

Open Access in Swedish Private Sector R&D

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Helena Stjernberg is, since the beginning of March, working as an information specialist at the Danish medical company Ferring. Before that she worked at the Library Head Office, Lund University, with issues relating to Open Access and electronic publishing.



Statistics Sweden (SCB) has estimated that 75 per cent of all money invested in research activities in Sweden is invested by private companies. In spite of this, the private sector has been relatively absent from the Open Access discussion and development, in contrast to the universities.

The goal of the project presented in this article was to study the advance of OA practices in the private sector. The method was to visit a number of Swedish companies and present the OA concept. After the presentations, web-based surveys were distributed to measure previous knowledge of OA, publishing and readership practices, and views of the matter.

Can reading and publishing practices within the private sector lead to a skewed funding situation for a future Open Access economy? Are there differences in usage of Open Access articles depending on place of work?

During 2008, a National Library project set out to investigate knowledge and awareness of Open Access within a number of R&D companies in Sweden. The aim was also to put to question whether a rather low publishing frequency within the companies might lead to a skewed funding situation for a future Open Access-economy based on an “author-pays”

model. Furthermore, the project team was interested in looking into if publications may be used differently depending on whether someone works at a company or at a university.

Background

Of all money invested in research activities in Sweden, Swedish private companies invested 75 per cent according to Statistics Sweden (SCB). In the SCB report *Total expenditure for research & development*, the 2007 prognosis for research money invested by private enterprise was 83 billion SEK. Expenditures for R&D in universities and institutions of higher education amounted to around 23 billion SEK in 2007.

A significant amount of company-based research is done in large international collaborations and research programmes, and information needs are very similar to those of the universities. Even though the approach to research is similar between universities and private companies, the awareness of Open Access and the discussions about OA have not had the same impact in the private sector as it has had in the educational institutions. In the discussions about Open Access, private companies have been looked upon as possible obstacles, since they currently fund a considerable part of the research publishing through subscription and reprint costs, which may not be replenished in a future author-pays economy.

Presentations and web surveys

The project was funded by the National Library programme OpenAccess.se¹ and the project group consisted of Håkan Carlsson (Lund University/Gothenburg University), Helena Stjernberg (Lund University), Ros-Mari Kristiansson, Per Sulg and Lars-Håkan Herbertsson (AstraZeneca R&D).

14 presentations were held at 10 different companies in Sweden², focussing on defining Open Access and self-archiving (both self-archiving author versions of articles and how to publish in Open Access journals). The SHERPA/RoMEO database over publishers' policies and permissions was also part of the presentation.

Web-based surveys were sent to participants who had attended the presentation. One web-based survey was sent to researchers, and a separate survey was addressed to the information specialists and took up their work in relation to Open Access. A total of 110 responses were collected from researchers and 24 from information specialists.

As a control, a smaller survey was also conducted at Lund University and the University of Gothenburg. The aim of this survey was mainly to check to what extent the concept of Open Access is known among researchers within academia and to see whether reading and publishing frequencies differ between university and industrial researchers. The control survey was answered by 67 university researchers and technical staff.

The private sector's knowledge about Open Access

According to this study, the concept of Open Access is generally much more widely under-

stood in the academic research field compared to the industrial research environment. When asked if familiar with the concept of Open Access in relation to scientific communication, 32 per cent of the 109 industrial researcher respondents claim to have had knowledge of Open Access before they heard our presentation. 68 had no prior knowledge of Open Access.

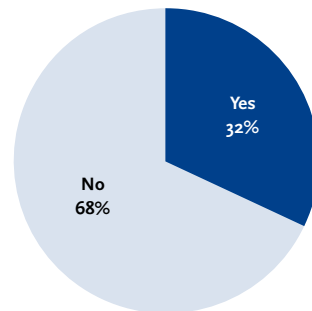


Figure 1: Industrial researchers' knowledge about Open Access

In the university control study, 58 out of 67 respondents answered the question about knowledge of Open Access. Of these, 86 per cent were familiar with the concept of Open Access.

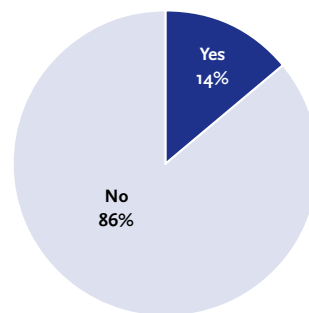


Figure 2: University researchers' knowledge about Open Access

1 <http://www.kb.se/OpenAccess/Hjalptexter/English/>

2 AAK – Aarhus Karlshamn (Karlshamn), Active Biotech (Lund), AkzoNobel (Stenungsund), AstraZeneca R&D (Lund, Mölndal, Södertälje), Biovitrum (Stockholm), DuPont Chemoswed, (Malmö), Höganäs AB, (Höganäs), Nobel Biocare, (Göteborg), Novartis (Stockholm), TetraPak (Lund).

