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I Introduction

COAR is an international association with over 100 members and partners from around the world representing libraries, universities, research institutions, government funders and others. COAR brings together the repository community and major repository networks in order build capacity, align policies and practices, and act as a global voice for the repository community.

Four strategic directions guide COAR’s activities:

I. Promote the development of a sustainable, global network of open access repositories as key elements of international research infrastructures in support of excellence in scholarship and education

II. Provide support for the OA repository community and build local capacity for the development and management of repositories and repository networks

III. Define and promote interoperability, common standards, and best practices for repositories, repository networks and with other related systems

IV. Stimulate the development and adoption of value-added services for repositories and repository networks
2 Programmatic Activities

COAR’s programmatic activities for 2017-2018 were organized according to the four strategic directions:

2.1 Strategic Direction I.

I. Promote the development of a sustainable, global network of open access repositories as key elements of international research infrastructures in support of excellence in scholarship and education

Presentations and Keynotes

COAR representatives participated in numerous conferences, events and sessions related to the open science, open access, and repositories. In particular, the COAR Executive Director and Chairman delivered a number of “keynote” presentations presenting the high-level vision of COAR and the work we are doing to progress this vision international in Nepal, Greece (LIBER), Argentina, London, and San Diego, as well as Athens for the Open Science FAIR. A complete list of presentations is available at the end of the report.

Figure 1 Photos from presentations in Argentina, LIBER 2017, and Open Science FAIR Conferences

Five Prerequisites to a Global Knowledge Commons

In October 2017, COAR published an infographic1 on our website entitled: Beyond Open Access: Five prerequisites for a sustainable knowledge commons. The infographic highlights the fact that many institutions and regions are concerned about APCs and the impact they will have on scholarly communications. It also raises awareness of a more sustainable alternative, one that involves institutions and repositories working collaboratively to develop a global knowledge commons.

COAR-SPARC Joint Statement Against Bepress Acquisition

On September 6, 2017, COAR and SPARC jointly published a blog post expressing concerns over the Elsevier acquisition of Bepress. “Like many others in the scholarly community, we were very disappointed to learn about the recent acquisition by Elsevier of Bepress, the provider of the popular Digital Commons repository platform. The acquisition is especially troubling for the hundreds of institutions that use Digital Commons to support their open access repositories. These institutions now find their repository services owned and managed by Elsevier, a company well known for its obstruction of open access and repositories.”

Repository Infographic

COAR and SPARC Europe (with input from IFLA) produced an advocacy flyer about repositories to raise awareness of the role and benefits of repositories. The flyer was produced specifically to use in Europe for policy makers in the European Union, who are currently considering some new legislation that could be very damaging for repositories. We wanted to communicate, in a concise way, the benefits of repositories. The flyer has already adapted for other countries and regions and has been translated into Spanish and Hungarian.

2.2 Strategic Direction II.

II. Provide support for the OA repository community and build local capacity for the development and management of repositories and repository networks

Webinars

COAR continued its webinar series with several interactive events offering information about the latest trends and topics in open access and repositories. These webinars, some for members only and some for the public, are a mixture of virtual presentations and facilitated discussions about important issues for COAR members. The aim is to have sessions every 4-6 weeks and ensure that we have programming of relevance for different regions and time zones.


COAR Repository Training

In 2017, COAR made its first foray into repository training in several countries. In that capacity, the organization has contributed to a number of events, including in Argentina, China and Cuba. All events are listed at the end of the report. In the next year, COAR will work to formalize the curriculum so that it can be re-used and adapted for other countries and contexts.

Figure 2 International Training Course of Open Access Repository 2017 organized by the National Science Library of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (NSL, CAS), Peking University Library (PKL) and Agricultural Information Institute of Chinese Agriculture Academy of Sciences (AII, CAAS)

Asia OA Meeting

Asia OA is a special forum hosted by COAR in which members of the Asian open access community share information, meet each other and build relationships. The community is dedicated to people working in the academic environment based in the Asian region and it celebrates Asian cultural diversity and unique way of doing things. Each year, OA Asia organizes a meeting to bring people from the Asian region together and help build capacity in one country. This year, the Asia OA meeting took place in Kathmandu, Nepal in December 2017. The meeting was attended by about 60 people (40 from Nepal and 20 from other Asian countries) and provided an opportunity to learn about global trends, share information across Asian countries, and help with local strategies for increasing the adoption of OA in Nepal. All the slides and the meeting report are available on the COAR website.
Survey of Open Access in Asia

In June 2017, COAR published a report presenting the results of a survey of open access activities in Asia. The report provides an account of the current state of open access in 16 regions of Asia. It is expected that the survey results will contribute to the wider implementation of open access and help various regions make the case for greater investment in open access, both in terms of policies, as well as national and local infrastructure.

