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Launch of DOAR - Directory of Open Access Repositories

University of Nottingham, UK and University of Lund, Sweden are developing a new service for Open Access to research information.

A new service is starting development to support the rapidly emerging movement towards Open Access to research information. The new service, called **DOAR** - the Directory of Open Access Repositories - will categorise and list the wide variety of Open Access research archives that have grown up around the world. Such repositories have mushroomed over the last 2 years in response to calls by scholars and researchers worldwide to provide open access to research information. Leading UK universities are establishing a national network of archives, where research papers are available to download for free. Internationally, universities and research institutes in Australia, India, Europe and the USA are doing the same, so that there are now large numbers of archives of different sizes, composition and scope.

DOAR will provide a comprehensive and authoritative list of institutional and subject-based repositories, as well as archives set up by funding agencies - like the National Institutes for Health in the USA or the Wellcome Trust in the UK and Europe. Users of the service will be able to analyse repositories by location, type, the material they hold and other measures. This will be of use both to users wishing to find original research papers and for third-party "service providers", like search engines or alert services, which need easy to use tools for developing tailored search services to suit specific user communities.

The project is a joint collaboration between the University of Nottingham in the UK and the University of Lund in Sweden. Both institutions have a track record in the Open Access area. Lund operates the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), which is known throughout the world. Nottingham leads SHERPA, an institutional repository project that has helped establish Open Access archives in 20 of the leading UK research universities. Nottingham also runs the SHERPA/RoMEO database, which is used worldwide as a reference for publisher's copyright policies.

The importance and widespread support for the project can be seen in its funders, led by the international Open Society Institute (OSI), which is a major player in advocacy for the spread of open access to the world's research findings. The UK funding body JISC (Joint Information Systems Committee) has also backed the 18 month project, as part of a larger programme of funding for repository development in UK institutions. There has been additional contributory funding from the Consortium of Research Libraries (CURL) and from SPARCEurope - an alliance of European research libraries, library organisations, and research institutions.

Much valuable work has already been done in listing repositories in different countries and the project will build on this existing work. The project will last 18 months in its initial phase, during which time work will be done to survey and classify existing repositories, produce the database for use and to assist new repositories to register themselves to maximise their visibility and the use of their research content.

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For more information, go to the project website - www.opendoar.org

Internet Links:

Directory of Open Access Journals - www.doaj.org
SHERPA Project - www.sherpa.ac.uk
SHERPA/RoMEO - www.sherpa.ac.uk/romeo.php

OSI - www.soros.org
JISC - www.jisc.ac.uk
CURL - www.curl.ac.uk
SPARCEurope - www.sparceurope.org