



# OPEN SCIENCE SKILLING AND TRAINING INITIATIVES IN EUROPE

## LUXEMBOURG

*Interview with Jonathan England, Luxembourg University Library / OpenAIRE National Open Access Desk (NOAD), Luxembourg*

*Jonathan is “Advocate for scholarly communication and research process” at the University of Luxembourg and the OpenAIRE National Open Access Desk (NOAD) representative in Luxembourg. They were trained as an early-career researcher in the field of evolutionary biology in the UK, where their interest for Open Science practices emerged, and they now work for the university Library.*

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### How did your Open Science skilling initiative begin?

The university started promoting Open Science with the library’s support and input from the university Repository manager, then Beth Park, who was also appointed OpenAIRE NOAD. Since a lot of work was required on the opening of the new library (Belval Campus project), they hired a new OpenAIRE NOAD in July 2017. Advocacy became a full-time mission and, with one dedicated staff, promoting Open Science could be done effectively. This mission was reinforced by the [Luxembourg national research fund / Fonds National de la Recherche \(ENR\)](#) new Open Access policy: after 1 January 2017, all research they fund must be made available in Open Access (except monographs).

### When did the general initiative start?

The general initiative started with the establishment of an institutional repository at the University of Luxembourg. Hence, the training focused at first on Open Access, in order to address misconceptions about Open Access models and routes.

### Please describe the context and aims of the initiative.

We try to promote most topics related to Open Science. As a start, several workshops were organised around Open Access issues both to early-career and senior researchers and Research support Staff.

### How is the initiative managed and coordinated?

The promotion of Open Science is managed by one person within the library team, though there is discussion about trying to diversify other librarians’ roles. “Research facilitator” is an identified role within the University of Luxembourg, distinct from the library staff. They





are research support staff, who help across the research process. In the library, there are two librarians working as the helpdesk for the University Repository and an “Advocate for scholarly communication and research process” who works more directly with research units. I am leading the advocacy programme alone for the time being, first as part of the OpenAIRE NOAD hired by the Library in 2017 and now on a permanent basis since the beginning of May 2019.

### Who are your target audiences?

Researchers. PhD. PostDoc.

### Which skills are prioritised?

TOP PRIORITY	STRONG PRIORITY	NOT A PRIORITY	OTHER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• FAIR Data</li><li>• Open Science Skills</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Scholarly Publishing</li><li>• Metrics &amp; Rewards</li><li>• Research Integrity</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Research Infrastructures and the EOSC</li><li>• Citizen Science</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• DMP</li></ul>

### Why did you prioritise some skills and exclude others?

Most of the work over the last two years was to remove any misconceptions about OA and how to make one’s work available. We are now moving towards RDM and DMP since it will soon be required by national and international policies. We are basically following the policies’ trends and EC recommendations closely.

### How do participants acquire these skills?

Helpdesk. Workshops. Conferences.

### Which channels and learning types are used?

Face-to-face. Self-training activities. Group learning.

### Which formats are used?

PDF documents. Slides. Gamification activity (Open Science Quest) for library users to learn about OS practices at their own pace.

### Is there formal recognition?

For PhD, yes, we did an OS workshop for PhD candidates that was recognised for ECTS as part of their ‘Transferable Skills’ programme.

### What impact do you expect from this initiative?

Getting researchers to ask more questions and use the library services as an integral part of their research process.

### How do you train the trainers?

Face-to-face talks. Mailing lists of trends in OS.



## How do you recruit the trainers?

Basically trainers, as well as speakers, are selected and recruited through networking: mainly OpenAIRE, FOSTER, conferences, train-the-trainer workshops. The main criteria is how passionate they are about the subject and the degree to which they can raise genuine interest with the attendees as well as their ability to communicate their curiosity and make you feel interested in the subject.

## What have you learnt so far?

It is a long process and face-to-face is the most rewarding so far. The 3-day event around Open Science we organised last year was not well attended and such bigger events might not be appropriate to train researchers that are not yet interested in the subject.