Engagement with National, Regional and International Library Associations

COAR has increased its engagement with library associations, in order to ensure our activities are more widely disseminated and understood in the international library community.

2.3 Strategic Direction III.

III. Define and promote interoperability, common standards, and best practices for repositories, repository networks and with other related systems

COAR has been making steady progress towards greater alignment of repositories and repository networks. We continued efforts to support international alignment and harmonization of repository networks. Much of this work is undertaken as part of the OpenAIRE projects, funded by the European Commission. COAR is the task leader for the Work Package in both OpenAIRE proposals responsible for Aligning Repository Networks. Part of this work is discussed earlier in this report in terms of advocacy and promotion and advocacy, as well as much of the work described below.
International Accord of Repository Networks

On May 8, 2017, at the 2017 Annual Meeting, several regional and national repository networks and stakeholder groups formally endorsed an international accord\(^4\), that will lead to the greater alignment of repository networks around the world. The international accord aims to foster closer relationships between the regional networks and act as a framework for undertaking specific activities including metadata exchange across networks, the adoption of common standards and APIs, and implementation of more advanced functionalities. The accord was signed by network representatives from Australasia, Canada, China, Europe, Latin America, Japan, South Africa and the United States. As a follow up from this accord, COAR has been organizing a technical and strategic meeting of repository networks to facilitate greater exchange and share challenges and solutions. The meeting will take place in Hamburg, Germany in conjunction with the COAR Annual Meeting for 2018.

Next Generation Repositories

A major focus for COAR this year was the work to establish the vision and new functionalities for next generation repositories (NGRs). In November 2017, COAR published technical recommendations for both repository platforms and networks to improve their functionality as well as ensure common behaviours across the international repository community. The aim is to ensure the adoption of new technologies into repository platforms that will support the development of more sophisticated services on top of repository contents. In February 2018, the NGR behaviours and technical recommendations were placed onto GitHub to enable community input, adoption of recommendations, and updating of recommendations as new technologies appear. Since the report was published in November, COAR has been working with a number of organizations and groups to support the implementation of NGR technologies, including


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OpenAIRE, National Institution of Informatics in Japan, and a US NGR Implementers Group as well as the main open source platform providers. It is expected that, by the end of 2018, significant progress will be made in terms of the adoption of NGR recommendations by the platforms. A logo for Next Generation Repositories was also created to help with the branding of this work.

**COAR Controlled Vocabularies**

The COAR Vocabularies working group published a draft of a new controlled vocabulary – “access mode”. This vocabulary has been translated into seven languages and is undergoing its final review by the community. COAR now has three controlled vocabularies and is assessing the possibility of a fourth vocabulary related to version. In addition, we have developed an infographic to help explain in basic terms the importance of a controlled vocabulary and is also working on a step-by-step guide for implementing them into various platforms.

**OpenAIRE Alignment, Bilateral Projects**

The OpenAIRE Advance Project is facilitating data exchange and development of new services between OpenAIRE and several other countries. Given the global nature of research it is imperative that the infrastructure being developed is interoperable and integrated with other types of infrastructure, both vertically (with other related infrastructures in Europe) and horizontally, with similar services being developed in other countries and regions. In terms of horizontal integration, OpenAIRE has already been working with a number of countries and regions to align their activities and create a more seamless global view of research outputs. As part of the OpenAIRE Advance project, lead and facilitated by COAR, OpenAIRE will engage in a number of bilateral projects with 4 regional organizations: LA Referencia, National Institute of Informatics, Canadian Association of Research Libraries, West and Central African Research and Education Network.

**2.4 Strategic Direction IV.**

**IV. Stimulate the development and adoption of value-added services for repositories and repository networks**

**Repository Networks Strategic and Technical Meetings**

COAR has involved in planning a technical meeting for repository networks, planned for May 14 & 15, 2018. The meeting of 16 repository networks to discuss services and technologies of networks around the world. Repository networks aggregate the metadata and (sometimes content) from repositories and increasingly offer value added services such as integrating resources, discovery and tracking of research outputs, text and data mining, and assessment of usage and impact of research outputs. They also play an important role in community building across repositories, ensuring the adoption of common standards and best practices at local repositories that belong to the network.
Next Generation Repositories

Some of the functionalities and behaviours presented in the vision for next generation repositories require hubs and centralized services. These services in particular are:

- Recommender systems, which provide notifications and social networking functions
- Annotation and peer review on top of repository content which require communities of scholars layering their reviews on top of repository resources (e.g. hypothes.is)
- Usage statistics, which sometimes, though not always, are processed and standardized through a hub.

