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Autor: Fuhrer, Christian
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Kontakt: arlette.piguet@library.ethz.ch

ABSTRACT

Libre accès à l'EPF de Zurich – un rapport d'expérience

Le mouvement «Open-Access» a pris de l'énergie avec le lancement de diverses initiatives sur la scène internationale ainsi qu'avec la fondation de revues «Open-Access». Le rapport présenté ci-contre esquisse le développement du libre accès à l'EPF de Zurich. Grâce à la collection électronique de l'EPF, ce sont environ 20 000 documents qui sont accessibles, dont 5880 thèses en texte intégral. La croissance des statistiques d'utilisation permet de conclure que le serveur de documents de l'EPF de Zurich est devenu un centre de documentation institutionnel connu mondialement.

ZORA: Open Access at the University of Zurich

Christian Fuhrer,
Main Library University of Zurich

The University of Zurich was the first Swiss university to sign the Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge in the Sciences and Humanities and to publish an Open Access policy. In the Zurich Open Repository and Archive (ZORA), researchers of the University of Zurich deposit metadata and full text of their scientific publications. We describe our experience focussing on 2008, the first year in which all publications of the University were collected in ZORA.

The University of Zurich is the largest university in Switzerland and comprises seven Faculties ranging from Theology, Law, Economics, Medicine, Veterinary Medicine to Arts and Science.

To introduce Open Access (OA) at such a multidisciplinary, heterogeneous and by tradition federalistic institution is a big task. Publication cultures vary considerably between the Faculties. A bottom-up democratic pro-

cedure to anchor ZORA and OA would result in seven different directions requiring too many resources. Our strategy has been a mixture of top-down and bottom-up. University leaders show the way assisted by the Main Library and the IT services, and care for feedback of the Faculty members. ZORA is further anchored by a committee made up by representatives of each Faculty.

OA activities date back to 2002, when the University became a member of BioMed Central. A symposium on Open Access was held, and the Berlin Declaration was signed in 2004. In 2005, the University published an OA policy, which was revised in 2008.

Development of ZORA: technical hallmarks

ZORA¹ is operated by the Main Library and the IT services and was outsourced for the first two years as an Open Repository Service by BioMed Central. This generated a jump start and allowed us to quickly gain practical experience. In October 2006, ZORA went public containing more than 1,100 publications. After evaluating several open source platforms, Eprints version 3 was installed and adapted. This software offered critical parameters such as metadata import from PubMed and DOI, embargoes and modulated visibilities of full text. In February 2008, metadata and full text migrated to the in-house ZORA.

Workflow, marketing and communication

It became clear that the best workflow for ZORA is one in which researchers or their assistants (submitters) deposit their publications and the ZORA team acts as editors. The benefit of this approach is obvious. Authors become aware of ZORA, OA and their author rights. Previously they indicated their publications in the Annual Reports; now they deposit them in ZORA, and metadata are automatically transferred to the Annual Reports.

Starting in March 2006, we visited selected OA promoters and interested institutes of the University and implicated them in the submission process. Articles in the newsletter of the University informed about the current status. We produced a film about Open Access

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and showed it, together with public lectures, at the 175 year anniversary of the University in March 2008². In parallel, ZORA was presented to the Deans of each Faculty and at plenary Faculty meetings. These and other sessions informed the researchers directly, led to discussions and created valuable feed-

1 ZORA: <http://www.zora.uzh.ch>

2 Open Access Film of the University of Zurich: <http://www.oai.uzh.ch/index.php?option=content&task=view&id=406&Itemid=282>

