Promoting greater visibility and application of research through global networks of Open Access repositories

COAR Annual Report 2014-15

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public version

http://coar-repositories.org
COAR – Annual Report 2014/15

This past year has been both an interesting and challenging one for COAR. Undoubtedly, the visibility of COAR has increased, as reflected by new members from regions that have not been well represented in COAR, including Africa and North America. We have consolidated our role as an international organization representing the global repository community, and have made significant progress in several strategic areas including aligning repository networks and interoperability. On the other hand, with a major decrease in membership fees in 2014, it has been challenging to maintain previous years’ levels of productivity.

I’d like to thank those organizations that provided COAR with bridge funding for 2014 and acknowledge the financial contribution to COAR of the European Commission through the Horizon2020 funding programme. Much of the credit for our achievements over the last year goes to the COAR members who have volunteered their time towards the activities of various working groups, task forces and interest groups as well as the Executive Board and especially our chairman, Norbert Lossau. In addition, I am very thankful to Katharina Mueller and Maxie Gottschling (formerly Putlitz) for all their dedication and hard work to keep the COAR office running so smoothly.

For next year, we will continue to raise the profile of COAR, remain dynamic and responsive to the rapidly evolving environment, and build on our momentum in order to support our mission of increasing the visibility of research outputs through a global network of repositories.

Kathleen Shearer, Executive Director, COAR
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1. Strategy and outreach

Membership recruitment remained an important strategic activity for COAR over the last year. As membership fees were reduced in 2014 from 2500 euros to 500 euros, COAR must continue to increase its membership to ensure an appropriate level of service and support for its activities. COAR pursued new members through 4 strategies:

1. Ensuring COAR is producing work that benefits the repository community
2. Raising the visibility of COAR through wide distribution and communication of outputs and activities
3. Liaising and working with external stakeholders with similar interests and goals, and
4. Targeting specific institutions

COAR has been actively engaging with other international stakeholders in order to achieve our goals and raise our visibility. These organizations include CASRAI, euroCRIS, the Research Data Alliance, Global Research Council, SPARC and SPARC Europe, IFLA, and UNESCO.

Other outreach activities included engaging with several regions that are not yet participating actively in COAR. In some cases, this involves a “loss leader” strategy whereby we encourage these regions to participate in our activities with the expectation that they will become aware of the value of international collaboration through COAR and join as members or partners in the future.

Photo 1: Aligning Repository Networks Committee during the first meeting in Rome, Italy in 2014
2. Activities

Over the last several years, COARs activities have been focused on targeted activities in smaller interest groups and task forces, rather than through the three large working groups. Some of these activities are restricted to COAR members only, while others require working with others outside the COAR community. An overview of all COAR groups and activities is provided in the image below:

Figure 1: Overview of COAR Groups, Committees, and Task Forces

Each of these groups has a chair, a work plan, and is progressing at its own rate. In some cases, groups have very active members that are able to commit significant time to the activity, while others progress more slowly. Each group is described below.
Aligning Repository Networks (chair, Norbert Lossau)

A major strategic priority for COAR over the last year has been to greater align repository networks in order to create a seamless global repository network and demonstrate that repositories offer a viable solution for open access. These activities are guided by a committee with senior representation from the major repository networks from around the world. Repositories networks can be aligned across various levels: policies/strategies, technical interoperability, and services.

COAR has pursued global alignment through four activities:

1. Fostering Collaboration: making connections across regions to support dialogue, collaboration, and alignment: La Referencia, OpenAIRE, SHARE, UK, etc.
2. Advocacy: Promoting the importance of aligning networks with other regions: Africa, Australia, India, etc.
3. Visibility: Promoting the value of repository infrastructure in various international venues (e.g. Global Research Council, UNESCO)
4. COAR-CASRAI Working Group: Agreements about common vocabularies and metadata elements for open access publications

Statement on Embargo Periods

As part of the Aligning Repository Networks Activities, COAR and several international organizations published a statement supporting the “immediate, barrier free access to and reuse of scholarly articles” in May 2014. Since then, a number of other organizations and individuals have endorsed this statement. The statement strongly supports the immediate deposit of published articles into open access (OA) repositories, with short or no embargo periods. Repeated claims by some pub-
Publishers and their representatives that immediate access to articles via OA repositories will have a negative impact on their subscriptions have not been substantiated by evidence. Communication to raise awareness of the topic was reinforced during Open Access week 2014. Until now, the embargo statement has been signed by 24 institutions and a number of individuals.