COAR has been promoting the adoption of these types of services with existing repository networks and is looking for opportunities to develop pilots in different regions.

Open Metrics Interest Group

This is a discussion group to share information about best practices, trends and new metrics for repositories. The Open Metrics Interest Group aims to identify these services— at both the technical and organizational level – in order to give an overview of the current landscape for (open) metrics for repository managers. The group had an in-person meeting at the May 2017 meeting in Venice, hosted a webinar about various metrics projects in UK and US, and is contributing to the planning of an open metrics meeting in Hamburg in 2018.

Research Data Management

Many institutions are considering expanding their repository operations to include the collection and management of research data. Some have adopted completely new platforms while others have gradually begun accepting research data without making significant changes to repository systems, policies or procedures. In 2016, COAR launched an Interest Group for Research Data Management to support knowledge sharing about RDM practices at member institutions. This group has been supporting information sharing across institutions about activities and challenges around RDM and is planning a session for the COAR Annual Meeting. In addition, the COAR Executive Director is active in the Research Data Alliance (RDA), attending at least one of the bi-annual meetings each year. She is currently the chair of the Long Tail for Research Data Interest Group, which is looking at best practices and interoperability in managing diverse data sets.

3 Organisation & Governance

3.1 Membership

Membership has grown quite substantially during the past year. 25 institutions from nine different countries (Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Japan, Mexico, Nepal, Switzerland, and the United States) joined since April 2017. Especially notable is the growth in Asian region, where a consortia of eleven institutions from Japan and one special member from Nepal joined COAR. At the same time, some institutions have also ended their membership at the end of 2017.
Table 1 Development of Membership April 2017 - April 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Full single members</th>
<th>Consortia (# of institutions)</th>
<th>Special members</th>
<th>Partners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 2017</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>1 (6)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2018</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>2 (17)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

New Members since the General Assembly 2017:

**Individual members**
- Columbia University (USA)
- Galter Health Sciences Library, Northwestern University (USA)
- LILLIAD Learning center Innovation, Université de Lille Sciences et Technologie (France)
- Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg (Germany)
- Technische Informationsbibliothek (Germany)
- Universidad Autónoma de San Luis Potosi (Mexico)
- University of California Los Angeles (USA)
- University Library of Bern (Switzerland)
- University of California San Diego Library (USA)
- University of Miami Libraries (USA)
- University of South Africa Library (South Africa)
- University of Sydney (Australia)
- University of Victoria (Canada)

**Consortia**
- Japanese Consortium of Open Access Repositories (Japan)
  - Chiba University Libraries (Japan)
  - Hokkaido University Library (Japan)
  - Kagoshima University Library (Japan)
  - Kobe University Library (Japan)
  - National Institute of Polar Research (Japan)
  - Ochanomizu University Library (Japan)
  - University of the Ryukyu Library (Japan)
  - University of Tsukuba Library (Japan)
  - University of Tokyo Library System (Japan)
  - Waseda University Library (Japan)

**Special members**
- Nepal Library and Information Consortium (Nepal)
3.2 Governance Bodies

3.2.1 Executive Board

The Executive Board takes the lead on major strategic decision making regarding the activity areas of COAR as well the overall responsibility for the organization and its finances. A focus of discussions during the past year has been to increase COAR’s funding to ensure greater sustainability and also expand efforts in other areas. These efforts involve raising the profile of COAR and actively recruiting new members, as well as identifying other external funding sources. The Executive Board meets every two-three month via teleconference with one face-to-face meeting during the COAR Annual Meeting. During 2017/2018, one face-to-face board meeting took place on 8 May 2017 in Venice, Italy and via teleconference on 11 September 2017, 20 November 2017, 9 January 2018 and 27 March 2018.

Eloy Rodrigues from University of Minho, Portugal has been COAR Chairman since October 2015. Eloy has been an active participant in COAR since its inception in 2009 and offers a wealth of experience with repositories and open access. He is known and respected around the world and brings a valuable strategic perspective about the role of repositories in the future of scholarly communication. Other members of the Executive Board are Carmen-Gloria Labbé, Vice-Chair (CLARA, Chile) (who resigned on December 31, 2017 due to a change in her employment), Marta Viragos, Treasurer (University of Debrecen, Hungary), Daisy Selematsela from the National Research Foundation and now with the University of South Africa Library (South Africa), Oya Rieger from Cornell University (USA) and Wolfram Horstmann from Göttingen University Library (Germany) who all contribute their considerable experience, knowledge and diverse outlooks to COAR.

