

Gabrielle Gardiner, Helter-Skelter: the UTS Library's Open Access Publishing Journey

Digital publishing at UTS Library started its official life in 2004 as UTSePress. Alex Byrne described the launch as signalling “a new phase in our services to support research and scholarship, the knowledge-generating aspects of universities.”

UTSePress was launched with our first journal: PORTAL Journal of Multidisciplinary International Studies. In keeping with the journal's international flavour, it was launched concurrently in Mexico, where the journal's editorial team from the Institute for International Studies was attending a conference.

At the same time, UTS Library played host to an international conference on ePublishing with more than 80 delegates, including our keynote speaker John Willinsky and Mary Barton from the MIT DSpace Project.

Out of this, through the visions of Alex Byrne and Fides Datu Lawton, UTS Library developed 2 arms to its digital publishing – UTSePress and UTSiRepository. The goal for UTSePress was to publish journals, eBooks and conference proceedings by authors from UTS and from affiliates at other institutions.

The goal for UTSiRepository was to capture, store, preserve and make available the University's scholarly research in digital formats.

Both areas were to be open access, online to the world – showcasing the scholarly output of UTS and enhancing the flow of research internationally.

Open Conference Systems and Open Harvester were added to the services offered by the Library.

We now publish

- 4 eBooks
- 9 Journals with an additional 4 journals are in various development stages.
- 450 items in our DSpace repository, including nearly 200 digital theses.

What we've done

The Journals

When we are approached by someone who wants to establish a journal, they get an OJS crash course with me, a copy of OJS in one hour, pointers in the general direction of OJS online support, a journal instance established for them to play with. And then they get told “go for it”. Which invariably they do, and then guiltily ring and email me regularly over the next few weeks while they establish their first edition.

Things they want help with range from confusion over which role to take on when doing various tasks, how to fix logons etc...but generally by the end of the first edition, they're experts. And once they are comfortable with how to use the system, they usually want to try and extend it.

The most recent question was "are my registered users being spammed"? The great thing about PKP is that you can get a response sometimes within minutes, and at worst, within hours.

We have JMs and JEs now who want to design their own looks, have multimedia journals, link to blogs and other interactive forums. They focus on the statistics for their journals and increasing their rankings and readership.

The Conferences

We have had 4 conferences run through OCS. They have similar issues to the Journal editors and managers, only it appears that the process is more complex. They get the same kind of support from the Library – basic crash course, documentation, and then ongoing troubleshooting as required.

The Repository

UTSiRepository has recently evolved into UTSiResearch, primarily as a result of Chris Rusbridge's declarations about the negative reactions 'repository' invokes, which replicated our own feelings about a word that seems to be relatively meaningless outside library jargon. The new badge better reflects our focus on developing a research support system that capitalises on our capabilities.

UTSiResearch is currently housed on DSpace 1.4.2 vanilla version. We have a beta version of 1.5 with Manakin in play at the moment and will move to this as soon as we have time.

We originally let the Communities and Collections in UTSiResearch come up with their own names but have realised that this will become unmanageable and 'unbrowsable' over time. After looking at a range of existing classification systems, we have decided to use the Fields of Research codes and collections such as 'Books', 'Book Chapters', 'Journal Articles' etc.

The repository is also the home of our PhD theses with about 200 theses in there at the moment. We are hoping to institute mandatory submission of theses at UTS in the near future.

What we are building

Alex now describes us publicly as the 3 legged stool:

1. UTSePress
2. UTSiResearch

3. Research data curation

Data Curation

The Australian Social Science Data Archive (ASSDA) approached UTS regarding the provision of a national 'node' to manage the collection and storage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research data. UTS was approached because of the conjunction of Indigenous research leadership in Jumbunna and expertise in digital repository management in the UTS Library. UTS is also the NSW node for ASSDA

Some of the things we will be doing over the next few months are:

- Employing key staff to manage the projects.
- Establishing practices in collaboration with staff at ANU for the selection, processing and ingest into ASSDA of suitable datasets to ensure their preservation and accessibility under appropriate conditions.
- Ingest of selected datasets
- Initiation of relationships with selected researchers in NSW to promote the recruitment of new datasets
- Development of appropriate protocols

We have successfully ingested our first data set, a longitudinal study called Australia at Work.

How we are supporting it

We have developed the UTSeScholarship website, which went live this year. It contains support documentation for journal managers and journal editors, librarians, iResearch Content Creators and Researchers, such as FAQs and guidelines.

We are in the process of adding information for the data curation leg.

Our main aim over the next 6 months is to consolidate all material on the website and make sure we have in place the documentation, workflows and support infrastructure necessary to sustain our existing clients and build our capacity to take on new clients.

In addition, we are in the process of planning training, tools and resources with which we can equip our faculty liaison librarians when they are working with academics.

Who's involved

We've developed a number of key relationships over the last 5 years. The most important is with our own staff, who have put in an extraordinary amount of effort.

Outside the library we have developed a number of critical relationships. For example, we have been working with the UTS Research Office in developing a solution for all of the scholarly output of the University.

Our Systems Architect, Rajan Davio, has developed a process whereby the academic can submit an article through the Research Office. This is ingested into DSpace and a handle is sent to the RIO. All material in DSpace will be restricted until cleared by copyright and licence agreements in a process managed by Madeleine Mann.

We have approximately 6000 objects from previous years and expect 1500+ per annum ongoing. This will sit in a separate instance of DSpace for simplicity of management.

In addition to the research output, the Research Office have also approached us to store and link all the account reports for research projects so that they can use the same process to link this to academic's profile pages in Research Master.

We established the UTSeScholarship Board late in 2007. We have held 3 meetings this year. The Board provides us with high level advice about things like policy and strategic planning.

We established a forum for Journal Managers and Journal Editors this year. We have held 2 meetings with the Journal Managers and Editors, which have been invaluable. The JMS and JEs are active and enthusiastic and constantly looking for ways to improve their journals and UTSeScholarship in general.

Other Universities

We have worked with Sydney Uni Library on a number of projects. We are now looking at ways we can collaborate on the development of promotional tools and educational resources for our Library staff to take out to academics.

We are developing a similar relationship with UNSW library.

And finally, Scott Yeadon from ANU has provided valuable support over the last few years.

What's it got to do with the Beatles

For those who don't know, a helter skelter is a showground ride that winds around a tower. The term helter skelter means in chaotic and disorderly haste.

The Beatles song Helter Skelter encapsulates both the exciting slippery slide ride from the top to the bottom, as well as a sense of disorderly haste which really has been my experience with digital publishing.

Just as we get out of the roller coaster ride and find ourselves on solid ground, along comes another 'project' with exciting potential and we go back to the top of the ride because we

want to support it, whether it is a new interactive multimedia journal, a better publishing interface or even another leg to make our stool a chair...

It's my technical team who think 'look out here she comes' every time I come back with "guess what we are doing now".

And it's our clients who are singing "show me show me show me the answer".

And that's the helter skelter UTSeSchol story.