# the future of academic publishing for the good of university and society

**Praha**
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**Sijbolt Noorda, Amsterdam**
**President Dutch Universities Association**
**Board member EUA and Chair Working Group on Open Access**

# research benefits in the digital age (1)

- ✓ since the seventies the 'computer' gradually became a valuable tool for researchers in all fields

- ✓ by now the digital mode offers much more than computers assisting in handling large quantities of data in a short amount of time, it changed the research landscape in many fields

- ✓ what has this development brought to us so far, and what has it in store?

- ✓ what does it require and how should 'we' respond?

...2...

# research benefits in the digital age (2)

- ✓ **automated data analysis [e.g. in social sciences and humanities]**
- ✓ **intelligent data generation [e.g. in astronomy and molecular sciences]**
- ✓ **artificial intelligence projects [e.g. in logic and law]**
- ✓ **modelling [e.g. in physics, life sciences, neurosciences and chemistry]**
- ✓ **re-inventing scholarly communication [from 'electronic journals' to professional wiki's]**
- ✓ **creation of 'virtual laboratories' [e.g. in computer science, fine arts and  system biology]**
- ✓ **fewer test animals, richer teaching environments and more accessible libraries**

...3...

# research benefits in the digital age (3)

- **the digital mode offers much more than a metamorphosis of traditional ways of doing research and scholarly communicating**

- **large scale data sharing, virtual labs, wiki's by and for academics, multi-media e-learning – there is much more innovative potential  than we thought just 20 years ago**

- **although many benefits 'just happened' in the research communities, yet some  aspects of e-research require facilities, active support and stimulation that only university leadership can bring about**

- **three magic words:** *ambition,*  **smart** *budgeting* **and** *cooperation* **[and the most valuable one is cooperation]**

# an example of the impact of a, b & c

- **in 1985 all Dutch HEIs and research institutes founded SURF, a foundation for joint action in ICT, in terms of infrastructure, services and linking good practices**

- **why? to show a shared *ambition*, to get relevant *budgets* (and share them efficiently) and to stimulate *cooperation* in every sensible way**

- **this arrangement is still in full swing and has greatly contributed to the level of digitization in Dutch academia [from supercomputing , ultra fast broad networks and e-grid to national licensing and linked repositories]**

# another area for a, b & c

- **also within the walls of a university these same three: a, b & c are essential 'tools' in order to**

- **develop the traditional roles of computer centre and library resulting in dependable ICT services to institutes and schools by creating shared service centres of professional expertise and state of the art infrastructure to facilitate research**

- **stimulate experiments and support new initiatives**

- **engage in (inter-)national cooperation [in the digital mode stand alone solutions and facilities are rarely good enough]**

# zooming in on academic publishing

- **are we moving towards open scholarly communication?**

- **how to get the benefits of digital publishing to society at large?**

- **what should/could university leadership contribute to e-publishing, and what should/could the publishing industry do?**

# scholarly communication: nothing new

- the new magic word here seems to be open access
- like the invention of public libraries in the old days, it is what it always has been: a matter of public service and the dissemination of knowledge [publishing = making public = Latin: *publicare*]

- the digital age, however, requires new arrangements of control and ownership, of selling and buying, and of dissemination and access - also to the academic world

- open access should be part of those arrangements - as a service to the scholarly community and the public at large
- we need new business models and a new spirit of cooperation between universities, research institutes and funding councils, and publishers

# concentric circles of 'clients'

academia

*professionals*

**public
at large**

# open communication as part of the digital revolution

- **the main driver behind it: in the digital world open communication is a common feature  (we don't like barriers there, and seem to have forgotten about waiting and prolonged searching, and about ….. paying for use)**

- **so open communication is an important part of the digital revolution, stimulated by the www-experience, that makes us expect that everything interesting should be accessible, especially in the case of public goods and public interests (like research funded by public money)**

- **what doesn't exist in the digital mode (cannot be found by search machines) has less chance to be used, quoted and valued**

- **so the basic rule of all researchers should be "*make your work digitally traceable, searchable, harvestable*"**

# EUA and EC policy positions

- **in its Barcelona council meeting of March 2008 EUA adopted a policy on public access to peer reviewed academic publications, based on the role and responsibility of universities as guardian of research knowledge as a public good, including recommendations to European university leadership, National Rectors' Conferences and the EUA itself**

- **on August 21st , 2008 the Commission has launched a pilot project which will see the results of EU-funded research made freely available online to raise visibility of European research and drive innovation by ensuring that SMEs have access in 7 FP7-areas: health, energy, environment, ICTs, research infrastructures, socio-economic sciences and humanities, and science in society**

- **recipients of grants in these areas are required to deposit their peer reviewed articles in open access repositories (6 or 12 months after publication)**

# open scholarly communication, what remains to be done (1)

- **real progress requires new business models and types of contracting**

- **it can be done, vide the sponsoring consortium for open access publishing in particle physics**

- **such new contracting models will have to be invented and tested, e.g. auctions, (national) licences or group contracts**

- **universities and the research community may contract with publishers for services [*the key role of publishing: branding, selecting, developing*] and open dissemination, not about stuff and limited access to it**