The period of the current board is now in its third and final year and will continue until 30 September 2018.

3.2.2 Personnel

COAR has a fairly small staff, with total personnel resources add up to 1.2 FTE (Full Time Equivalent), split over several persons and locations. Kathleen Shearer is Executive Director, working from Montreal, Canada. Ilkay Holt provides programmatic support COAR as independent contractor.

The office is permanent contact point of the association and is located in Germany at Göttingen State and University Library. The local team consists of Katharina Mueller as Head of Office, Kurosh Navabi and Maxie Gottschling (on maternity leave since November 2017).

During 2017, office activities focused on an audit obligatory for associations with non-profit status. Subject to this process were all activities and budgets of the years 2014, 2015 and 2016. The auditing process was conducted by the public revenue service of Göttingen. The audit was passed successfully and COAR’s status as non-profit organization for research and education was reaffirmed for a period of three years, up to 2020.

3.3 Funding

COAR receives funding from the following sources:

- Membership fees
Membership fees: All members contribute on a regular basis through the annual fee of 500 euros. The fees are collected throughout the year and ensure COAR’s ongoing operations. Funding through membership fees are principally for the permanent functioning of the association and cover about half of the annual budget.

European Commission: In 2017-2018, COAR continued its participation in the OpenAIRE activities funded by the European Commission. In the OpenAIRE2020 project, funds were allocated for activities related to aligning repositories and repository networks internationally. The project ended in mid-2018. International Alignment initiative and granted until mid-2018. COAR is also a partner in the follow-up project, OpenAIRE-Advance, which began in January 2018 and will run until 2020, contributing significantly to the COAR budget. In total OpenAIRE funds amounted to almost half of the annual budget of COAR.

Fundraising: Occasionally, COAR also receives financial contributions from the partner institutions or other organizations, either as subsidies, to support meeting costs and travel, and/or for specific programme activities. In 2017, SPARC North America, GODAN and DuraSpace generously contributed to the costs of the COAR Annual Meeting.

Registration fees: The organization of the Annual Meeting 2017, hosted in Venice/Italy by Ca’ Foscari University, was made possible through registration fees by all participants in addition to sponsorship funding.

Benefits in Kind: Several member institutions provide significant work time of their staff contributing in the different activity groups. Gottingen State and University Library provides critical support for COAR by providing rent-free premises and infrastructure to the COAR Office. In addition, contributions have been made by Ca’ Foscari University Venice/Italy and ZBW Leibniz Information Centre for Economics Hamburg/Germany for hosting and organizing the Annual Meetings in 2017 and 2018.
3.4 Annual Meeting

The 2017 COAR Annual Meeting took place on May 8-10, 2017 at the Università Ca’ Foscari in Venice, Italy. The event focused on fostering closer collaboration across countries and regions and facilitating dialogue about issues of common concern and was attended by 80 international delegates. One of the major highlights of the meeting was the launch of an International Accord for Repository Networks. In addition, a good portion of the meeting was devoted to a discussion about the work that COAR is doing to define new functionalities for the next generation of repositories. Members of the COAR Next Generation Repositories Working Group presented a number of scenarios for the future of repositories, including peer review and commenting on top of repository content, social networking functionalities, and better workflows for users. Thanks to support from the University of Alberta, GODAN (Global Open Data for Agriculture and Nutrition) and SPARC North America, we were able to invite a number of important speakers and experts to contribute to the dialogue and discussion.

3.5 Dissemination Activities

3.5.1 Publications, Reports, Statements

- Horstmann, Wolfram; Nurnberger, Amy; Shearer, Kathleen; Wolski, Malcolm (2017): Addressing the Gaps: Recommendations for Supporting the Long Tail of Research Data. DOI: 10.15497/RDA00023

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• Shearer, Kathleen; Kuchma, Iryna; Rodrigues, Eloy; Principe, Pedro; Carvalho, Jose Manuel (2018) International Collaboration to help build capacity for open access in Africa: COAR, Open AIRE, and WACREN. 
  https://indico.wacren.net/event/59/contribution/37.pdf