Repository Content

Open Access Agreements and Licenses Task Force (chair, Kathleen Shearer)

This group is documenting and sharing licensing language that is being used by organizations and consortia that secures the rights for the university to deposit published articles into their institutional repository. The aim is to encourage organizations to implement this type of language into their publisher licenses. These clauses address enable institutions to deposit all their affiliated authors articles directly into the repository, by-passing the need to check the publishers/journals deposit policy for every article. The results have been presented and shared regularly at the ICOLC meetings including the 2014 conference in Portugal. We hope to intensify our promotion of these clauses in the coming year(s).

Repository Impact and Visibility Interest Group (chair, Silvia Nakano)

Many institutions have been investing a lot in increasing the impact and visibility of their repositories. Their strategies may include: search engine optimization, enriching metadata schemes (ORCID standard for authors, unique identifiers for funders/institutions, implementing DOI for citation etc.), linking repository content with data repositories (allowing citation both ways), marketing of repository content through social media and other communication channels, and so on. There is significant value for repository managers in learning new techniques to increase the visibility of content and authors. This group aims to identify and develop effective strategies for marketing content in the repository and share them with the broader repository community.

Photo 2: Participants of the Table “Repository Impact and Visibility during the “Breakfast Club” meeting in Athens, Greece, 2014
The Repository Impact and Visibility Interest Group has also spawned a smaller sub-group, led by Jeff Mixter from OCLC, which is focusing on linked data and will develop recommendations for implementing linked data practices into repositories. Their work plan contains topics such as reviewing, adopting and implementing best practices (for example those developed by Schema.org), identifying challenges and issues and defining use cases unique to individual repositories. The two other groups will be looking at best practices for marketing repositories and search engine optimization.

**RDA Long Tail of Research Data Interest Group and RDA Libraries for Research Data**
(chairs, Kathleen Shearer, Najla Rettberg, Wolfram Horstmann AND Wolfram Horstmann, Kathleen Shearer, Michael Witt)

Research data is an important strategic area for COAR, as data becomes widely recognized as an extremely valuable research output. Through both of these groups, COAR has been promoting the role of the institution for managing research data in various international venues. These interest groups are investigating best practices for managing research data in the context of libraries and long tail repositories. As with publication repositories, one of the major issues around managing research data is to convince researchers to deposit the data. The Long Tail of Research Data Interest Group is looking into tools, workflows and incentives that would help to improve rates of deposit into data repositories. The Libraries for Research Data group has recently been approved as an Interest Group in RDA. The group has already discussed issues of training and education for librarians and is interested in investigating and sharing best practices around organization models for research data management in libraries.

As part of this work, Kathleen Shearer attended a meeting in Lyon, France between RDA and IFLA to discuss further collaborations between the two organizations and how we could raise awareness of research data management with IFLA members. She has also given presentations about research data management at conferences organized by DataCITE, EUDAT, RDA and the University of Tartu, Estonia.

**Repository Interoperability**

**Interoperability Roadmap** (lead, Friedrich Summann)

The COAR Roadmap: Future Directions for Repository Interoperability was published in early February 2015. After a year’s work starting with a poll among a group of international experts and the identification of priority issues for interoperability, Friedrich Summann from Bielefeld University Library, Germany has worked closely with the COAR Executive Director and the Office as well as several editors to finalize the document. The roadmap identifies important trends and their associated action points for the repository community around interoperability and will assist COAR in identifying priority areas for our interoperability efforts in the future.
Controlled Vocabularies for Repository Assets Interest Group (chair, Jochen Schirrwagen)

The aim of this group is to develop an international set of controlled vocabularies for repository assets. This vocabulary will be based on the "info:eu-repo" controlled vocabulary that was developed through the DRIVER/OpenAIRE project and expanded to reflect the requirements of the international repository community.

During the summer 2014 the group made a start with the revision of the controlled vocabulary. Several members of the interest group volunteered to serve on an authority subgroup, to undertake a careful analysis and comparison of resource type terms with other vocabularies and guidelines. The aim was to provide a draft of revised terms and to prototype a SKOSified version of the vocabulary following linked data principles and then share them with the broader community for input.