- **these steps cannot be taken by individual universities on a stand alone basis, we must cooperate and strengthen our common base**

# open scholarly communication, what remains to be done (2)

- **thinking of scholarly communication we primarily think of the research & education community itself,**

- **but the wider circle of professional users and the public at large should not be forgotten [concentric circles]**

- **scientific publishing, or rather to be or not to be published is an essential part of the reputation game inside academia (academic prestige matters for all involved, just think of career enhancement, competition for funding and reliability issues)**

- **thus peer hierarchy on the basis of reviewing is and remains crucial, also for professional use outside academia**

- **quality labelling must be done and if publishers continue to do it, they deserve to be paid for this service (one way or another)**

# e-research and digital archiving

- **the formidable growth of e-research underlines the need for archiving and its challenges in the digital age (accessible archiving is just as essential as publishing)**

- **archiving becomes an issue in volatile markets, with frequent migrations, and in innovative trajectories**

- **archiving is an issue because of its long term value, its high cost and quite complicated governance  situations**

- **archiving basically can and should be handled best by public consortia and/or international co-operations of research institutions and societies of scholars  by discipline or field of research [there are no stand alone alternatives]**

# e-research is not the same thing to everyone

- **one of the secrets of the success of the university is its complexity (what makes sense to historians doesn't impress engineers)**

- **the disparate nature of research cultures and traditions, national preferences, professional usage and language networks stand in the way of simple solutions across the board, both in e-research, e-learning and in digitally re-mastered scholarly publishing**

- **so we need to tailor actions to the specifics of research fields**

- **in doing so some questions seem taboo, like about the future of the book in the digital age, and about American domination in the international market for textbooks**

# final slide

- **the digital mode offers much more than a digital metamorphosis of traditional ways of doing research, sharing its data and communicating its results**

- **to make the required progress in Europe inter-university cooperation is essential**

- **only then affordable and scalable facilities and arrangements can be realized**

- **all of them beneficial to researchers, to future researchers and to many outside academia**

# five theses as a summary

- there is hardly any area where the digital age has brought more progress than in scientific research

- yet selection and preservation of research data is to a large extent still unexplored and not cultivated territory (international cooperation needed)

- publishing of research results has immensely profited in terms of speed, diversity and usage

- yet access has been limited due to largely defensive licensing contracts, depositing road blocks to non-academic users (international cooperation needed)

- the future of scholarly publishing requires trusted quality control & open access, enabled by serious peer review and a fair fee for the work of publishers

# additional footnote on open access (1)

- **what doesn't exist in the digital mode (cannot be found by search machines) has less chance to be used, quoted and valued**
- **so the basic rule of all researchers should be "if you want to read and quoted, make your work digitally traceable, searchable, harvestable"**

- **self-archiving is a quite satisfactory way to achieve this (do it yourself or have your – digital - assistant do it)**
- **all you need is a suitable repository (digital library a must in every serious HEI)**

- **a fair license to publish should allow uploading last versions after 6 months**

# additional footnote on open access (2)

- **digital journals could be freely accessible to all and harvestable by all if subscriptions would be replaced by advance payments**

- **this way the publishing business would continue its business in the public broadcasting mode (cost paid by those who want to disseminate, rather than those at the receiving end)**

- **in addition new business model will come around like auctions, (national) licences or group contracts**

- **or universities and the research community contract with publishers for services [*the key role of publishing: branding, selecting, developing*] and open dissemination [not about material and limited, temporary access to it]**

# footnote on open access, quality matters

- **scientific publishing, or rather to be or not to be published is an essential part of the reputation game (academic prestige matters for all involved, just think of career enhancement, competition for funding and trust & reliability issues)**

- **some kind of peer hierarchy on the basis of reviewing (before or after the act) is and remains crucial, also for professional use outside academia**

- **this, however, doesn't imply a conservative attitude towards present practice (some adaptations are doable)**

- **yet, quality labelling must be done and if publishers continue to do it, they deserve to be paid for this service (one way or another)**

# OAPEN

- **a very interesting new approach to open access publishing:**

- **a European consortium of university presses**

- **specialising in humanities and social sciences**

- **the first open access project in academic book publishing**

- **producing peer reviewed scholarly monographs as open access e-books**

- **based on 'author pay' (approx. 2 or 3 times the cost of single open access journal articles and approx. 30% the cost of traditional monographs)**

- **in addition offering printing on demand versions**

# www.oapen.org

- **in humanities and social sciences monographs continue to play an essential role**

- **deserving wide visibility and retrievability**

- **as well as reliable peer review**

- **authors, their readers, their funders, libraries and last but not least specialised publishers – substantial benefits to all of them**

- **particularly because monograph publishing isn't easy and access to monographs very limited**

- **invented in 2008 and launched in 2009**

# a European initiative

- **in humanities and social sciences specific European academic cultures and schools should be upheld and enhanced**
- **accross national and/or language barriers**

- **by collaborating the consortium is able to create technical standards and share production and marketing facilities**
- **creating a brand and a considerable volume**

- **inviting new partners to join the present consortium**