

CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CONFERENCE ON “OPEN ACCESS”

The conference on “Open Access” held at the University of Minho, Braga, Portugal, May 12-13, 2005, aimed to promote the knowledge, discussions and exchange of experiences about Open Access.

With more than 150 participants, the conference allowed the presentation of contributions from specialists and promoters of the most important initiatives on Open Access that are growing all over the world, and also representatives of the Observatório da Ciência e do Ensino Superior [Observatory of Science and High Education], B-on, and National Library of Portugal.

As a result of this meeting, the participants made a set of conclusions and recommendations to be delivered to governmental entities, universities and research centers.

Main conclusions:

- Being generally established that Open Access is already playing an increasing role in scholarly communication, the focus is now on how should it implemented and what may be the organizational and economic models that can guarantee its sustainability;
- Open Access to scholarly literature contributes to the improvement of the scientific communication and to the achievement of greater value from the investment made on scientific research. By promoting the visibility, accessibility and diffusion of results from the academic activity and scientific research of each organization, each country and Europe as a whole, OA enhances its use and impact in the international scientific community;
- Open Access is not just beneficial to researchers and academics, but it also benefits society as whole as a contribution to democracy and for ensuring sustainable development. By facilitating the access to scientific information to all citizens worldwide it also contributes to the improvement of life-long learning, quality of life and democratic participation. Facilitating access to all must also include persons with disabilities, through the conformance with national and international accessibility guidelines (namely Web Content Accessibility Guidelines of W3C/WAI) by all OA initiatives.

With the objective of promoting Open Access to Portuguese scientific production, therefore contributing to its visibility, and to participate in the initiatives related with Open Access on at European and world level, the participants recommend:

The Portuguese universities and research centers to:

- Create their own repositories, promote their interconnection and from these repositories to cooperate on the establishment of new added-value services;
- Define policies that stimulate or make mandatory the deposit of the scientific production of their authors in those repositories;
- Support and/or encourage their authors to publish in open access journals;
- Participate in international initiatives on Open Access, namely by signing the Berlin Declaration and in the commitment to the initiatives related to it.

The Government and Entities that finance research to:

- Define policies making mandatory that publicly-funded research become available in open access, namely by depositing it in open access repositories;
- Support and/or encourage authors, scientific societies, publishers and other organizations involved in scientific publication to experiment with new publication models associated with open access;
- Cooperate with others European countries and the European Union to establish a common approach on the access to scientific information on a European level;

Authors of scholarly literature to:

- Self-archive their publications in Open Access Repositories, namely in the repositories of their employing organization;
- Publish their articles in Open Access Journals, whenever a suitable one exists.

Publishers and other stakeholders of scientific publication to:

- Experiment with the new business and publication models associated with Open Access
- Adopt licensing and copyright policies that facilitate or at least do not obstruct the self-archiving of authors that publish in open access repositories.

Librarians to:

- Encourage and contribute to the discussion of scholarly communication issues and proposals of change;
- Actively participate in the setting up of institutional repositories;
- Support authors self-archiving their publications in Open Access Repositories.