Open access: engage or oppose?

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Denial

“It’s a few cranks. It’s not going to happen.”
Anger

“How dare these ******* tell us how to run our journals?”
Bargaining

“Maybe we can buy them off with deposit of manuscripts.”
Depression

“****. It’s going to eat our lunch.”
Acceptance

“It’s not going to go away. Let’s work with it.”
Principles of constructive engagement

- A clear articulation of the services that publishers provide to the scholarly community
- A clear and constructive approach to repositories
- A clear and constructive approach to gold open access
- A clear commitment to multiple business models
- A clear commitment to maximising the flow of research information, regardless of business models
So how should we work with green OA?

- Clearly delineated policies for different versions of the article
  - Author’s original version; accepted manuscript; version of record
  - Length of embargo
  - Use of journal name and branding
- Clear communication of policies
  - Tag articles with rich metadata on rights, permissions, funding bodies, etc
And how should we work with gold oa?

- Offer a gold oa model on all relevant journals
  - Enable authors to publish in their journal of choice, and comply with funding agency policies; build a sustainable path to gold oa
- State clearly that open access publication fees will be taken into account, alongside other revenue streams and all costs, when setting subscription prices for hybrid journals
  - Don’t give publishers’ opponents the opportunity to say that gold oa won’t work because publishers are cynically ‘double-dipping’
And how should we work with gold oa?

- Engage with funding agencies to ensure they develop robust and sustainable funding mechanisms for payment of publication fees
- Help the funding agencies to track and measure the research they fund
- Adopt appropriate copyright policies which enable re-use of content
- Work as an industry to facilitate text-mining of both subscription content, under appropriate licences, and gold oa content
IFLA Statement on open access – clarifying IFLA’s position and strategy

The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) is committed to the principles of freedom of access to information and the belief that universal and equitable access to information is vital for the social, educational, cultural, democratic, and economic well-being of people, communities, and organizations.

Open access is the new known name for a concept, a movement and a business model whose goal is to provide free access and re-use of scientific knowledge in the form of research articles, monographs, data and related materials. Open access does this by shifting today’s prevalent business models of after-publication payment by subscribers to a funding model that does not charge readers or their institutions for access. Thus, open access is an essential issue within IFLA’s information agenda.

Definition of open access
As an initial action, IFLA has signed the Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge in the Sciences and Humanities. IFLA adheres to the definition of open access used in the Berlin Declaration and will use it in public communication and contacts with various organizations.

A clear focus on the access issue
IFLA acknowledges that there are a number of worthwhile objectives, besides open access, concerning the development of the system of scientific and scholarly communication, such as:
- implementing a rigorous system for the control of scientific quality;
- providing long-term preservation of research information;
- safeguarding freedom from censorship;
- offering efficient and user-friendly services;
- fostering activities that support "information literacy";
- expanding bandwidth and other essential infrastructure that underlies robust access to information.

There is a positive synergy between promoting open access and pursuing these other essential objectives, and IFLA supports a number of activities related to them; however, they are not identical to open access as herein defined, and neither requires the other. IFLA will promote open access with a clear focus on the access issue.

The current model does not guarantee access and is not sustainable
As the rate and amount of research publication in various forms is rapidly expanding, the current predominant scholarly communication model – via scholarly journals subscriptions – is hardly sustainable and not working effectively in the interests of the global community. Scholarly journals are subject to rapid price escalations and there are no clear and consistent correlations between price, quality and impact. Even the most well endowed research library cannot afford to purchase all of the content requested by its faculty and students.
Engage - publicly

- Engage with open access, in both its forms
- Make that engagement public
  - Clear statements from the industry and from individual publishers on policies in relation to green and gold OA
- Articulate the value and efficiency of the services that publishers provide