we get a firmer sense of the ongoing cost of such a fund. These figures are based on SFU's experience with BMC pre-pay membership and the experience of similar sized libraries elsewhere.

Memberships should be arranged with publishers where they are available and will provide APC discounts for SFU (e.g. Public Library of Science and Hindawi). The Library should draw from the OA central fund to cover these costs.

The OA central fund **should not cover** optional article processing charges from **hybrid journals**. Hybrid open access journals are now published by some commercial publishers, such as Springer, Nature and others, and by some non-profit publishers such as the American Chemical Society and Oxford University Press. Under this model papers are published in traditional subscription journals, but if authors elect to pay an optional APC, their article is made Open Access. Although publishers claim to redirect the funds from these APCs to reduce the cost of subscriptions and licenses, there is insufficient evidence that this is actually happening. Eligible journals will be those in the Directory of Open Access Journals, or those whose editorial policies meet the criteria for membership in DOAJ.

The fund **should not cover additional charges** beyond the basic APC, such as for including colour plates, long articles, submission fees, or excess page charges.

It is anticipated that SFU authors will **include OA publishing charges in grant applications** where they are eligible, and will first use such funds before applying for reimbursement from the central OA fund. While the Library has no mechanism to enforce this, we will work with the Office of Research Services to raise awareness of grant eligibility for OA fees and funder mandates.

To **minimize out of pocket expense for authors** and to streamline administration of the fund, memberships should be arranged with publishers (e.g. Public Library of Science and Hindawi) where they are available. Wherever possible, arrangements should be made for the Library to be invoiced, rather than reimbursing authors after the fact (e.g. Optical Society of America). The Library should draw from the OA central fund to cover these costs.

To prevent overuse of the fund by individual authors, **the amount each SFU author may claim** during one fiscal year is limited to \$10,000.

Analysis of the use of central OA funds at other universities predicts that the majority of activity will be in BMC and PLoS journals (estimated at over 80%). Since the most active disciplines with high quality peer-reviewed OA journals are clustered in the life and biomedical sciences, we anticipate that the fund will be most heavily used by scholars in those disciplines. However, the range of other activities to support OA publishing at SFU described here is meant to provide a balance to this disciplinary advantage.

Notes

1. See, for example: *The Access Principle: the case for open access to research and scholarship*, by John Willinsky. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2006;

Bethesda Statement on Open Access Publishing available at <http://www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/bethesda.htm>;

Budapest Open Access Initiative. Available at <http://www.soros.org/openaccess>;

“The Green and the gold roads to open access,” *Nature Web Debates* by S.Harnad et al. Available at <http://www.nature.com/nature/focus/accessdebate/21.html>;

“Open access publishing in science”, F. Mann et al. *Communications of the ACM* 52 (3), Mar 2009, 135-9.

2. *Income models for Open Access: an overview of current practice*, R.Crow. Washington, DC: Scholarly Publishing & Academic Resources Coalition, 2009. Available at <http://www.arl.org/sparc/publisher/incomemodels/>

3. “Paying for open access?: Institutional funding streams and OA publication charges”, S. Pinfield, *Learned Publishing* 23(1), Jan 2010, 39 – 52.

4. “What’s the opposite of a pyrrhic victory?: Lessons learned from an open access defeat” by T. Hackman, *C&RL News*, October 2009,70 (8). Available at <http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/acrl/publications/crlnews/2009/oct/pyrrhicvict.cfm>