

Issue:

Academics sign away most rights to publishers

- It makes compliance with funder open access mandates more difficult or more expensive and in some cases impossible
- Management of embargos adds to the workload of OA services (~75% of staff time managing repository deposits is occupied in administering embargos)
- Universities retain no rights to many scholarly outputs
- It prevents or delays open access, limiting the availability and impact of research
- It restricts academics' reuse of their own scholarly outputs for teaching and research
- It puts academics at risk of litigation should authors use their own outputs in ways not allowed by the publisher

Solution:

Ensure academics retain re-use rights

- Inspired by Harvard's open access policy
- Academics grant the university a non-exclusive licence to their outputs
- The licence allows the university to make the peer-reviewed manuscript publicly available under CC BY NC
- The university sub-licenses all authors (& their host institutions) to do the same
- Academics can request a waiver for individual outputs
- The licence applies to all scholarly papers, including conference proceedings
- Licence is binding on publisher
- This legal construct ensures authors retain re-use rights, excluding commercial ones

Benefits:

- Academia retains rights over its outputs
- Authors have the right to make articles open access
- Open access articles have higher citations than closed ones
- Reduced costs for compliance (embargo handling & checking of publisher policies)
- Academics no longer have to sign a separate deposit licence for every manuscript uploaded
- Authors can continue to publish in journal of choice irrespective of whether it allows open access or not
- Single means by which authors can comply with "green" open access policies
- Minimizing reliance on hybrid open access: reduces "double dipping" (paying twice through subscriptions & APC)
- Minimises effort on managing complex hybrid APC payments

Implementation:

- Led by Imperial College London (Chris Banks & Torsten Reimer)
- A group of research organisations, including world-leading universities, are preparing to adopt the UK-SCL
- Discussions involve 70+ organisations in the UK
- Endorsements from UK sector bodies
- Interest from other European organisations (LERU, LIBER, EU Commission)

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