OPEN SCIENCE SKILLING AND TRAINING INITIATIVES IN EUROPE

BELGIUM

Interview with Paul Thirion, University of Liège

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How did your Open Science skilling initiative begin?

Our initiative started with the development of our institutional repository in 2007.

Please describe the context and aims of the initiative.

When we decided to develop our institutional repository, it was clear we had to inform and instruct researchers about the problematic of for profit evolution of scientific publication and the aims and philosophy of Open Access in this context.

What organisational framework did you use for this initiative?

Our team consists of a head librarian, an institutional repository team and library instructors (for information literacy program).

We create and use various resources for skilling and training participants, such as PowerPoint presentations, short videos, booklets, and flyers.

Our choices and policies relating to this initiative are always linked to the institutional mandate of the Liège University and to the Belgian Open Access decree.

A compulsory deposit mandate was adopted by the University of Liège in 2007, and has led to the success of the ORBi institutional repository of the University of Liège. "This commitment to Open Access was confirmed with the creation of different Open Access platforms intended to widely disseminate the scientific production of ULiège". Find more information on the mandate of the university here.

The university decision made in 2007 is available here.

As for the Belgium (French speaking community) Open Access Policy Decree, Parliament work can be seen here with the amendments.

How is the initiative managed and coordinated?

Currently, there are different ways used.

Internally (managed by library alone or, for open/fair data initiative, in collaboration with research administration), our activities include:

- Regular communication to the whole scientific community (mass mailing, news on the web sites, articles in the university communication media, etc.)

- Creation of short videos about OA

- Creation and distribution of flyers and booklets about the evolution of Belgian law linked to OA

- Seminars included in the university PhD training program about Open Access, institutional repository and, since recently, Open/Fair data and DMP (in this case in collaboration with research administration)

- Regular seminars proposed to the whole scientific community about our institutional repository, Open Access and authors rights and, in the near future, about Open/Fair data and DMP (in this case in collaboration with research administration)

- Part of the information literacy program for students (bachelor and master degree)

- At the request of colleges or different structures of the university: conferences about specific topics of OA

- Internal instruction for library staff

Furthermore, in collaboration with other Belgian universities, we organize national seminars for researchers about OA, Open Science, APC and transformative agreements.

Who are your target audiences?

Library staff, researchers, PhD and students.

Which skills are prioritised?

TOP PRIORITY	STRONG PRIORITY	MODERATE PRIORITY
• Scholarly Publishing	• FAIR Data • Open Science Skills	• Research Infrastructures and the EOSC • Metrics & Rewards • Research Integrity

Why did you prioritise some skills and exclude others?

Scholarly publishing was the first topic included in the OA trainings and it's linked to the institutional mandate. Recently Open/Fair data and more largely Open Science skills became more important. Metrics and Rewards should be more developed in the future (especially when real alternatives will be in place). Ciitizen Science is not a priority at the moment.

How do participants stay updated on he acquired skills?

Through global communication to the scientific community.

How do you recruit and train the trainers?

Trainers are member of the institutional repository staff and are trained through individual and staff learning.

Which learning types, channels and formats are used?

Learning types: face-to-face, group learning, and individual learning.

Channels and formats: PDF documents, slides, and short videos.

Is there formal recognition?

Depending on the initiative, some of them are formal trainings and part of the curricula. Particpants receive a certificate of attendance.

What impact do you expect from this initiative?

We expect a greater awareness of the challenges of OA and OS as well as skills evolution.

Have you seen any impact of your initiative so far?

Yes, the academic community of the University of Liège is significantly more aware about OA and OS than what is observed in other Belgian universities, although there is still a lot to do.

What have you learnt so far?

We have to be more structured and systematic in the instruction offer. We need to use different and more interactive tools.

What's next on your skilling/training calendar?

Seminars in January and a large distribution of booklet.

What about the budget and costs?

For internal initiatives, there is no specific budget except for the realisation of the brochure and flyers. For the inter-university initiative, a small budget was obtained through sponsorship not more than a few thousand euros in total.

Which challenges have you encountered?

Reaching the entire scientific community is a challenge, because very often mass emails are not read and opening rates are very low.

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

Multiply communication and training channels.