Valuable assets with Open Access according to company researchers

Is Open Access judged as important to company researchers? When choosing from a number of alternatives, increased access to literature is what industrial researchers value most highly with OA. Other things considered valuable are represented as follows in the figure below:

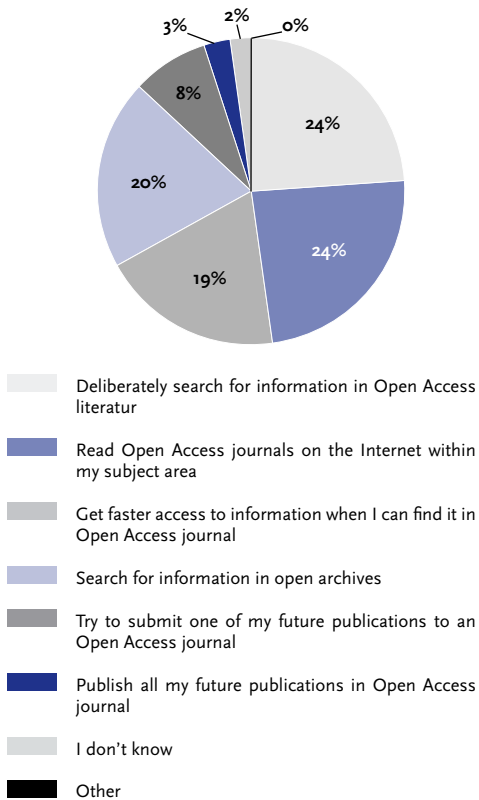


Figure 3: Future benefits of Open Access according to company researchers

Publishing and reading frequencies

The Open Access community has discussed both whether and how private sector companies might be able to contribute to publication costs in an Open Access model of scientific publishing. Questions have arisen if there

is a risk that private corporations and companies might become free riders and if a low publishing frequency within the companies might lead to a skewed funding situation for a future Open Access-economy based on an "author-pays" model.

Of the industrial researchers in this study, 62 per cent read scientific articles every week, while 38 per cent report lower reading frequency.

When it comes to publishing of articles, 32 per cent claim to publish a scientific article at least every other year. There is a close correlation between the yearly staff publishing rate and high readership. All researchers in the 32 per cent most publishing staff also reported daily or weekly readership.

Of the 67 researcher respondents in the university control study, 85 per cent read scientific articles every week, while 15 per cent report to do this less frequently than once a week. When it comes to this respondent group's publishing of articles, 87 per cent claim to publish a scientific article at least every other year.

Misconceptions about quality control in Open Access journals

Despite the fact that we, in our presentation, gave information on the constantly increasing number of Open Access journals with peer review or editorial boards that are available via e.g. DOAJ, many of the respondents expressed concerns about the review process in OA journals. One example of such a response in the survey was: "There are actually no disadvantages apart from the fact that knowledge of Open Access is still limited and the most common argument that one hears is that these journals do not have peer review".

So, seemingly, misconceptions about the quality control in OA journals are still common, even though the number of quality controlled journals is increasing.

Companies using OA articles in journals and repositories

Project discussions about Open Access and its relation to private companies raised questions about copyright. A commonly used definition of Open Access is free, unrestricted access to scientific literature. However, what different user groups are allowed to do with the publications differs and the usage of Open Access publications for companies is unfortunately not as straightforward as one might wish.

Uploading authors' versions of articles in repositories, the so called green road to Open Access, is one way of giving free access to research publications. Publishers have different policies for this, and when searching for publishers' policies in the copyright policies database SHERPA/RoMEO one of the restrictions is "*On non-commercial author's website or repositories*" or "*Non-commercial use only*". What does non-commercial actually mean? The publisher Wiley states that "On author or institutional server or e-print server (not for commercial sale)", i.e. that digital versions of the author's pdf must not be sold via the server. But can non-commercial also mean that authors' versions should not be uploaded on servers that belong to a commercial enterprise?

In 2007, the NIH (National Institute of Health) Public Access Policy became US law. The policy requires that all published results from research funded by NIH must be made available to the general public in the PubMed Central (PMC) archive no later than 12 months after the official date of the publication. The American Fair Use principles apply to these PMC manuscripts. Despite the papers being *open to download* for the public, they are not Open Access per se, which usually involves a license that allows more liberal use than Fair Use. The only way private enterprises can use the papers is reading them on the computer screen, because private enter-

prises are not covered by Fair Use. This leads to a very confusing situation for corporate librarians, who will have to educate their end-users about the different levels of "free" content.

As regards the usage of Open Access journal articles as reprints, Open Access publishers like Public Library of Science (PLoS) and BioMed Central use their web sites to give information on how articles can be used. PLoS uses the Creative Commons Attribution License (CCAL) for all works they publish: "Under the CCAL, authors retain ownership of the copyright for their article, but authors allow anyone to download, reuse, reprint, modify, distribute, and/or copy articles in PLoS journals, so long as the original authors and source are cited. No permission is required from the authors or the publishers." This, as compared to the example with the PMC manuscripts, is very helpful for corporations since there is clear information on each article or journal that the material is Open Access and exactly what it means.

In turn, the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) reports a large number of journals using the CC-BY-NC Creative Commons license. This license omits uses for commercial purposes. Whether this includes the commercial aspects of scientific products resulting from the use of scientific input from licensed publications is not clear. Careful companies interpret it that way, which already limits the use of the publications. The diverse nature of the smaller publishers in the Open Access arena may also make copy-clearing more difficult than in the normal case.

Access to Open Access both at universities and private companies

Knowledge about Open Access is lower among company researchers than university researchers, but the study showed increased

access to scientific literature is still of interest to the company researchers.

As there is a difference in the number of read and published articles between companies and universities and also it has been discussed whether this difference may be compensated for economically, the authors of the project report would like to suggest that the information flow be left unchanged. Researchers access to information should be the same irrespective of where they work. In a future Open Access model of scientific publishing, there are various options. Among these options we suggest that institutional memberships, which are becoming more and more common, could be extended to companies at

a higher fee. Perhaps a limit in the reproduction rights for companies, encouraging routine practice where companies pay publication costs for collaboration publications, could be an alternative. Higher publication fees for companies might be an option, but considering that many publications have authors from both universities and companies, this might become too complicated. Membership programmes or sponsorship for companies who want to take part and create a sustainable financial foundation for the Open Access publishing environment may be a possible solution. The most important issue is that Open Access really is Open Access regardless of where someone works.



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