



knowledge without boundaries

EIFL-OA: Open Access

Removing barriers to knowledge sharing

Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology Open Access Institutional Repository

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Results of the EIFL-funded Open Access Project

INTRODUCTION

Open access (OA) was first introduced to the Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT) Library through a workshop entitled, “The Benefits of OA for Research Dissemination, Usage, Visibility and Impact” funded by EIFL in August 2010. One of the outcomes of the workshop was the creation of an all inclusive committee with a mandate to write an OA institutional policy. The committee was chaired by Professor Kamau Ngamau, the Dean of Faculty of Agriculture. The JKUAT OA [policy](#) was adopted on the 22nd of June 2012 and the OA institutional repository (IR) was set up. With this policy in place, the library decided that the next step should be to raise awareness of both the OA policy and the OA IR. This project ran from 1st June to 30th November 2012.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- The JKUAT OA IR was publicly launched by the Vice-Chancellor;
- The Board of Postgraduate Studies was enthusiastic about this initiative and have already forwarded 479 copies of thesis and dissertations which are in the process of being uploaded to OA IR;
- OA IR became a part of the University performance contract for the year 2012-2013 thereby ensuring that there is a commitment to achieving the stated goals.
- A variety of successful awareness raising activities were conducted: one-on-one sessions were held with a total of 19 Chairmen of Departments; a team of students demonstrated the IR to Chairmen of three major departments; and a two-day workshop was attended by 79 administrators and faculty members.

STRATEGIES, TACTICS AND TOOLS

The JKUAT OA IR project came at a time when the university management expressed concern about our web ranking. Our university prides itself in being a trendsetter in research and innovation. However, our web ranking does not reflect both the quality and quantity of research and innovations generated at JKUAT.

Additionally, two issues of particular interest to researchers and lecturers that the campaign sought to address were copyright management and plagiarism of researchers work.

The following groups were introduced to the OA policy and the OA IR: Chairmen of Departments, lecturers and students in various departments, Research, Production and Extension office, Board of Postgraduate Studies, ICT and Directorate of Planning and Performance Contracting.

The activities included:

- Two awareness raising workshops for research administrators and faculty members that included an introduction to OA IRs, roadmap to JKUAT IR, JKUAT OA Policy, legal issues of IRs, local experience of IRs and a demonstration of the JKUAT IR; Photos of the workshop are available [here](#).
- One-on-one visits to Chairmen of Departments, Deans and Directors;
- Demonstrations of the IR to Chairmen of Departments by the student team;
- An article about the IR in the university magazine;
- Distribution of an online brochure using individual email addresses of all staff and students;
- Peer training among students on the JKUAT IR;
- Update of the IR on the library website;
- Our theme for the OA Week 2012 was the JKUAT IR; and
- Advocacy and marketing of JKUAT OA IR to faculty and students via OA ambassadors. JKUAT IR champions/ ambassadors were identified from 19 departments. The library will continue working with them to keep the IR agenda alive in the departments.

JKUAT OA IR was successfully implemented using DSpace software and launched on 21st November 2012 by the Vice-Chancellor.

CHAIRMEN OF DEPARTMENTS SUGGESTIONS

The following suggestions were made by various Chairmen of Departments; some of them have already been addressed.

- Develop a system that will make it easy for departments to submit and upload documents in batches at the end of each academic year
- Continuously engage and remind both students and academic staff of the importance of using the IR and also update them on new and important research outputs deposited
- Automatically give relevant users (e.g., Masters and PhD students) usernames and passwords for them to upload their content. (The library recognizes that even though self archiving is the long-term goal for the JKUAT IR, in the short-term they will continue to take on this task until researchers and authors have fully engaged in the process.)
- Incorporate repository training into the student orientation program. (Note: this has already been incorporated into the information search skills training that is currently provided)

STUDENT RECOMMENDATIONS

The team of students recommended that

- each Chairman should be encouraged to share the IR message with the lecturers in their departments;
- the library should hold a workshop for the entire teaching staff so that they can convince them of the importance of sharing their works through the repository; and
- students should facilitate training and sensitization to their peers.

In order to address the issue of engaging with students, the library remains committed to taking advantage of all opportunities to raise awareness of the IR. The library has been working closely with the student community in outreach activities targeting other students.

CHALLENGES

There was a two-week national university strike that coincided with the students' academic break during which we had planned to work with students to upload content. The speed of uploading was therefore not been as fast as we had hoped. Since then, we are now able to fast track the uploading.

Since the project took place at the end of a busy semester, the Chairmen of Departments were very busy, which made getting appointments with them very difficult.

SUCCESS STORIES

- Awareness raising workshops were a great success. The Chairmen of Departments were asked to nominate representatives from their departments; 19 departments were represented with some of them sending more than one representative. Key stakeholders were well represented, including the following: Research, Production and Extension division that is in charge of all JKUAT's research, the ICT department that provides library technical support, and the Directorate of Planning and Performance Contracting (DIPCA), the arm of the university that deals with performance contracting.
- A team of ten students were trained on OA IR and then signed up to visit various departmental heads. They demonstrated the JKUAT IR to the Chairmen of the following departments: College of Engineering (Electrical and electronics engineering; Mechatronics Engineering; Electrical and Computer engineering; Telecommunication and communication engineering; Mechanical engineering), School of Human Resource Development (Mass communication department); Department of Biomechanical & Environmental Engineering; Science (Botany; Zoology; Chemistry; and Math).
- The one-on-one sessions helped us to successfully engage with seven Chairmen of Departments, a Dean of Faculty, the chair of the policy committee and the Deputy Vice Chancellor in charge of Research, Production and Extension. The student team visited 12 Chairmen of Departments. A total of 19 Chairmen of Departments have therefore been sensitized. They were all very supportive of the project and promised to work with the library to ensure its success.

LESSONS LEARNED

- The OA IR is a demanding project that requires a dedicated team for it to succeed. Simply adding the OA IR project as another library activity may therefore not be feasible for the repository manager.
- One-on-one campaigns seem to work better because you are able to freely address the concerns (such as copyright and plagiarism issues) that could be holding someone back from submitting research work to the OA IR.
- Sharing of experiences by peers proved to be very effective. However, the researchers who share their experiences should be influential in their field. For example, Professor Mary Abukutsa, a renowned researcher who has published a lot of her work in OA, shared her experience during our first workshop. The positive reception from other participants was clearly visible.
- Many of our researchers are not fully aware of their copyright obligations and restrictions.

THE FUTURE

The project will continue so that the Chairmen of Departments who have not yet been visited, will be contacted.

JKUAT campuses were not as well represented as hoped for. Strategies for advocating to them will be put in place.

The library was previously organised around subject areas. It has now been restructured and a new section called Reference and Special Collection was created. This section will be involved in identifying content for the repository and for uploading it. This will help fast track the population of OA IR.

Training on self archiving was not done. However, the library will be helping their researchers to submit their work to OA IR.

There is a need for the installation of anti-plagiarism software.

We will work with the Chairmen of Departments and students in implementing recommendations listed in the relevant sections above.

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