## What's next on your skilling/training calendar?

We are planning to run RDM/DMP/FAIR workshops to early-career researchers in the first place, and then offer tailored workshops to senior researchers in each department.

Efforts will focus on reaching out directly to research centres within the university. Large events won't be much on the agenda.

## What about the budget and the costs?

Event cost: OpenAIRE and the FNR provided a budget for the OS forum. A very small amount was spent: under €4000 for the three days of the OS forum (travel costs for 18 speakers – no catering provided during the event).

Staff costs: at first the activity was completely funded by OpenAIRE (OpenAIRE NOAD) but in May 2019 the Luxembourg University Library created a permanent position.

Research funding: it is good to know that in Luxembourg there is a national research fund, [Fonds National de la Recherche \(FNR\)](#). It adopted a policy stating that after 1 January 2017, all research it funds must be made available in Open Access (except monographs): scholarly communication is thus directly connected to research funding.

Time is the main cost. Designing, organising the events, giving the training and managing communication issues are very time-consuming.

## Which challenges have you encountered?

Being the only advocate until now was a challenge because one person is in charge of everything: design, advocacy, training, promotion with university departments etc. But in May 2019, the university appointed an Open Science “chargé de mission” [project manager] and this has been a decisive step forward as far as setting the university's Vision for Open Science is concerned.

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

First of all, it is important to consider where the institution is at, because obviously you are not going to do the same kind of events if the researchers are already publishing Open Access or practising DMPs or RDM, or if your institution is completely new to this. In the latter case, the best thing would be to go and network with the researchers to determine how, at the individual level, you can help them. Then you can become an identified,



available and understandable entry point towards Open Science, and they will spread the word with other researchers and point in the Library's direction.

You need to have more than one person – you need have a team because that way there is so much that you can do!

With the people you want to reach, always favour individuals and quality over large amounts of people and quantity.

Focus on specific disciplines and interests: formal and general presentations are not the best format for advocating. Also avoid long seminars: this will only attract people who are already convinced. Disciplinary-focused workshops, topic-centred short talks and debates are more intimate, and thus much more efficient. Creating a close link between Open science officers and the university research departments are critical. When we shifted from a national level event to a department level talk, the relative attendance rocketed to almost 90% of people attending within the departments. This was much more time-effective, and more people got convinced.

In my [Jonathan England's] opinion, and some people differ from this, Open Science is a heated subject; some researchers do not understand why they are “forced” into Open Science. For them this is extra work, not something that is rewarding... so my personal advice is “do not be too aggressive with Open Science advocacy”. It is crucial to inform them, and take the necessary time to show the benefits and display how amazing Open Science is for knowledge. They are sometimes a bit defensive and sometimes they need to receive a subtler message in order to make them get involved with Open Science willingly.

It is the same with approaching Plan S, even if you are personally deeply convinced; adapting your message to address the tensions and defuse defences can be important.

It is much more interesting – and rewarding – to spend time and energy explaining to curious people what Open Science, Open Access, Data management and Open-peer-reviewing are about, and what the benefits can be, for science as well as in financial terms. It is therefore easier to start advocating with early-career researchers. This also helps you investigate the disciplinary fields and target the senior researchers' points of interest.

Tailor your events depending on your university's already existing OA / RDM programmes.

Go and network with researchers, talk to them; see how at the individual level you can help them. Then they share the word with their community that the library is offering this or that service.

## Have you seen any impact of your initiative so far?

This remains to be evaluated.

## References

[Open Science Quest](#) (Zenodo)

[Myth and Realities around Open Access](#)

[Luxembourg Open Science Forum 2018](#) (Zenodo community)



[‘Data Conversation’ series - GDPR and your research data](#)

[Luxembourg Open Science Forum](#) (blogpost)

[Open Science Quest](#) (blogpost)

*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.3251731>*

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