Photo 3: Participants of the "Vocabularies" table at the "Breakfast Club" meeting in Athens, Greece, 2014

The IG has received strong support from the Agricultural Information Management Standards Initiative (AIMS) of the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations (FAO AIMS). Imma Subirats supports the group with her expertise in linked data and agINFRA (a data infrastructure for agriculture) contributes technical support.

On July 7th, 2014, the interest group organized a webinar open to COAR members and partner organizations with David Baker presenting the Consortia Advancing Standards in Research Administration Information (CASRAI). Given that repositories are increasingly being used to collect and track research outputs (as well as provide open access), it is very important that COAR has ongoing relationships with organizations like CASRAI.
**Usage Data and Beyond Interest Group** (chair, Daniel Beucke)

Measuring usage data of the individual scholarly article has become increasingly common and accepted in the scholarly community. Article-level metrics provide more granular information about access and use of publications and offers a compelling alternative to the traditional journal impact factor. A growing number of repositories seek to implement these types of metrics in order to promote and measure the use of their content to authors and research administrators.

Currently, there is no comprehensive list of the range of article-level metrics available for repositories. This interest group is reviewing existing and emerging article level metrics with the aim of identifying a common set of metrics that can be adopted across repositories, enabling the community to compare statistics across repositories. In March 2015, the Interest Group organised a webinar about usage data for repositories which had more than 40 participants. The presenters discussed status updates and internal perspectives of related projects and services like IRUS UK, OA-Statistics and OpenAIRE.

![Photo 4: Participants of the "Usage Data" table at the "Breakfast Club" meeting in Athens, Greece, 2014](image)

**Training and Education**

**Joint Task Force on Librarians' Competencies in support of e-Research and Scholarly Communication** (former chair Iryna Kuchma/current chair, Pascal Calarco)

The Joint ARL/CARL/COAR/LIBER Joint Task Force on Librarians’ Competencies in Support of E-Research and Scholarly Communication has been collaboratively preparing a series of librarian’s competencies profiles for research data management, scholarly communication and open access, digital humanities research and digital curation and preservation. The findings of the TF have been presented by its members on several occasions over the last year, e.g. at the Library and Information Association of South Africa (LIASA) conference in September or the Bibliotheca academica 2014 conference in Ústí nad Labem, Czech Republic.
Photo 5: Participants of the "Training" table at the "Breakfast Club" meeting in Athens, Greece, 2014

Repository Observatory (chair, Alicia Lopez Medina)

The COAR Repository Observatory identifies trends and future scenarios in the context of the use of repositories in research and education, to help open access repositories to anticipate and respond the constant state of rapid evolution. The last edition, available on the COAR website, highlighted the interoperability of institutional repositories with CRIS (Current Research Information Systems). It includes a vision statement by Wolfram Horstmann, library director of Goettingen State and University Library, Germany, in which he emphasizes the role of institutional repositories as a provider of durable and persistent source of knowledge resources and discusses the importance of harmonizing technologies and vocabularies that describe these knowledge resources. Pablo de Castro, of the euroCRIS Board, explored the why and how of IR and CRIS interoperability and identified “7 things you need to know about repositories and CRIS”. He also moderated the video round table discussion about the topic with the experts Friedrich Summann (Bielefeld University, Germany) and Lígia Maria Ribeiro (University of Porto, Portugal). The edition also includes case studies from the University of Porto (Portugal) and the University of Glasgow (UK).
3. Annual Meeting

The COAR Annual Meeting 2014 took place in conjunction with a joint conference with the OpenAIRE project from May 21 - 23, 2014 in Athens, Greece.

The meeting started with a pre-conference day in which COAR members and OpenAIRE partners could participate on a workshop about Research Data Management (RDM). Workshop topics included the introduction of the RDM tool DMPonline as well as presentations from several experts.

The General Assembly took place on May 21, 2014. The most important topic was the change of the Articles of Association to expand the size of the Executive Board members to allow involvement of members from different regions.