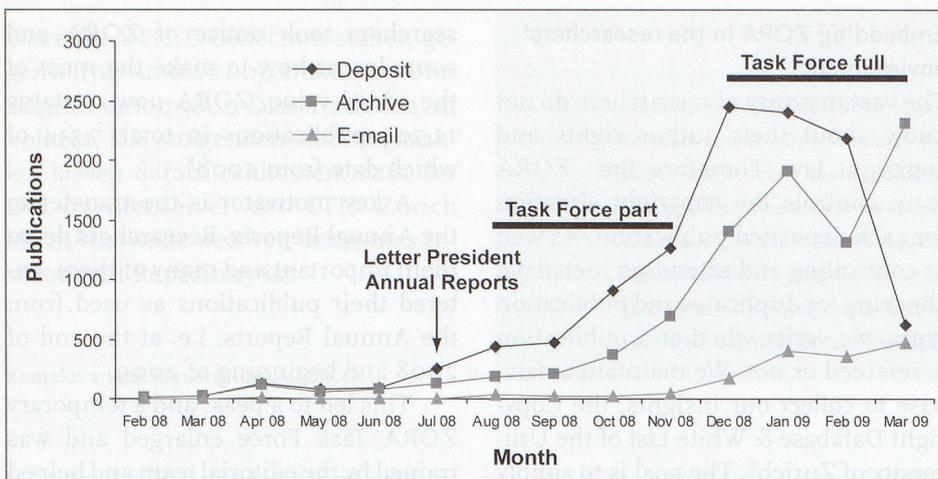


Figure 1: Depositing publications in ZORA. The graph shows how many publications were entered in ZORA per month from February 2008 to March 2009. Deposit: submitters deposit a publication in ZORA; Archive: the submitted publication is controlled by the ZORA team and moved to the repository; E-mail: in cases of questions or refusal the ZORA team returns the publication to the submitter including E-mail notification. The letter of the President, the announcement of the Annual Reports, and work periods of the Task Force are indicated.

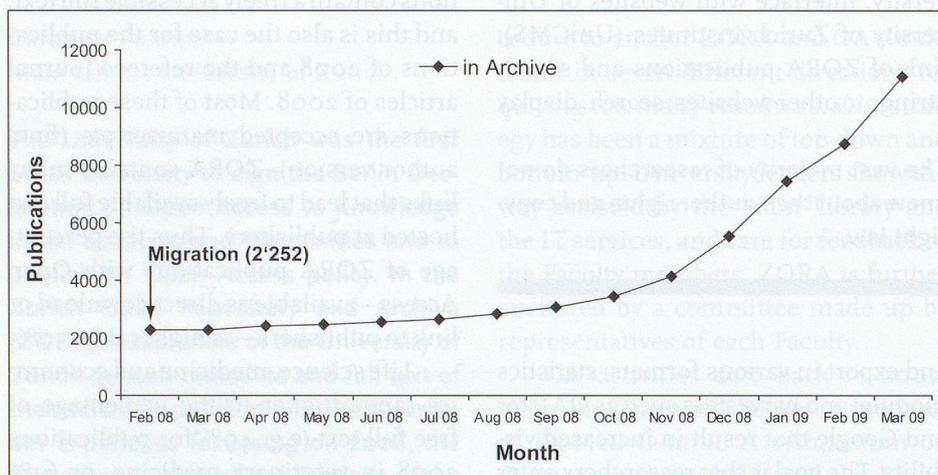


Figure 2: Increase in the number of total publications in the ZORA archive. Migration to in-house ZORA took place in February 2008.

the copyright situation. For example, economists are used to reading and disseminating working papers – and the final version of these can be used as the accepted manuscript in ZORA. The Institute of Zoology has 61% OA in 2007, because the ZORA team contacted the authors each time they had deposited a publication for which the accepted manuscript would have been allowed but was missing. In 2008 we did not have the manpower to do this – and OA dropped to 37%.

Reception of Open Access and ZORA by the researchers

All researchers want others to read their works and to quote them. Accessibility is a key parameter and therefore, in principle, researchers support the idea

of OA. However, the University of Zurich is still in a good position with licensed journals. Therefore it is difficult for researchers to understand that Open Access should be implemented now.

