EIFL-OA: Open Access

Removing barriers to knowledge sharing

Open Access – Optimizing Scholarly Communication

Natalia Cheradi, the Academy of Economic Studies (AESM) Library, Moldova

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Results of the EIFL-funded Open Access Project

INTRODUCTION

There are four open access (OA) journals published in Moldova by the Academy of Sciences of Moldova, Presa Universitara Balteana and Alecu Russo State University of Bălți. The Library community has been active in the OA movement, but there were no OA institutional repositories (IR) and no OA policies in the country.

The project objectives were to:

- Develop and approve an OA policy at the Academy of Economic Studies (AESM);

- Launch an OA IR;

- Share information about OA in the national language;

- Increase awareness of OA among faculty and students;

- Identify OA advocates to continue promoting OA on campus and in the country;

- Train and encourage other universities and research organizations in the country to follow AESM's approach.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- The first OA policy in Moldova was adopted by the Senate at the Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova (AESM) on December 24, 2012.

- The first OA repository in the country launched at AESM: http://www.dspace.ase.md.

- Through a variety of promotional activities, over 15,000 faculty, students, research administrators and librarians gained an understanding of and confidence in OA.

STRATEGIES, TACTICS AND TOOLS

The promotional strategy was a multifaceted approach which included designing and sharing promotional materials (via web sites and in print), posting project news on the EIFL-OA Moldova blog (2,955 visits in October 2012 compared to 560 visits in October 2011), organizing OA presentations at Departmental Chair meetings, hosting OA information days and educational workshops, and celebrating OA Week 2012 during which OA promotional materials were disseminated on the campus and across the city.

Library staff received training on how to promote and advocate for OA on their campus and how to manage and populate an OA IR. Afterwards, they conducted face-to-face information sessions for faculty and students. They used different strategies for each stakeholder community:

- Faculty members received information about OA via email, attended OA presentations at faculty meetings, educational workshops, information days, and round tables;

- Students (especially Master students) were introduced to OA within the framework of the Information literacy course (September-October 2012), during information days, at educational workshops and at round tables.

Print promotional and information materials were available in all the library reading rooms, in the multimedia centre, as well as at the university chairs' offices, dean's offices and at information stands. Librarians used creative approaches such as producing handmade souvenirs and sweets in orange wrappers, packaged in special designer boxes with OA logos. And for each OA discussion session, they created a festive atmosphere.

A questionnaire was carried out to identify the level of students' awareness of OA and then later competitions and contest games in students' clubs were organized to educate the students.

Promotional materials were distributed during training sessions and presentations at departments and in classrooms.

Having widespread faculty and student support during the development of the OA policy helped to ensure the approval of the policy by the AESM Senate and also the creation and launch of an OA IR.

ACTIVITIES

June 22, 2012: A presentation of the monograph by Turcan, Nelly. The Scientific communication in the context of open access to information. Chisinau: CEP USM, 2012. 324 p. (in Romanian).

June 26, 2012: The above mentioned book review was posted on the EIFL-OA Moldova blog by Natalia Cheradi. In the blog she recommends the book as a useful reading about OA.

July 3, 2012: The OA advocacy campaign was officially launched at the AESM.

September 2012: Presentations about OA for undergraduate students (220 academic groups) and Master's students (48 academic groups). Promotional materials were distributed.

September 26, 2012: This project along with an on overview of OA was presented at the International Scientific Conference "University Interference – integration through research and innovation", Section III: Social Sciences. Journalism and Communication, held at the State University of Moldova.

September 28-29, 2012: Two presentations about OA were given at the International Scientific Conference "Competitiveness and Innovation in the Knowledge Economy" organized by the AESM.

October 2012: An OA promotional campaign celebrating International OA Week 2012 included the following activities:

- **October, 14**: "Ask me about OA" during the City Day of Chisinau, as part of the exhibition of the AESM;

- **October, 18:** Launching the project "Development of New Economic Information Services for Moldovan Higher Education", funded by The Norwegian Cooperation

Programme in Higher Education and Eurasia, which supports partnership between the AESM and the University of Bergen in OA developments;

- **October, 22**: Inauguration of OA Week at the Multimedia Center of AESM; action "I support OA" at the campus of AESM;

- **October, 23**: Presentations for undergraduate and graduate students: "Knowledge in the digital era. OA Policies";

- **October, 24**: Presentations for faculty at their departments "Knowledge management: educational resources and OA repositories";

- **October, 25**: Competition for students "How OA facilitates scholarly communication";

- **October, 26**: Debates "What can librarians do to promote OA";

- **October, 27**: A presentation "e-Resources for Education and Research at AESM"; and

- **October, 28**: An OA IR presentation, Multimedia Center, AESM.

October 16, 2012: Natalia Cheradi presented the report "OA – an important element of optimizing the scientific and academic communication: Advocacy Project" at the International Scientific Conference "Library dimensions in the Knowledge Society", Free International University of Moldova.

October 17, 2012: Information was disseminated about the project at the Professional workshop "Information Literacy: essential presence in modern library activity" Free International University of Moldova.

October 23, 2012: Natalia Cheradi presented the report "OA Week 2012 in the Republic of Moldova" at the International Conference "The impact of OA to information on the quality of scientific research results" at The Scientific Library of the State University of Medicine and Pharmacy "N. Testemitanu".

October 25-26, 2012: An overview of OA and this project were presented at the Conference "College library in the context of reformation and modernization of education: current and future tendencies", College of Engineering in Chisinau.

October – November, 2012: A series of events were conducted, including Library staff training on OA; working with the Rector, Vice-Rector and members of the Senate of the university to engage prominent researchers to promote OA; providing certificates and diplomas to young scientists who attended training sessions (the certificates and diplomas can count toward their formal training and professional development during their evaluations); and student participation in OA contests (the winners received free access to some paid services provided by the University).

October – December, 2012: Educational seminars on self-archiving for researchers and university staff were held at 22 departments, three research centres, and at the Business Incubator centre.

September – December, 2012: A discussion about the wording of OA policy and IR Regulations at AESM.

December 24, 2012: A presentation at the ASEM Senate meeting.

December 24, 2012: An OA policy and IR Regulation were adopted by the Senate of the AESM.

SUCCESS STORIES

- University administration supported the OA project and assisted in running the events. Representatives of the Scientific Library attended the Senate meetings and presented about OA which resulted in an OA policy implementation on December 24, 2012.

- The project started in the beginning of the academic year which was good timing to introduce OA to every department and to the first year students.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Information about OA should be targeted to different stakeholders using different dissemination channels. Brief and clear information about OA worked the best for us. It is also important to emphasize the opportunities OA brings and not the challenges.

- Support from the Rector, the Department of Science and the confidence of the library staff was crucial for us.

- It is important to motivate library managers and coordinate all project activities. OA project coordinators and e-licensing managers should work together to bring consistent messages to the faculty and students.

THE FUTURE

The project will serve as a model for other universities and research organizations in the country and will contribute to the effective development of science and education, both at the national and international level.