OPEN SCIENCE SKILLING AND TRAINING INITIATIVES IN EUROPE

SPAIN

Interview with Ignasi Labastida, Learning and Research Resources Centre (CRAI) University of Barcelona

Ignasi is the Head of the Office for Knowledge Dissemination and the Research Unit at the CRAI

Website

Email: ilabastida@ub.edu

How did your Open Science skilling initiative begin?

For many years the library has provided open access and copyright training to our own staff, researchers, students and other staff. Now that Open Science is also among the key topics, it was clear that the library had to update its training sessions to include items like Research Data Management (RDM), and to propose new sessions.

When did the general initiative start?

The starting point was internal training on RDM with library staff. We had to offer new services to researchers but first we had to prepare our staff. After this initial training, we decided to work with the Doctoral School and provided PhD students with an introductory course on Open Science. We participated in some previous activities addressing early career researchers but the Doctoral School asked us to include our training in the general programme of transversal sessions. Moreover, the university wanted to have Open Science training for PhD students which followed the recommendations of the LERU Roadmap on this topic.

Please describe the context and aims of the initiative.

It is one of the general training sessions that PhD students must attend to gain enough credits before presenting their dissertation. This training capsule consists of a four-hour session with a mix of theory and practice. Around 40 students participate in the sessions and the main aim is to raise awareness among PhD students about Open Science issues and topics. We have done two sessions this course and we are planning to organize a webinar along with a short practical session for the next academic year. The outline is available here as well as other training sessions for PhD students.

What organisational framework did you use for this initiative?

The Doctoral School organises the training framework and the library is in charge of this specific training session. Together we decided the best model, which currently is based on an introductory session of theory and explanation of cases and best practices. The training does not include any final tests or marks. Attendance is enough to acquire the needed hours of general training.

How is the initiative managed and coordinated?

The training is coordinated by the Doctoral School but all the training programmes are organised by the library, especially the unit for research support. The places are open to any PhD student on a first-come, first-served basis.

Who are your target audiences?

The target audiences are PhD Students participating in any Doctoral Programme at the University of Barcelona. Occasionally, supervisors voluntarily attend part of the sessions.

Which skills are prioritised?

TOP PRIORITY	STRONG PRIORITY	MODERATE PRIORITY	NOT A 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?

Publishing, FAIR Data and Open Science skills are prioritized because the situation is more mature. The Open Access (OA) situation is quite stable and we have already developed some services for RDM. We have Citizen Science projects and we introduce them but in a general session we don't offer detailed explanations. Metrics rewards and assessment are still being discussed in our institution and therefore it is not yet practical to create a detailed training session. We are planning sessions on Research Integrity.

How do participants acquire these skills?

During the training we present practical situations to participants and ask them to think about which decision they would make and why. For instance, we imagine that they are doing a research about a topic for their PhD and they must decide where they will publish the data (by selecting a data repository or data journals), the possible article (OA journals) and other outcomes, such as preprint or postprint (repositories).

How do you keep trainees updated with these skills?

There is no formal plan to keep trainees up-to-date beyond the general information and training that we provide to researchers.

How do you train the trainers?

We haven't done it yet. We just organized some internal training in the library but did not focus on this specific type of training. We plan to organise a session during the next academic year.

How do you recruit the trainers?

The initiative is just starting therefore we have not recruited any trainers. Probably we will choose trainers from our staff who perform research support in the libraries.

Which channels and learning types are used?

Face-to-face.

Which formats are used?

Students are provided with slides and PDF documents that include links and references. Students use their own institutional profiles to apply what they are learning.

Furthermore, we use interactive tools like Mentimeter or Kahoot. With these tools we try to engage the audience and start discussions among the participants. We also organise participants in small groups to discuss and present some cases.

Which channels and formats have been most useful?

I think it is good to have in-person sessions, not just virtual ones. Participants are more free to ask questions and introduce their own issues.

Is there formal recognition?

Yes, participants receive a certificate of attendance as it is a formal training and part of their curricula. PhD students must do some general curricular training (a certain number of hours on skills) and this training is part of it.

What impact do you expect from this initiative?

We expect that the early career researchers will bring the change. We are already seeing evidence that — after these sessions and similar training sessions in other contexts — questions related to access, research data and data management plans are increasing.

What would you advise to someone who is looking to do similar activities?

I would say that it is advisable to organize a first transversal course for all types of profiles and doctoral backgrounds, then a second course or a personal seminar, focused on disciplines or areas of research. This can be used to deepen customized techniques and resources for each specific area and need.

What's next on your skilling/training calendar?

In the autumn we will have a third session and we will have a webinar ready.

What about the budget and costs?

There is a budget in the Doctorate School for PhD training. It can be used to pay the lecturer, according to the official fee. However, the remaining expenses (classroom, resources, etc.) are charged to the general teaching budget of the university (shared with the rest of programmes).

Which challenges have you encountered?

The main challenge is catering for the needs of PhD students. The course must be general but also specific. This means that it has to be tailored to the general profile of a PhD student but also to his/her field of research or discipline (which has its specificities).

Moreover, because of the limited space we had to run the programme several times during the academic year.

Also, there is a different level of knowledge of the topic among participants.

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

I suggest to have general training sessions — probably as a webinar or similar — and then to organise a hands-on practical session. We are going to start the next academic year with this system.

Which resources helped you to develop this initiative?

https://www.fosteropenscience.eu

https://101innovations.wordpress.com

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

2019