A main concern of researchers about the Gold Road to OA is that they feel obliged to stay with their favourite

Life science, medicine and economics range higher in the percentage of free full text.

journals and books even if they do not want to. Simply, many OA journals are not yet established and have no impact factor, whereas the impact factor is a very critical aspect in evaluations. Pay-

ing author fees for single articles in established hybrid journals, on the other hand, is considered too expensive unless a policy shift at publishers' side can be integrated in a combination of pricing/licensing.

Concerns about depositing publications in ZORA arise because researchers are uncertain about copyright. And because most journals only allow the accepted manuscripts (final author version) to be freely accessible, not the publisher's official PDF. Accepted manuscripts are not what most researchers want to read and show. Instead they search the internet and often find publishers' PDFs on the websites of their colleagues who did not care about their contracts with publishers. Furthermore, even if it only took a single minute to archive a publication – for most researchers this is too much. In reality it takes longer, and accepted manuscripts first have to be created. Finally, solidarity of researchers with publishers, typically small ones, is seen in disciplines in which massive price increases have not (or not yet) occurred.

Impact of the Open Access policy

The policy of the University of Zurich allows bringing ZORA and OA to the attention of all researchers of the University. However, the policy does not force researchers into providing OA, and the free choice of publication remains intact. Exclusive contracts with publishers count as legal objections, and there are no sanctions. So, to have a policy is better than having none, but to get researchers to comply with it is another big task.

Acceptance could be increased by making ZORA a tool that researchers want to use. Added value could provide help, such as import tools that make deposition easier, statistics at the item level, or calculations about the connection between free full text in ZORA and increased citation frequency. However, particularly with statistics and rankings, an institutional repository is at a disadvantage when compared to subject repositories that cover entire scientific fields – at least until individual institutional repositories are interoperating in very intelligent ways, which will take time to accomplish.

The University of Zurich is a federalistic university, built on individual research chairs, in a federalistic country. This is an entirely different cultural background compared to for example the circumstances of the National Institutes of Health in the United States. Biomedical researchers in the U.S. would do anything to get a grant from the NIH – even pay attention to their author rights and deposit their accepted manuscripts in PubMed Central, as required by the new NIH policy.

What's next?

One of our goals is to increase the anchoring of OA and ZORA at the institutes by having local publication managers acting as editors. We also intend to provide more added value as de-

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scribed throughout this article. A final challenge is to increase the percentage of free full text in ZORA. We will re-

ABSTRACT

Zora: «open access» à l'Université de Zurich

L'université de Zurich a été la première en Suisse à se positionner sur le terrain des publications scientifiques en accès libre. Sur la base d'une politique OA définie en 2005, est né le silo Zora (Zurich Open Repository and Archive). Les chercheurs ont ainsi l'occasion de faire connaître leurs travaux à la fois par une version électronique *full text* (environ 30% actuellement de l'offre) et des métadonnées. L'enjeu pour l'équipe Zora: encourager la communauté scientifique aux traditions multiples en matière d'édition, à enrichir le contenu du silo mis à leur disposition tout en respectant les conditions posées par les éditeurs. La communication interne et des mesures d'accompagnement (encouragement et support de la direction de l'université, élaboration des rapports annuels sur la base de Zora dès 2008, bibliométrie) s'avèrent prépondérantes pour gagner la bataille du libre accès. La contribution souligne notamment le peu de connaissances des scientifiques sur la question des droits d'auteur et de copyright. Il s'agit en fin de compte de faire en sorte que les chercheurs soient informés régulièrement de l'offre et aient envie d'utiliser cet outil. Les fonctionnalités doivent donc être d'un usage facile et rapide pour ne pas décourager les déposants.

mind researchers again and again about ZORA and OA using all communication channels possible. High potential is expected from systematically sending notes to authors when an accepted manuscript could be shown freely but has not been provided. This procedure anchors concepts of copyright and OA in a practical manner linked to real publications. This seems to be key: practical

measures to anchor OA with researchers.

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Contact: christian.fuhrer@hbz.uzh.ch

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