Photo 6: participants of the COAR General Assembly 2014 in Athens, Greece

The joint conference started in the afternoon of May 21 in the premises of the Acropolis Museum in Athens. Sessions touched on how repositories intersect with other library and research services and the variety of value added services that enhance them such as text-mining. Other focus areas were measuring the impact of scientific output and data in the institutional context. The conference also discussed the issue of global interoperability of repository networks. All presentations of the conference are available on the website.
4. Governance bodies

Executive Board

The Executive Board takes a lead on major strategic decision making regarding the activity areas of COAR as well the overall responsibility for the organization. As such, a focus of discussions during the past year has been the set-up of sustainable structures to ensure the longer-term development of COAR. COAR has been accredited by the European Commission for funding and is now one of the partners in the Open-AIRE2020 project. Similarly, the legal records as association with the Magistrate’s Court of Goettingen, Germany (official seat of COAR) have been updated. This was a procedure following the change of the Articles of Association as agreed at the General Assembly in Athens 2014.

Executive Board meetings regularly take place every three months and are held in form of virtual meetings. Due to geographical distance, face-to-face meetings are feasible only at the Annual Meeting.

Since 2014, COAR is listed in the Yearbook of International Organizations, published by the Unions of International Associations (UIA), a major source of reference in International Relations reflecting the increased reputation of COAR.
Office

The permanent COAR staff is made up of Kathleen Sh earer, Katharina Müller and Maxie Gottschling. Due to geographic disposition, a double structure is set up guaranteeing smooth and efficient procedures: As Executive Director, Kathleen Shearer is working from Montreal, Canada while the office, located in Goettingen, Germany, is led by Katharina Müller.

The main duty of the office staff is to facilitate and support the ongoing activities of the different governance committees, the working and interest groups and to assure for the daily management of the organization. In this regard, priority during the past year has been on getting the organization ready to work with external funding: the necessary legal measures have been undertaken together with the Executive Board and internal workflows have been adapted.

5. Marketing and communications

In 2014/15 the COAR Office has been working on a request of COAR members to design a multilingual website. The translations should start with some of the languages of the United Nations (Spanish, Chinese, French). Some of our members have been contacted and asked if they would volunteer in translating some of our pages. So far, significant progress has been made in translating the theme (main navigation, buttons etc.) and some pages into Spanish. Major thanks for this work go to Gonzalo Villarreal and Marisa de Giusti from the National University of La Plata. We encourage other members to contact the COAR office if they are interested in contributing to activity.
6. Membership
A number of new institutions joined the COAR network during the past year diversifying the membership base geographically: Between May 2014 and April 2015, institutions from Australia, Brazil, Canada, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Kenya, Slovenia, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and Turkey joined COAR.
7. Conferences, Meetings, Webinars & Presentations