3.5.2 Webinars

• Arlitsch, Kenning. (2017). Driving Traffic to Institutional Repositories: How Search Engine Optimization can Increase the Number of Downloads from IR. Zenodo. 
  http://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.894564


  http://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.400287
3.5.3 Infographics

Controlled Vocabularies Infographics (2017)
- Sinhala (2018) to be placed on the web
- Portuguese (2018) to be placed on the web

European repositories infographic (2017)

Beyond Open Access: Five Prerequisites for a Sustainable Knowledge Commons

3.5.4 Training Activities
- 2017 October. Repository Certification and Interoperability Workshop in La Plata, Argentina
- 2017 November. International Training Course of Open Access Repository produced in conjunction with the National Science Library, National Academy of Sciences in Beijing, China.

3.5.5 Presentations

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Conference - Location</th>
<th>Presentation title</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2017, May 9</td>
<td>COAR Annual Meeting</td>
<td>Next Generation Repositories</td>
<td>Eloy Rodrigues, Pandelis Perakakis, Paul Walk,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017, June 28</td>
<td>Open Repositories - Brisbane Australia</td>
<td>Next Generation Repositories</td>
<td>Eloy Rodrigues, Kathleen Shearer, Andrea Bollini, Petr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Keynote Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
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<td>----------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017, July 6</td>
<td>LIBER - Patras, Greece</td>
<td></td>
<td>Keynote: Sustainability and innovation in scholarly communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017, August 3</td>
<td>Repository Fringe - Edinburgh, Scotland</td>
<td></td>
<td>Keynote: Next generation repositories – moving from the “fringe” to the foundation of scholarly communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017, September 7</td>
<td>Open Science Fair - Athens, Greece</td>
<td></td>
<td>Next generation repositories – moving from the “fringe” to the foundation of scholarly communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017, September 7</td>
<td>Open Science Fair - Athens, Greece</td>
<td></td>
<td>Building a global knowledge commons: ramping up repositories to support widespread change in the ecosystem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017, September 20</td>
<td>Research Data Alliance - Montreal, Quebec</td>
<td></td>
<td>Long Tail of Research Data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017, October 2</td>
<td>Biredial - La Plata Argentina</td>
<td></td>
<td>Keynote: Sustainabilidad y innovacion en scholarly communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017, December 6</td>
<td>Asia OA - Kathmandu, Nepal</td>
<td></td>
<td>Open is not enough! Sustainability and Innovation in Scholarly Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event Details</td>
<td>Presentation Title</td>
<td>Presenter(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018, January 18</td>
<td>OpenAIRE 2020 and OpenAIRE Advance - Athens, Greece</td>
<td>Aligning Repository Networks</td>
<td>Kathleen Shearer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018, March 8</td>
<td>Info 2018 - Havana, Cuba</td>
<td>Keynote: Open is not enough! Sustainability and Innovation in Scholarly Communication</td>
<td>Kathleen Shearer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018, March 22</td>
<td>Research Data Alliance - Berlin, Germany</td>
<td>Supporting the Long Tail of Research Data</td>
<td>Kathleen Shearer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018, April 24</td>
<td>2018 Digital Initiatives Symposium, San Diego, California, US</td>
<td>Opening Keynote: Working Together to Build and Sustain a Global Knowledge Commons</td>
<td>Kathleen Shearer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 Presentations made by COAR Executive Director, Executive Board, members and partners at various international conferences, webinars and other events.
Appendix 1: Governance and Staff 2017/18

1.1 Executive Board

Chairperson: Eloy Rodrigues, University of Minho, Portugal
Vice Chairperson: Carmen-Gloria Labbé, Cooperación Latinoamericana de Redes Avanzadas (CLARA), Chile
Treasurer: Márta Virágos, University and National Library of Debrecen, Hungary
Oya Rieger, Cornell University, United States
Daisy Selematsela, University of South Africa, South Africa
Wolfram Horstmann, Göttingen State and University Library, Germany

1.2 Staff

Executive Director: Kathleen Shearer
Independent Contractor: Ilkay Holt
Office:
- Maxie Gottschling
- Katharina Müller
- Kurosh Navabi

1.3 Interest Group and Task Group Chairs

Controlled Vocabularies:
Jochen Schirrwagen, Bielefeld University Library, Germany
Isabel Bernal, Spanish National Research Council, Spain

Open Metrics:
Astrid Orth, Göttingen State and University Library, Germany

Next Generation Repositories:
Eloy Rodrigues, University of Minho

Research Data Management:
Raman Ganguly, University of Vienna