annual report
[ making open the default ]
www.sparceurope.org
INTRODUCTION

2017 was a very active, engaged year for SPARC Europe. We have been deliberate and focused in our effort to realize the objectives described in our strategic plan released last year. At the same time, we have been agile in our response to crucial issues, such as the proposed EU copyright reform; while continuing to listen closely to you, our members, and colleagues in the European research community.

We have continued to produce impactful reports to help guide Open policy decisions in Europe. We’ve joined with other international bodies and made decisive moves to help shore up the vital infrastructure that supports the Open Access landscape - and we have been at the centre of a crucial lobbying effort aimed at EU lawmakers as they revise key copyright law that would impact the future of Open Access and Science in Europe. Helping facilitate and stimulate cultural change in our research community remains a priority for us. A new focus, Open policy amongst funders, has also featured in 2017.

At the end of last year, we also saw changes to our board. Four new members were elected, signaling a renewed effort to ensure that our governing body adequately reflects our membership, both in terms of geography and gender.

This annual report provides an overview of how SPARC Europe, on behalf of you, our members, is using its growing strength, expertise, influence and relationships to help make Open the default in Europe.

Vanessa Proudman
Director, SPARC Europe
Driving Policy Development for More Open Research

Copyright Reform
SPARC Europe has taken an active role in the effort to halt the adoption of potentially harmful provisions in the proposed draft of the Directive on Copyright in the Digital Single Market, and certain amendments, which could threaten Open Access and Open Science. Efforts began with the gathering of a coalition that includes CESAER, COAR, The Commons Network, Communia Association, Creative Commons, C4C, EBLIDA, EIFL, EUA, Free Knowledge Advocacy Group EU, IFLA, LIBER, RLUK, Science Europe, and SPARC Europe, with SPARC Europe take the co-ordinating role. Together, the group issued an Open Letter that was addressed to EU Parliament committee members, and, at the same time, widely circulated it to gain signatures of European research libraries and academics.

To strengthen our efforts, SPARC Europe engaged a policy advocate dedicated to influencing relevant members of the European Parliament, European Council and European Commission, voting, amending, and eventually passing, the new copyright legislation. We have been able to share our concerns with all MEPs in the Legal Affairs Committee, the LIBE Committee, with all Parliamentary Group political advisors and with the Permanent Representatives of all EU Member States. Our contacts now include key political advisors, and MEPs and assistants at the heart of the legislative process; these contacts allow us greater insights into how best to influence the legislative work. MEPs and their advisors have told us that the wide coalition, which signed the September open letter, has raised the profile of Open Access and our other concerns with MEPs and officials.
Though a final vote is not scheduled to take place until 2018, progress has been made to influence some of the harmful elements of the proposed, new language. Parliament is also rethinking the narrow exceptions on “illustration for teaching” and cultural heritage institutions. However, influencing this directive remains a challenge with over 1000 amendments on the table.

SPARC Europe will continue efforts to influence Juri Committee MEPs ahead of their vote, which is expected to take place during the first quarter of 2018, as well as MEPs ahead of the Parliament’s plenary vote. Influencing the European Council will also be critical in 2018 before a final vote on the Directive takes place.

For more information on the issue, and to follow our progress, see www.sparceurope.org/copyrightreform.

Gaining a Better Understanding of Research Funder Policies
Government, funders and research assessment bodies are crucial in changing the Open practices of Europe’s researchers. With this in mind, in the fourth quarter of 2017, SPARC Europe commissioned a small-scale study into the Open policies (Open Access and Open Science) of a range of 50 selected funders active across the EU as well as Norway and Switzerland. The primary objectives of the study were:

- to gain a better understanding of the different roles, responsibilities and funding disbursement processes of European funders;
- to explore how these relate to Open Science policy;
- and to identify existing European funder policies and practices in the promotion of Open Access and Open Science.

Mandates, preferences for Green or Gold Open Access, budgets for APCs, innovative OA publishing practices / projects, as well as monitoring and compliance processes were examined in the process.

Results of the study will be shared with the community in the first quarter of 2018.

Promoting Open Science for Increased Research integrity
In June 2017, SPARC Europe was invited to join a panel, part of a European RISE expert workshop, discussing how Open Science can impact research integrity. The meeting was titled Researcher careers and the European funding system: how to make Open Science a reality. Key stakeholders such as LERU, EUA, EURODOC, the European Commission, senior researchers, Open advocates and policymakers from throughout Europe considered how Open Science practice can support research careers. SPARC Europe contributed multiple suggestions for activities that could be advanced by disciplinary communities to support them in good research practice using Open Science.
Starting to Scope the Need for Supporting More Open Education in Europe

In 2017, SPARC Europe began to explore Open Education related policy developments underway in Europe by attending the 2nd OER Policy Forum in Warsaw; this informed the subsequent development of a brief. Titled *High-level Pointers for OER Policy Discussions*, its purpose is to aid in preparing for high-level policy discussions on Open Education.