The COAR Executive Board and Director as well as members and partners have presented COAR at various international conferences and events (see table below). It supported various members and partners in strategic issues and COAR priorities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Conference/Meeting</th>
<th>Who?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 30th, 2014</td>
<td>Presentation “COAR – Latin America” at OTGA &amp; SPINCAM Training course on e-Repositories, Ecuador</td>
<td>Josefina Siguencia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 3rd - 6th, 2014</td>
<td>Presentation “Wagging the long tail: Improving Discovery Practices for Long Tail Research Data” at IASSIST Conference 2014, Canada</td>
<td>Kathleen Shearer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 3rd - 6th, 2014</td>
<td>Presentation at “Bibliothekartag”, Germany</td>
<td>Friedrich Summann,</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Map 1: COAR members and partners worldwide, April 2015
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
<th>Presenter(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 9th - 13th, 2014</td>
<td>24/7 presentation “Aligning Repository Networks” at Open Repositories 2014, Finland</td>
<td>Pablo de Castro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 9th - 13th, 2014</td>
<td>Poster presentation, at Open Repositories 2014, Finland</td>
<td>Katharina Müller</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 9th - 13th, 2014</td>
<td>Presentation “COAR/LIBER/ARL/CARL Joint Task Force on Librarians’ Competencies in Support of E-Research and Scholarly Communication” at Open Repositories 2014, Finland</td>
<td>Dominic Tate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 19th - 20th, 2014</td>
<td>Poster presentation at ELPUB 2014, Greece</td>
<td>Natalia Manola</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2nd - 5th, 2014</td>
<td>Presentation “Global Alignment of Repository Networks” at LIBER 2014 Conference, Latvia</td>
<td>Kathleen Shearer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 7th, 2014</td>
<td>COAR-IG Controlled Vocabularies Webinar about CASRAI – Research Information</td>
<td>Kathleen Shearer, Jochen Schirrwagen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 16th - 22nd, 2014</td>
<td>Presentation at IFLA 2014, France</td>
<td>Kathleen Shearer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 25th - 26th, 2014</td>
<td>Presentation “Wagging the Long Tail of Research Data” at DataCite 2014, France</td>
<td>Kathleen Shearer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 29th, 2014</td>
<td>FAO/AIMS webinar about COAR, Spanish</td>
<td>Josefina Siguencia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date Range</td>
<td>Event Description</td>
<td>Presenter(s)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 3rd - 5th, 2014</td>
<td>Presentation “Libraries for better (research) communication” at Annual Conference of Romanian Library Association, Romania</td>
<td>Imma Subirats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 22nd - 24th, 2014</td>
<td>Interest Group meetings at RDA 4th Plenary Meeting, Netherlands</td>
<td>Márta Virágos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 22nd - 26th, 2014</td>
<td>Presentation of TF Competencies at Library and Information Association of South Africa (LIASA) conference</td>
<td>Kathleen Shearer, Wolfram Horstmann</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 13th - 14th, 2014</td>
<td>Participation in Fall 2014 SHARE Meeting</td>
<td>Kathleen Shearer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 14th - 15th, 2014</td>
<td>Presentation “Librarians’ Competencies in Support of E-Research and Scholarly Communication” at Bibliotheca academica 2014, Czech Republic</td>
<td>Iryna Kuchma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 20th - 22nd, 2014</td>
<td>Presentation about Licenses TF at ICOLC 2014 Conference, Portugal</td>
<td>Kathleen Shearer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 23rd, 2014</td>
<td>Presentation about Long Tail of Research Data Interest Group at the conference “Towards linked science - Open Data and DataCITE” Estonia</td>
<td>Kathleen Shearer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 11th - 12th, 2014</td>
<td>Presentation „Interoperability – the IR (COAR) perspective“ and participation in Panel Discussion at euroCRIS Strategic Members Meeting, Netherlands</td>
<td>Friedrich Summann</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December, 4th, 2014</td>
<td>Participation in Science 2.0 workshop, Spain</td>
<td>Najla Rettberg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 28th - 29th, 2014</td>
<td>Participation and Work Package meeting at OpenAIRE</td>
<td>Norbert Lossau,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2015 | 2020 Kick Off Meeting, Greece | Kathleen Shearer, Katharina Müller |
---|---|---|
March 9th - 11th, 2015 | Interest Group meeting at RDA 5th Plenary Meeting, USA | Wolfram Horstmann |
March 12th - 14th, 2015 | Presentation “Aligning Repository Networks and the Confederation of Open Access Repositories (COAR)” at 10th International CALIBER Conference, India | Kathleen Shearer |
March 16th, 2015 | COAR Webinar “Usage Data for Repositories” | Daniel Beucke, Paul Needham, Jochen Schirrwagen |
April 1st - 2nd, 2015 | Facilitator at Global Research Council high-level workshop on Open Access, UK | Kathleen Shearer |

Table 1: Conferences and meetings of the previous year

8. Publications

Since October 2014 COAR has its own community collection with related publications in the Zenodo repository. Not all publications have been uploaded yet, but the collection will be curated further.


COAR Annual Report 2013/14 (public version), September 2014

Other

Interview with Kathleen Shearer about COAR. Otwarka Nauka. March, 2015 (available in Polish and English language)

A review of the COAR Interest Group “Controlled Vocabularies for Repository Assets”, Interview with Jochen Schirrwagen, March 2015

FAO AIMS Newsletter with focus on the COAR Interest Group “Controlled Vocabularies for Repository Assets, March 2015
Stepping up Open Science: Combining infrastructures, incentives and active support, Joint Statement by OpenAIRE and COAR on the European Commission’s Science2.0 consultation, September 2014

Letter calling on the STM Association to withdraw their model licences for open access, initiated by PLOS; along with numerous other organizations, COAR is a signatory to this letter, August 2014

Statement about embargo periods, Joint Statement by major international associations to underscore their support for immediate open access to research articles, May 2014

Report written by
Kathleen Shearer, Katharina Müller, Maxie Gottschling
Summer 2015