



OPEN SCIENCE SKILLING AND TRAINING INITIATIVES IN EUROPE

LATVIA

Interview with Gita Rozenberga, University of Latvia

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How did your Open Science skilling initiative begin?

The university's participation in Open Access related projects began in 2015. The starting point was taking part in the international projects OpenAIRE and FOSTER, which gave the university resources to develop and organize activities related to Open Science. As an EU-member country and academic and scientific institution, we strongly support the European Commission (EC) initiatives regarding Open Science. Therefore, the first institutional repository in Latvia was set up in 2011. The University of Latvia applied for membership in the Confederation of Open Access Repositories (COAR). In 2017, an Open Access policy was established as well as an institutional repository policy. All of these activities went hand-in-hand with Open Science skilling and training activities for researchers to strengthen the Open Science initiatives at the University of Latvia and be an example for other academic institutions.

Please describe the context and aims of the initiative.

As a result of this Open Science initiative, workshops on different OS topics (chosen based on relevancy and necessity for researchers) are organized yearly and an e-course was set up as an introduction to Open Science topics. The course was created thanks to the cooperation of the University of Latvia, the National Library of Latvia and Riga Technical University, in the project "Open Science - the 21st century's benefits for researchers".

Work is underway to expand and deepen the support of training on Open Science skills for the scientific community of Latvia.

Who are your target audiences?

The target audiences we especially approach are library staff, researchers, PhD and PostDoc students.





Which skills are prioritised?

TOP PRIORITY	STRONG PRIORITY	MODERATE PRIORITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scholarly Publishing • Open Science Skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAIR Data • Research Infrastructures and the EOSC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metrics & Rewards • Research Integrity • Citizen Science

Why did you prioritise some skills and exclude others?

The priorities highlighted are the ones most relevant to the situation of the scientific community of Latvia. Unfortunately, currently we lack specialists in the country with certain in-depth skills to give training on Open Science topics. In order to ensure that the scientific community has enough opportunities to access the particular OS knowledge, experts from abroad (generally, from Europe) are regularly invited to provide profound workshops on various topics, for example, on RDM as well as scholarly publishing, licencing, research infrastructures, etc.

Which channels, learning types and formats are used?

On-site and face-to-face training, self-training activities, group learning and individual learning are the learning types we commonly use and our main channels are online or individual consulting, webinars, workshops and conferences. The mostly used formats are PDF documents, slides and e-courses. I see individual consultations or meetings between research project teams or members and library staff as some of the most valuable channels and formats. They provide a great platform to exchange questions and answers and more accurately identify stakeholder needs.

What impact do you expect from this initiative?

We expect the use of the OS principles in the research cycle to become good practice and to open up new opportunities for progress in science. We strive to become a solid support and consultation point for disseminating and accessing research results to serve the researchers and the society in general in Latvia.

How do you train and recruit the trainers?

We used the brilliant possibility of the FOSTER Open Science Trainer Bootcamp to train our trainers and we are trying to attract new employees by explaining what Open Science and its great goals are.

What have you learnt so far?

The transfer of knowledge must take place in a flexible way, and informative materials should be freely available and easily accessible in the electronic environment. Training on OS topics should begin at an early age, for example, by participating in some Citizen Science activities during pre-school and primary school education programmes, so the next generations can take this for granted.



Have you seen any impact of your initiative so far?

Yes, the number of requests for consultation has increased significantly, especially after the close collaboration with the Horizon 2020 National Contact Point Latvia through which we organized various informative seminars among others on OS topics.

What's next on your skilling/training calendar?

Updating our e-course and workshops on Open Science in the context of scientific disciplines, as well as RDM for the scientific community of Latvia.

What about the budget and the costs?

Some activities (OS related workshops and conferences mostly) were funded by our participation in the OpenAIRE 2020 and OpenAIRE-Advance projects and some activities were funded from the library budget.

Which challenges have you encountered?

The main challenge stays the same: how to reach potential stakeholders who have not heard of Open Science, and those who already have developed a negative perception or misconception of this globally significant scientific movement.

What would you tell others looking to do a similar program?

The e-environment is something that should be used as much as possible to give interested parties the opportunity to learn about Open Science in various aspects and contexts. And finally, small steps are the ones that create the culture. Keep moving with small steps closer to a culture of openness in research! Keep calm and carry on doing Open Science!

Resources

<https://www.fosteropenscience.eu/>

<https://www.openaire.eu/>

<https://opensciencemooc.eu/>

This case study has been produced by [LIBER's Digital Skills for Library Staff & Researchers Working Group](#).

For more case studies, and the original version of this one, please see: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.3701370>

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