SPARC Europe was also invited to the World OER Congress in Ljubljana where almost a dozen of the world’s ministers of education shared visions, policies and experiences with Open Education. Preliminary results were also shared here on a range of Open Education policy approaches in EU countries. These results will be made public in the JRC technical report on *Policy Approaches to Open Education. Case Studies from 28 EU Member States* in 2018; SPARC Europe will explore this paper before addressing further OER policy development activities in this area.

Policy Documents

SPARC Europe released the following policy reports in 2017, with the the Open Data policy analysis apparently the most relevant with over 2000 downloads:

**A Snapshot of Open Data and Open Science Policies in Europe (Brief)** (Updated Oct 2017) This report gives an overview and quick access via live links to a variety of national and regional policies from across Europe.

**An Analysis of Open Data and Open Science Policies in Europe (Report)** - Considerable change is occurring on Europe’s Open Data and Open Science policy landscape. To better understand where we stand today, SPARC Europe partnered with the Digital Curation Centre on this report that details, by country, research data policies in 31 European countries.

**Open Data Policy Case Study** (Case Study) This report sheds light on the UK’s Concordat on Open Research Data as a valuable example of Open Data policy work to support more effective research data management practice.

**High-level Pointers for OER Policy Discussions (Brief)** This paper aids in the preparation for high-level policy discussions on Open Education.
Providing Advocacy Guidance and Tools

**Briefing Papers**

Briefing papers we released over the past year have provided guidance and have continued to grow a body of evidence validating the importance of making research and data open to all.

**The Open Data Citation Advantage** *(Briefing paper)*

This paper looks at how Open Data is proving to have a positive effect on research impact, boosting critical citations to the papers they support. A sample of the evidence is reviewed, and a recommendation given to take a closer look at potential links between domains where these benefits are found, and prior investments in research data infrastructure have been made.

Total downloads: 468

**The Value of Open Data to Research Institutions** *(Brief)*

Directed at senior institutional managers, this paper provides insights into the breadth of benefits Open Data brings institutions, as well as an overview of the OD policy landscape in Europe, and concrete steps institutions can take to support OD internally.

Total downloads: 1,047

**Mapping Guidelines and Recommendation Work in Europe**

In order to prevent the duplication of work on Open Science in Europe and to identify white areas of development for advocacy, SPARC Europe conducted a mapping exercise of guidelines and recommendations in Europe encompassing 12 organisations that, to a significant extent, focus on Open Access or Open Science. Included in the exercise were: COAR, CSC, DCC, DFG, ERC, EUA, Jisc, Knowledge Exchange, OAPEN, OASPA, OpenAIRE and SURF. 114 documents were collectively identified. This aggregated content will be provided to the FOSTER portal.

An analysis of these materials revealed that most guidelines and recommendations were targeted towards policy makers, research managers, researchers and library staff. Early career researchers and business / industry / SMEs seem hardly to be served despite the fact that they are clear beneficiaries of Open research. In terms of topics covered, one area significantly under-represented was legal issues, including copyright & licensing. This and other intelligence gained through the analysis will feed into the future development of SPARC Europe advocacy materials.
Initial Exploration of Digital Rights and the Current Status of the SPARC Author Addendum

Ahead of planned efforts to explore a larger campaign on “knowing your rights” in 2018, SPARC Europe reached out to its members in 2017 to gain insights into the community’s experiences with the SPARC Author Addendum, developed over 10 years ago. The information will be pooled with results from a similar mini-survey conducted by Canada’s CARL librarians.

Together with CARL, SPARC (US), Creative Commons and others, in 2018, additional research will be conducted into legal practices surrounding the sharing of research, securing related, pertinent rights and exploiting them. These insights will help inform plans to apprise the research and education sectors more clearly on their rights pertaining to material usage for research or education purposes. The intent is also to change scholarly communication practices to help secure and exploit these rights to disseminate the world’s research results more effectively. Plans are underway for a global working group to take this forward in 2018; this group will include SPARC Europe.

