OPEN SCIENCE SKILLING AND TRAINING INITIATIVES IN EUROPE

GERMANY

Interview with Birgit Schmidt and Helene Brinken, University of Göttingen, State and University Library, Germany

Birgit Schmidt is Head of Knowledge Commons and Helene Brinken is Project Officer at the Göttingen State and University Library.

Website

Email:

bschmidt@sub.uni-goettingen.de

brinken@sub.uni-goettingen.de

How did your Open Science skilling initiative begin?

Skilling for Open Science at Göttingen Campus has several starting points. Göttingen State and University Library (SUB Göttingen) engages in Open Access to publications, research data management and other Open Science-related topics since well over 15 years, and has gradually expanded its topical areas and training activities. Instrumental for reaching out to library staff and researchers have been services offered by the library (e.g. Göttingen University Press, repositories) as well as third-party funded projects focussing on Open Access and Open Science more broadly. In addition, training on research data management is offered by the Göttingen eResearch Alliance (eRA), a service unit which is jointly operated by the Gesellschaft für Wissenschaftliche Datenverarbeitung (GWDG) (Society for Scientific Computing) and SUB Göttingen.

National and international projects have been an excellent source for expanding knowledge and developing capacity. Training of a wide range of stakeholders was (and is) in particular important in the context of the OpenAIRE and the FOSTER projects. Moreover, since August 2018 Göttingen engages as a member of The Carpentries, a community of instructors and learners which teaches foundational coding, and data science skills to researchers and librarians worldwide.

For more information about the activities in Göttingen please consult:
Schmidt, B., Bertino, A., Beucke, D., Brinken, H., Jahn, N., Matthias, L., ... Bargheer, M. (2018). Open Science Support as a Portfolio of Services and Projects: From Awareness to Engagement. Publications, 6(2), 27.

Please describe the context and aims of the initiative.

Göttingen University supports Open Science through its policies and support measures for its practical implementation. In November 2016 a joint policy on Open Access to publications (in German language) was adopted by the University of Göttingen and the University Medical Center Göttingen. This policy updates the Open access resolution (in German language) from December 2005. Similarly, a joint research data policy has been in place since June 2014.

Several activity strands were brought together with Open Science Göttingen, initiated as a series of meet-ups since December 2016 targeting early career researchers, librarians and other interested people on Göttingen Campus. An overview of all activities and related materials is available through a collaborative web page as well as through an open archive. Working groups provide additional opportunities to engage with Open Science topics, e.g. to share and build up coding skills (Hacky Hour, The Carpentries) and to integrate Open Science into research integrity trainings (e.g. in the context of graduate schools).

Starting in June 2016, PhD students and early career researchers from psychology created the Göttingen Open Source and Science Initiative of Psychology. GOSSIP has already successfully integrated Open Science elements into curricula and courses.

Right from the start there was overlap and collaboration between the two initiatives.

The main aim of the Open Science Göttingen initiative is to strengthen all aspects of Open Science on Göttingen Campus. It facilitates discussions and training activities on practical aspects of Open Science, and has created a growing network of people who are interested in joint learning and problem-solving.

It directly links to the overall research policies of the University of Göttingen, which cover Open Access, Research Data and Research Integrity (Open Access-Policy (2016), Research Data Policy (2016), Rules Governing the Safeguarding of Good Scientific Practice (2016)), and the Strategy of SUB Göttingen. The library strategy highlights specific goals - e.g. to foster the visibility of Göttingen research results and to maximize Open Access - and a wider political goal to contribute to a global information commons and to strive for researcher-friendly information infrastructures.

How is the initiative managed and coordinated?

The Open Science Göttingen Meet-up is coordinated by a small library team which work in the Knowledge Commons and/or the Electronic Publishing groups of the library. The wider network of contributors from the library, the university and Göttingen Campus are subscribed to a mailing list (currently almost 190 subscribers, of these about 1/5 library staff).

What organisational framework did you use?

Team members roles and responsibilities. A team of 4 people from the library coordinates the OS Gö Meet-up activity and involves further staff members depending on the topic of the workshops and other activities.

Resources used for skilling/training participants. Both own resources as well as resources from projects and networks (e.g. FOSTER, OpenAIRE, LIBER, RDA) are used for skilling and training.

Choices and policies relating to this initiative. OA policy, data management policy, research integrity policy.

Who are your target audiences?

Library staff, researchers, PhD, PostDoc, students, research administrators and managers, teaching support staff.

Which skills are prioritised?

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

Why did you prioritise some skills and exclude others?

Some skills areas not a priority yet as these are highly specialized and not generally integrated into researchers' workflows yet. Scholarly publishing, management research data and related skills play the strongest role, both have strong relations to reward and incentives structures, research ethics and the use of research infrastructures and services.

Please explain how participants are acquiring these skills.

Participants acquire these skills through different types of training activities, e.g. face-to-face workshops, hacky hour.

Which channels, learning types and formats are used?

Channels and learning types used: Face-to-face, distant learning, self-training activities, blended learning, group learning, individual learning, live-coding and demos.

Formats used: MOOC, PDF documents, slides, interactive platforms, physical formats and cloud-based platforms.

Is there formal recognition?

It is a formal training and part of the curricula. Participants receive a certificate of attendance.

What impact do you expect from this initiative?

The initiative has been instrumental for extending and deepening our Campus-wide network with early career researchers from all kinds of research fields as well as research and teaching managers.

How will you keep trainees up-to-date with these skills?

Training opportunities are regularly offered, through the Open Science Meet-up, and the promotion of other events and trainings (self-organized and offered by others).

Are you running an evaluation with the trainees?

So far we did not run a larger scale evaluation of our training activities. However, for some workshops we have collected information both before and after the event (e.g. FOSTER, The Carpentries).

How do you train and recruit the trainers?

We use our own trainers as well as external training options, e.g. Train the trainer Bootcamp (FOSTER Plus, FIT4RRI), Carpentry Instructor training, data science reading group, workshops and events, and online self-learning (e.g. through MOOCs).

Everyone who is interested in Open Science topics is welcome to join-up our activities, and we apply a range of training and learning formats where we all can learn from each other. Depending on the topics we identify experts and ask them to contribute to training events, some of these engage more, others less in follow-up activities and/or trainings. Some may then volunteer to become certified trainers (e.g. Carpentries Instructor).

What have you learnt so far?

From the local point of view the initiative to create a network of individuals interested in all things Open Science through an Open Science Göttingen Meet-up has been successful beyond expectations. This has led to synergies between library service areas and projects as well as allowed us to link up with several other units across Göttingen Campus (e.g. graduate schools, learning support, research integrity office). The library is not only but also through this initiative identified as a space on campus where knowledge on Open Science comes together regularly, to learn and discuss approaches and challenges as well as to find support for practical aspects of implementing Open Science.

What about the budget and the costs?

There was no specific budget for the overall activity but we can use some library resources (rooms and equipment, basic catering).

Further comments

Some of the answers above, in particular related to the formats and certificates used refer to the OS Göttingen Meet-ups and/or the GOSSIP activities.

Resources

OpenAIRE

FOSTER

The Carpentries

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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