Open In Practice Panel Discussion and Closing remarks

Introduction

Here are recorded notes taken during the Open Question Time panel discussion and conference Closing remarks, at the *Open In Practice* conference at the University of Reading on 30th March 2017.

The theme of the discussion was: 'What can we do, as individuals and members of our communities, to make Open Research a reality?' The Chair first invited each member of the panel to make a short position statement on the theme, and then discussion was opened to the floor.

Panel: Louise Corti (Associate Director, UK Data Archive); Martin Paul Eve (Professor of Literature, Technology and Publishing, Birkbeck, University of London); Iain Hrynaszkiewicz (Head of Data Publishing, Springer Nature); Jonathan Tedds (Senior Research Fellow,University of Leicester and Director, Research and Educational Data (RED) Informatics Ltd)

Chair: Roberta Gilchrist (Research Dean for Heritage and Creativity and Professor of Archaeology, University of Reading)

For information about the panel and Chair see the Speakers and Presentations page.

MPE
Perspective as a researcher on open access. First interested in OA as a PhD researcher. Realised wouldn't have access to resources if not at a university. Advised needed to concentrated on building publication record. So incensed decided to ignore their advice and investigate OA. Worked out early on wanted to influence policy. don't be shy about putting yourself forward to argue for policy initiatives. Volunteered to give evidence as a n early career researcher to a committee of MPs. Volunteered to be on committees looking at OA policies. yes it takes time but helps cultivate admin side of CV. Early career is a good time to be focusing on activities that support research. Tend to think research is be all and end all but if you are interested in research you should also be interested in developing research policy and practice.

IH
Publishers provide services to institutions and researchers. Listen to researchers. Certain things motivate and impede open access. Need to listen and understand these concerns to serve research communities. Opportunities to harmonise and communicate policy and practice

around open research. Personally think important for publishers to practice what they promote.
So if mandating openness then need to make data they have produced openly available and do
their project work transparently. Various thing publish do to identify good open research
practice.

JT
Perspective as a researcher who has spent time working in/with research support services.
Originally in astrophysics and associate with people with a lot of technical expertise in data.
Many researchers have that expertise but it tends to be focused on analytics rather than
preservation, sharing and archiving. This applies to many of the big science areas. Tend to see
the data as 'theirs' perhaps due to how they are treated until they are established in their
careers. Researchers are centered on their discipline and relate far more to people in their
specialism than to their formal community as aligned by a research council or their institutional
community. Ways to help researchers be more open in practice, beyond mandates, is embed
open practice in existing research methods education and practices for their field. Also need to
support active data management as much as preservation. There are good services available
for preservation but if they don't apply good data practices at the start of the process it is hard to
retrofit them at preservation stage. Don't forget about software. Over 50% researchers in a
2014 SSI server were writing their own software.

LC
Involved in data policy work for over 20 years. First job in social science data was archiving and
preparing a large survey. Spoken to thousands of social scientists over 20 years. In early 90s
real reluctance to share data but have gone a long way beyond those early arguments against
sharing data. UK is quite advanced in data sharing and transparency even though we think we
may not be. We need to start training postgrads in good data curation as part of their research
methods training. Often researchers say their data is sensitive so they can't share it; sometimes
their topic may be sensitive but this doesn't necessarily make the data sensitive and not
shareable. Think about your own research and what you can share. It's not just data: sharing
methodologies and approaches are also useful and can be shared. Think about how to expose
what you've done and sharing research methods that don't usually have a place in the literature.
Even with data you can always share something.
What can you share to maximise the impact of what you do? think creatively about impact.

Q: (RG) What do universities need to do not just in terms of compliance but convincing
researchers this will help them do better research.

MPE: lot of talk about data. In Humanities have trouble convincing researchers they have data.
It means things that are given. Include evidence or artefacts and the idea of data broadens.
Digital space lets us imagine a raft of artefacts we could share. We have very constricted
accreditation procedures in the academy for a very limited number of posts. On the one hand
we have abundance on the other scarcity. Until we can find better ways to evaluate abundance:
the diversity of outputs, it doesn't work for hiring decisions.

IH: Acknowledged in mandates it's not just about papers it's about other types of outputs. Lends itself to culture change in institutions to consider all research outputs.