Making the Value of Repositories More Explicit

As part of advocacy work for the European copyright directive, SPARC Europe and COAR developed a new flyer to raise awareness of the importance and benefits of repositories in Europe to help inform and influence Members of the European Parliament and European Council. (Pictured left)
RISE Visualisation Tool
SPARC Europe, together with DCC, Delft University of Technology, Lancaster University and the University of Cambridge explored the need and feasibility for a tool to help visualise institutional data management policy status and service development in the last quarter of 2017. This online visualisation tool will build on the work of the SPARC Europe How Open Is your Research tool and the DCC RISE Research Infrastructure Self Evaluation Framework. It will seek to support policymakers and institution service managers developing a strategy for an improved research data management policy and service infrastructure. The tool will furthermore serve to help us better understand perceptions of the current RDM policy and service offering amongst a range of institutional stakeholders through its visualisations. With groundwork for the specifications of the tool already completed; it will be ready for implementation in 2018.

Providing more European news on Open Access, Open Science and Open Education
As a keen user of Peter Suber’s Open research and education world news service, OATP, in 2017 SPARC Europe began working to populate more European content into the service, engaging additional staff for the effort. Our goal is for OATP to include more news on policy developments, advocacy activities, research, and events related to Open Access, Open Science, and Open Education from France, Austria, Germany, Switzerland, Italy and Spain in 2017. This work will continue into 2018.

Speaking Engagements and Presentations
SPARC Europe presented at multiple meetings and events throughout the year, delivering keynotes as well as presentations. They included:

Keynotes
- Danish Professional Research and Education Libraries 2017, Årsmøde, Denmark. 22 Sept 2017
- The Pomeranian Open Science Conference 2017, Gdansk, Poland. 23 Oct 2017

Presentations
- IFLA WLIC Congress, Being Open about Open, Wroclaw, Poland, 19-25 Aug 2017
- Engaging Researchers in Good Data Management, Cambridge, UK, 15 Nov 2017
- Munin Conference on Scholarly Publishing, Tromsø, Norway, 22-23 Nov 2017
- WBI – UNIRIS Conférence Open Access, Lausanne, Switzerland, 30 Nov-1 Dec 2017
Encouraging Cultural Change

Cultural change remains one of the primary hurdles to Open becoming the default. Influencing and shaping cultural change is undoubtedly a complex endeavour, one that we are approaching from multiple angles that include the following.

Programmes

Open Data Champions - Late 2017 saw the launch of the next iteration of the SPARC Europe Open Champions Programme with the introduction of the Open Data Champions. The aim of the programme is to shine a light on individuals — champions — who are driving Open Data forward in the European academic community.

Among the current 14 champions from nine countries are professors, senior and early career researchers, as well as data professionals. Their profiles, where they share in their own words what they are doing with Open Data, what still needs to be done to unlock more data, and how they are influencing colleagues and peers, can be found on the dedicated site: www.openscholarchampions.eu/opendata.

“A change in research culture is needed to make sharing data a default rather than an exception”

PROF TUULI TOIVONEN
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR AND LEADER OF THE DIGITAL GEOGRAPHY LAB, UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI, DEPARTMENT OF GEOSCIENCES AND GEOGRAPHY, DIGITAL GEOGRAPHY LAB

EUROPEAN OPEN DATA CHAMPIONS
Events

Workshop: Bridging the Gap Between Policy and Practice: How Do We Make Open the Default?
A joint SPARC Europe/LIBER workshop was held during the LIBER annual conference, which took place in Patras, Greece, in July. The aim of the event was to collect and discuss good practices and current issues and challenges related to Open Access and Open Data implementation today. Four key challenge areas pertaining to policy implementation were the focus of the workshop: Engage with researchers to enable more Open Access (OA) and Open Data (OD) sharing; Simplify the process of OA/OD publishing for researchers and administrators; Reward researchers for contributing to OA/OD and Lead the dissemination of their own research information.

SPARC Europe managed the session on How institutions can engage more with researchers to enable more Open Access and Open Data sharing. More than 20 participants from across Europe took part in the session, contributing related ideas and experiences. These were compiled into a Mindmap Document which was subsequently shared with the community at large.

One-day Conference: Engaging Researchers in Good Data Management
Together with Cambridge University and Jisc, SPARC Europe organised a joint event: Engaging Researchers in Good Data Management. The one-day conference held in late October was tailored to those working to support and engage researchers with Open research and Research Data Management (RDM), including librarians, scholarly communications specialists, and researchers from both the sciences and humanities. A handful of key takeaway messages emerged from the event: good data management practices need to be recognised and rewarded; researchers should be engaged early in their careers to follow good RDM practices; and peer influence should be encouraged to persuade others to engage in good data management practice.

The day’s agenda featured 12 lightning talks, five workshops, and one panel discussion. Just over 100 participants from 10 countries were present.

