

PEER – Publishing and the Ecology of European Research

News release

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PEER Behavioural Research: Final Report on authors and users vis-a-vis journals and repositories now available at <http://www.peerproject.eu/reports/>

The PEER Behavioural Research Team from Loughborough University (Department of Information Science & LISU) has completed the behavioural research commissioned by PEER. The research which consisted of two phases adopted a mixed methods approach consisting of surveys, focus groups and an interdisciplinary workshop and was carried out between April 2009 and August 2011.

- The specific aim of the behavioural research was to understand the extent to which authors and users are aware of Open Access (OA), the different ways of achieving it, and the (de)motivating factors that influence its uptake.

The report integrates findings from the first phase of the research with the more in depth focus of phase two of the research, which drilled down into some of the key findings of the phase 1 results.

Key conclusions:

- Over the period of Phases 1 and 2 of the behavioural research the increase in the number of researchers who reported placing a version of their journal article(s) into an Open Access Repository was negligible.
- Researchers who associated Open Access with 'self-archiving' were in the minority. Open Access is more likely to be associated with 'self-archiving' (Green Road) by researchers in the Physical sciences & mathematics and the Social sciences, humanities & arts, than those in the Life sciences and Medical sciences who are more likely to associate Open Access with Open Access Journals (Gold Road).
- There is anecdotal evidence that some researchers consider making journal articles accessible via Open Access to be beyond their remit.
- Authors tend to be favourable to Open Access and receptive to the benefits of self-archiving in terms of greater readership and wider dissemination of their research, with the caveat that self-archiving does not compromise the pivotal role of the published journal article.
- Readers have concerns about the authority of article content and the extent to which it can be cited when the version they have accessed is not the final published version. These concerns are more prevalent where the purpose of reading is to produce a published journal article, and are perceived as less of an issue for other types of reading purpose.
- Academic researchers have a conservative set of attitudes, perceptions and behaviours towards the scholarly communication system and do not desire fundamental changes in the way research is currently disseminated and published.

- Open Access Repositories are perceived by researchers as complementary to, rather than replacing, current forums for disseminating and publishing research.

The full report is available from <http://www.peerproject.eu/reports/>

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About PEER:

PEER (Publishing and the Ecology of European Research), supported by the [EC eContentplus programme](#), is investigating the effects of the large-scale, systematic depositing of authors' final peer-reviewed manuscripts (so called Green Open Access or stage-two research output) on reader access, author visibility, and journal viability, as well as on the broader ecology of European research. The project is a collaboration between publishers, repositories and researchers and will last from September 2008 to May 2012

For further information on PEER, visit the website: <http://www.peerproject.eu/>

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Long term preservation archive: e-depot, Koninklijke Bibliotheek