LC: Make it all a little bit more fun. It's all too dry and legalistic. For example, just had a dissertation prize for dissertations using secondary data. Can have all sorts of incentives and competitions to make it fun and encourage your students to get involved.

JT: Support your software. Single thing you can do, even if not on a permanent basis, fund a research software engineer position. At Leicester put out a call for who needs help from a research software engineer - overwhelmed by demand.

IH: AT Cambridge been really good outreach using data advocates and data champions. Also thinking about how you engage with senior managements.

MPE: Do we have case studies on researchers being hired and promoted on the basis of data, software or other research outputs not associated with publications.

Q: Cultural shift is a bigger challenge. Really this is going to come from early career researchers. Agree needs to be incorporated into postgraduate education but go further: it should be included earlier in the curriculum because PGRs under pressure to produce. The time to make changes is when students do their first research projects as undergraduates. Once students are exposed to this they love it. Can similar things be done in other disciplines at earlier stages.

MPE: Whole process of academia is disciplining and normalisation: practice is handed down. It does vary by discipline.

LC: whole issue of fake news and fake data there is more of an onus on provenance and whether data sources can be trusted.

JT: Strongly support. The earlier you expose students to these ideas the better.

A: Some countries using short courses effectively at different stages. Most conservative are mid-career researchers and they are influential: on grants panels and peer review panels so can't ignore these. Training mandatory if going to serve on a panel. Reading University ought to assume that open is the default.

MPE: Open licensing more problematic in some disciplinary spaces e.g. history

RG: If open access monographs is a future research assessment requirement then this will change things considerably.

Q: What should a historian researcher be doing with a paper in draft?

JT: Write a short paper about your data or methodology.

IH: In open science a researcher blogs their lab notebook constantly online.

MPE: Some humanities disciplines have a strong pre-print culture e.g. philosophy. Changing journal culture to share work in progress openly with a peers - it doesn't sit well with journal editors. The benefits of going through the process of advanced comments on working papers may be more than preserving double blind peer review.

RG: Selecting your journal so it's a Gold OA journal. Most scientists are more aware of Gold OA, it's more of a rarity in humanities.

MPE: the biggest block to open publishing culture in the humanities is having no recourse to APCs. Researchers panic when asked for APCs. Much better if these things are open at source and change/challenge the business models.

Paul Johnson (Library): We have not turned down any APC request for publication in a genuine OA publication, not hybrid.

JT: APCs lower for data journals and some will waive fees if genuinely not able to fund.

IH: Has been a proliferation of pre-print archives as well.

MPE: Such a change to cultural norms to expose work in progress even if it is beneficial for the project.

Q (RG): Issue of research process and co-production/co-creation. Who really owns the data and what do you do if someone who has been involved isn't happy with how your data is being

LC: Deal a lot with the issue of multiple rights in data. Funder, institutions, researcher, informant may all have some rights. There is a general lack of interest in rights management. There is some good guidance universities can provide on who owns what. For example thinking about if you are purchasing data and linking it with your own what you can then use that data for.

JT: In biomedical area there are things like the information governance toolkit. Increasingly universities have to be more aware and help researchers meet requirements of information governance toolkits. Typically a university might not have a compliant data centre for sensitive data so use local NHS data centres.

IH: agree licensing is very important but very dry. Have to find a way that communicates implications simply and to be more open. WE give away a lot of personal data every day

because it's convenient and we benefit from it. If it's that easy and useful to your career you will make your data available under open licenses.

MPE: Authorship is a terrible proxy for crediting people's contributions to a project. There is a diverse range of labour roles in any research project and we don't have good ways of crediting them except as authors. CRediT taxonomy is one way to sub-divide who did what but is still not an established institutional way of appraising who added value.

Closing remarks (Phil Newton, Research Dean for Environment)

Huge range of issues raised today that vary according to your role and discipline your work in. Proposition open research is better research? the things you may resolve to do will vary hugely based on your position, discipline and context. Hope you agree open research is better research and you have thought about one thing you can take away and do. let us know your open resolutions. We need to know what things you want to do so we can support you in doing them.

Phil Newton's resolutions:

1. Take all of the ideas (panel comments and resolutions) and feed them into the open access and research data management groups.
2. Find out more about DORA and why UoR has not signed up to DORA.
3. Ensure research design is not statistically flawed. How can we do research design better within the University?

Let's keep the conversation going and sharing information and ideas.