Awards

The Data Management Engagement Award
In the ongoing effort to encourage cultural change amongst researchers to embrace improved data management, SPARC Europe, The University of Cambridge and Jisc have launched a new competition. Its aim is to elicit new and imaginative ideas for engaging researchers in the practices of good Research Data Management (RDM). The purpose is to stimulate activity in the
professional data management community, activity that leads to an increase in good RDM practices throughout diverse research communities. Most sought after: ideas that are applicable and transferable to a broad range of countries, institutions, settings and disciplines, and that have the potential for broad impact. For instance, the best ideas will engage as many people as possible in better, and preferably open, data management practices. (Think: ideas that have the potential to connect with large groups; that are easily reusable by others - and do not require a large budget to execute.)

The call for submissions has been downloaded more than 1000 times. The deadline for proposals is 28 February 2018.

Supporting the Sustainability of Open Science Infrastructure

SPARC Europe is a founding member of the new Global Sustainability Coalition for Open Science Services which has as its mission to provide a co-ordinated, cost-sharing framework to secure the future of non-commercial Open Science services that underpin the development of wider global Open Science.

The coalition launched in late 2017 after having agreed on the terms of reference, the case, the evaluation mechanism and the SCOSS governance structure in collaboration with the Australasian Open Access Strategy Group (AOASG), The Confederation of Open Access Repositories (COAR), the Council of the Australian University Librarians (CAUL), EIFL, The European Research Council (ERC), The European University Association (EUA), The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), LIBER, Science Europe, SPARC Europe, and SPARC (US). SPARC Europe has a co-ordinating role.

As a result, two initial pilots: DOAJ and SHERPA/RoMEO were invited to apply for funding. Both services obliged and were vetted by the SCOSS Board before being presented to the global academic and library communities for funding in November. By the close of the year, SCOSS had garnered its first funder, the University of Alberta Libraries, which committed to helping support both DOAJ and SHERPA/RoMEO.

SPARC Europe helped with communications for the coalition, creating, among other things, a website (www.scoss.org), placing an article in the highly trafficked LSE blog, titled SCOSS: strengthening the network of services that underpin open science and ensuring its sustainability, and getting a mention in The Times Higher Ed.
Engaging with Our Members and Our Community

We strive to remain in close contact with our members, reaching out for your input, and sharing important Open-related insights and news. During 2017, we have evolved some of our methods for doing this.

**Annual Meeting**
The 2017 SPARC Europe annual member meeting was held in Patras, in conjunction with the LIBER conference. Among the presentations shared was one by SPARC Europe’s Director, and another by the Digital Curation Centre’s Kevin Ashley who presented on our jointly produced paper, *Analysis of Open Data and Open Science Policies in Europe*. In her presentation, Vanessa Proudman shared progress made by SPARC Europe over the 12 months prior to July 2017.

Following the meeting, SPARC Europe joined with the LIBER OA Working Group to engage with participants in a workshop setting on a range of topics related to Open Access and Open Data implementation today.

**Member Newsletter**
The member newsletter was redesigned and further developed in March 2017. The archive is now available on the SPARC Europe website.

**A New SPARC Europe online**
A new website design project that began in late 2016 was completed in the first quarter of 2017. The new site incorporates a modernized design and navigation that better reflects SPARC Europe as an organisation, and enables us to more accurately and effectively communicate and inform the community on key issues and organisation news: [https://www.sparceurope.org](https://www.sparceurope.org).

**In Social Media**
SPARC Europe is active both on LinkedIn and Twitter ([@SPARC_EU](https://twitter.com/SPARC_EU)). Our most influential, engaged digital channel, by far, is Twitter where at the close of 2017, our followers had grown by 25%, from 4818 followers at the beginning of January to 6037 be the end of the year.

Newly released SPARC Europe reports and papers in particular garner strong attention on Twitter, as do posts related to our Open Access and Open Data champions.
New Board Members
After calling for nominees from our members, and then presenting them for a final vote, four new Board Members were officially added to the Board at the end of 2017. Collectively, they give our Board greater geographical and gender balance.

The new members are:

- Ms. Marlène Delhaye, Head of the Open Access Unit and Head of the E-Resources Service, Aix Marseille University Academic Libraries, France
- Mr. Ignasi Labastida i Juan, Head, Research Unit, Library, University of Barcelona, Spain
- Ms. Anna Walek, PhD, Director, Gdansk University of Technology Library, Poland
- Assistant Prof. Jadranka Stojanovski, Dept of Information Sciences, University of Zadar, Croatia

Our Staff
To aid in our delivering on our strategic plan, SPARC Europe enlisted two new consultants in 2017 to our team of regular part-time advisers and specialists. We added communications adviser, Angela Walseng; and Dan Pescod as Policy Advocate working on the copyright reform issue. In addition, SPARC Europe also engaged a range of other expert consultants enabling us to carry out our full scope of work.

SPARC Europe is helping make Open the default; thank you for enabling us to do so by supporting our work!