



Green Paper on a common strategic framework for EU research and innovation funding

Enabling Open Scholarship (EOS) (www.openscholarship.org) is an international organisation of university managers committed to promoting the principles of open scholarship, including open access to publicly-funded scientific research outputs.

We do this because evidence shows that there are benefits to research from operating such principles. These benefits are enjoyed by the whole research community, including the commercial and industrial research sectors, and are not limited to academic research though of course this is a major beneficiary. Benefits also transfer, in different ways, to the general public.

Open scholarship thus ensures that greater value is returned to society from its investment in research and supports the principle of knowledge as a public good.

In this context, EOS offers some comments in response to Question 20 of the Questionnaire.

Question 20. How should intellectual property rules governing EU funding strike the right balance between competitiveness aspects and the need for access to and dissemination of scientific results?

Point 1: Access to research

We recognise that in respect of commercialisation there can be some tension between the interests of the producers of research in guarding and husbanding intellectual property and the imperative to make knowledge public. In situations where knowledge is created through investment of private funds for the purpose of innovation and commercialisation, it is appropriate that that knowledge is kept out of the public domain while exploitation can take place.

Where public funds have been used for research, however, the outputs should all be publicly-accessible as soon as they are ready for dissemination. There should be no confusion between the two.

The concept of open access and dissemination is one that applies to “*work that is destined for the scientific literature*”. **In this case there is no reason for delaying access for all those who can benefit from the findings from EU-funded research. We recommend immediate accessibility for all EU-funded research outputs to maximise the public benefit.**

Where private capital has been involved in funding the research, the findings are not normally destined for the literature, at least until the commercialisation process has taken place. This is a different, separate and exceptional circumstance that is not covered by the definition of Open Access (which specifically refers to “that which scholars give to the world without expectation of payment”¹).

¹ Budapest Open Access Initiative: <http://www.soros.org/openaccess/read.shtml>

Point 2: Innovation

Evidence is accumulating to show that innovation, most of which is carried out by smaller companies in Europe without in-house libraries or information resources, is hampered by difficulties in accessing scientific research. Moreover, delays in access bring new and additional costs to companies and thus to national economies.

A newly-published study² conducted in Denmark estimated that the value of academic research to sales activity in innovating Danish SMEs is around € 2.1 million per firm per year, and the value of delays in lost sales of new products, is around € 4.8 million per firm per year.

These data underline the importance of open access to research findings, not only for the academic research community that produce them, but for innovation activities in Europe.

Point 3: Implementation of open access to EU-funded research findings

We strongly recommend that the Commission emulates the examples of the Wellcome Trust and the US's National Institutes of Health. Under these policies, researchers receiving publicly-funded research grants are required to retain the right to authorise OA (to the peer-reviewed manuscript) when they publish their results, and must use that right to authorise OA through a suitable designated repository. Such a condition ensures that there can be no permission-based barriers to open dissemination of EU-funded research results.

Submitted by Alma Swan, Convenor

*On behalf of the Board of **Enabling Open Scholarship** (www.openscholarship.org)*

² <http://www.fi.dk/publikationer/2011/adgang-til-forskningsresultater-og-teknisk-information-i-danmark>