OPEN SCIENCE SKILLING AND TRAINING INITIATIVES IN EUROPE

UNITED KINGDOM

Interview with Dr Paul Ayris, Pro-Vice Provost at UCL Library Services, University College London (UCL) and Dr Tiberius Ignat, Chief Executive, Scientific Knowledge Services (SKS).

UCL website and SKS website

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How did your Open Science skilling initiative begin? Please describe the context and aims of the initiative.

The starting point of our initiative was Open Access to Publications and advocacy to the academic body in UCL with the UCL Open Access mandate, which started some 10 years ago.

REF (Research Evaluation Framework) for 2021 is our horizon. REF requires an Open Access version of every output submitted to the REF.

The context of the policy, and the way it is implemented, is seen at https://www.ucl.ac.uk/library/open-access/open-access-ucl.

In order to achieve this, Scientific Knowledge Services and UCL Library Services started working together in 2015 to provide training and skilling through a series of Focus on Open Science workshops. This pan-European series is organised by Dr Tiberius Ignat, of Scientific Knowledge Services, and supported by Dr Paul Ayris of UCL Library Services.

This initiative has grown and now Focus on Open Science workshops are hosted throughout Europe by various institutions, with webinars starting in 2020.

To learn more, follow and join Focus on Open Science workshops here : https://www.knowledge.services/events/.

How is the initiative managed and coordinated?

Tiberius Ignat is CEO of SKS and Paul Ayris is Pro-Vice-Provost of UCL Library Services.

Together we organise the Programme for each event, undertake fundraising and write (from 2019) a strategic report on the status of Open Science in each host university and the resources used for skilling/training participants.

The policies in UCL and the eight pillars of Open Science agreed by the European Commission act as the framework. We also include Open Education (which has been

omitted in the definition of Open Science offered by the Commission). Focus on Open Science workshops gather leading thinkers, practitioners in Open Science from around Europe.

In order to reach a broad and pan-European audience, many Focus on Open Science workshop sessions are recorded and can be used for training after the event has finished.

In 2020 we will also see webinars under the Focus on Open Science banner.

Who are your target audiences?

Library staff, researchers, PostDocs, PhD, students as welll as administrators and senior decision makers at university level.

Which skills are prioritised?

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

Rewards and Skills are treated as separate pillars in the Focus on Open Science workshops. We also add Open Education to the Skills pillar, as this has been omitted in the definition of Open Science offered by the Commission.

How do participants acquire and stay updated on these skills?

Participants acquire these skills through:

- Participation in the workshops

- Implementing the Recommendations of the Strategic Report produced after every workshop

- Using the videos of the sessions as training material after the events

Furthermore, each host University is invited to apply for follow-up workshops to ensure that participants stay updated.

How do you recruit and train the trainers?

We recruit trainers through personal contacts with the Open Science community across Europe. The trainers are experts in their area, and are already trained.

Which learning types, channels and formats are used?

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

Channels and formats: PDF documents, slides, interactive platforms as well as livestreaming of the sessions and videos which can be used after the event has finished.

Which tools have been most useful?

Between in-person attendance and livestreaming of events, 1,000 people participated in the 2019 workshop series (including 600 physically). Twitter with a hashtag for each workshop was a great way of spreading the message. We use a conference tool, Slido, during the workshop itself to gather feedback and questions from the audience and to analyze the makeup of the audience in terms of issues like their background (librarians, researchers, professors) and also their level of previous knowledge of the subjects being discussed. An innovation in 2019 has been to issue the host with a short strategic report from Paul Ayris and Tiberius Ignat analyzing the levels of preparation for Open Science which we have found locally – this report can then be used for planning purposes after the workshop.

Is there formal recognition?

It is formal training and participants receive a certificate of attendance after completing the workshops.

Both certificates and recognition that the workshops are part of a wider curriculum are possible, on request by the host institution.

What impact do you expect from this initiative?

We expect to build a pan-European Open Science community.

Have you seen any impact of your initiative so far?

Yes, because host universities are asking us for repeat workshops in successive years – which shows that local communities value the insights that we are able to share.

Also, host universities tell us that they are using the Strategic Reports we customize for their own university as lobbying material with senior decision makers in the University.

What have you learnt so far?

Change takes time. Open Science concepts are easy to explain. Implementing platforms, services and changing academic culture take much longer.

What's next on your skilling/training calendar?

Ten workshops in Open Science across Europe in 2020.

What about the budget and costs?

We normally project a cost of £5,000 to cover all costs for each workshop.

Which challenges have you encountered?

- Engaging with local organisers to ensure that everything was covered in terms of preparation and planning.

- Finding sponsors to help cover the costs of the workshop series.

- Encouraging university communities to attend workshops and to commit to Open Science.

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

Plan, plan, plan.

Which resources helped you to develop this initiative?

www.ucl.ac.uk/library/open-science

https://www.knowledge.services/events/

The 2019 series of Focus on Open Science Workshops is at www.focusopenscience.org.