Open Access Collections

The Future of the Accessibility Framework and Research Assessment

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The Accessibility Framework
International Precedents

• A number of national and international developments give added support to an initiative encouraging open access. For example:

  – the *Consolidated Appropriations Act 2008* signed by President George W. Bush on 26 December 2007 and the open access statement for the NIH.

  – The Scientific Council of the European Research Council (ERC) has mandated that all primary research data and research articles produced by ERC-funded researchers must be made available on open access.

  – Since October 2006 the Wellcome Trust has required researchers to make their publications available on UK PubMed central within six months.
Recent statements: on accessibility

• **An Innovation Future for Australian Industry**
  Building a culture of innovation - A ten point plan for the future

  6. *Strengthen publicly funded innovation and research infrastructure so as to and develop multiple pathways for industry to access the knowledge and expertise in universities and research agencies.*

• **Senator Kim Carr**
  One aspect could be more effective use of research repositories. The minister said universities would get money promised to them under the defunct research quality framework, “but I’ll be talking (to them) about how we can enhance access (to research) through the repositories”… *(Scientists ‘obliged’ to share wisdom, The Australian, 23 January 2008, p22)*
Other statements post-election

• Minister Carr has stated that the Government is committed to “a new era of scientific and public debate that is characterised by openness and vigour” and that “it is essential to communicate new ideas and to infuse public debate with the best research and new knowledge”.

• The Government is committed to creating a “charter” for each of the public research agencies.

• The charter will identify and guarantee their responsibilities and obligations.

• It will enshrine not only the right, but the obligation, of scientists and other researchers to participate in public research debates.
Accessibility Framework - Intent

• The overarching intent of the Accessibility Framework is that outputs of publicly funded research, including research data and research publications, should be managed in ways that maximise public benefit through exposure and use.

• We will also explore how to encourage institutions, research organisations or individuals that receive public money to make the results of their research publicly available as soon as possible.

• We will explore the need to develop a regulatory system balanced with specific exceptions under Australian and international law but with a preference towards open content licensing schemes for publicly funded research.
Accessibility Framework

• The Accessibility Framework is about ensuring that publicly funded research is accessible to the public, by government and by business.

• Ensuring accessibility requires action in the areas of:
  – Technology
  – Policy
  – Regulatory framework
  – Innovative approaches to solving problems of access to research data and research publications
A Split of Components for the Accessibility Agenda

- Research Data;
- Research Publications; and
- Educational Content (including courseware).
• The key principles of the Accessibility Framework already guide the Platforms for Collaborations (PfC).

• The PfC, under the National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy (NCRIS), is funding the development of an Australian National Data Service (ANDS) to improve the management, sharing and use of research data.
NCRIS

• NCRIS brings a strategic approach to Australia’s investment in research infrastructure.

• Priority capability areas for support have been identified in the NCRIS Roadmap.

• Investments will support core NCRIS goals: support research excellence, promote collaboration, provide national benefit.
## NCRIS

$542M over the five years: 2007-2011

| • Evolving bio-molecular platforms and informatics | • Networked biosecurity framework |
| • Integrated biological systems | • Population health and clinical data linkage |
| • Characterisation | • Terrestrial ecosystem research network |
| • Fabrication | |
| • Biotechnology products | |
| • Optical and radio astronomy | |
| • Integrated marine capability | |
| • Structure and evolution of the Australian continent | |

**Platforms for Collaboration (allocated $75M)**
Investments

• Australian eResearch Infrastructure Council (AeRIC)
• National e-Architecture Taskforce (NeAT)
• National Computational Infrastructure
• Australian Research Collaboration Service
• AREN and AAF
• Australia National Data Service
Components of ANDS

- The Frameworks Program
- The Utilities Program
- The Repositories Program
- The Researcher Practice Program
Accessibility of Publications

• 2008 ASHER funding will further the development of repositories in universities.

• Universities will be required to develop repositories to support open access.

• Scope for future iterations of HERDC to require publications to be open access.
NHMRC and ARC funding rules

• 18 January 2007 - the Australian Research Council (ARC) and the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) called on researchers to make the results of research funded by the Australian Government publicly available, whenever possible and appropriate.

• Why? To ensure that research findings are available to other researchers and to the community.
The ARC has stated in its funding rules for *Discovery-Projects* from 2008 onwards that it:

- encourages researchers to consider the benefits of depositing their data and any publications arising from a research project in an appropriate subject and/or institutional repository wherever such a repository is available to the researcher(s). If a researcher is not intending to deposit the data from a project in a repository within a six-month period, he/she should include the reasons in the project’s Final Report. Any research outputs that have been or will be deposited in appropriate repositories should be identified in the Final Report.
Accessibility: Next Steps

• A discussion paper on the Accessibility Framework will be released this year.

• The Framework will explore using a set of levers to drive change, including (but not limited to):
  – The replacement to the RQF.
  – ASHER grants will be directed towards making repositories adhere to the Framework’s principles.
  – Examine ways to make future HERDC publications available through open access repositories within a reasonable timeframe.
Next Steps (cont.)

• Platforms for Collaboration (NCRIS) already contributing to the underpinnings of the Framework.

• The ARC will commence work on developing an enforcement regime for the open access statement in its 2008 Funding Rules.

• There may be scope to further strengthen the Funding Rules.

• The replacement to the RQF is likely to support this work by requiring institutions to identify the connection between researcher’s sources of funding and the publications they then produce.
Research Quality Assessment
Election statements: research quality assessment

• On 21 December 2007, Minister Carr announced the cancellation of the Research Quality Framework.

• The Government is committed to a new streamlined, internationally-recognised, research quality assurance process using metrics or other agreed quality measures appropriate to each research discipline.

• The new approach will take advantage of the existing work that has been done on metrics development but also make sure that robust quality measures are developed for the humanities, creative arts, and the social sciences.
Research assessment and the Accessibility Framework

- The Minister has stated that the new research assessment process will be metrics-based but will provide for limited peer review.
- The sector will inform the scope of peer review.
- Whilst not confirmed it is likely that peer review will not require publisher versions (pre-prints and non-publisher post-prints are likely to be sufficient).
Questions?