

# Getting on Board with Open Access Publishing: A Role for Reference Librarians

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## Purpose

This poster examines the roles of reference librarians' in the open access (OA) publishing movement and opportunities to participate in a more robust manner, as described in the literature.

## Methods

A literature review of reference librarians' involvement in OA publishing, obstacles to their participation, authors' views on open access, suggestions for future research, and evidence of the need for reference librarians to take more responsibility was performed.



<sup>1</sup> "Reference librarian" also includes instruction and liaison librarians.

<sup>2</sup> Mullen, L. B. (2010). *Open Access and its practical impact on the work of academic librarians*. Oxford: Chandos Publishing.

<sup>3</sup> Buehler, M.A., & Boateng, A. (2005). The evolving impact of institutional repositories on reference librarians. *Reference Services Review*, 33(3), 291-300.

## Results

Analysis of the literature led to 25 articles being grouped into four broad categories:

- (1) Overviews of the history and development of OA and its implications for scholarly publishing and libraries. These state a need for librarians to play a role in the movement and provide resources for becoming and staying informed. [5 articles]
- (2) Efforts by librarians to teach scholars about scholarly communications and OA. Several articles indicate a need make these topics a regular part of user education. Evidence of, and obstacles to, liaison librarians becoming OA educators are discussed. [7 articles]
- (3) The role of reference librarians in the success of institutional repositories (IRs). [8 articles]
- (4) Authors' perceptions and knowledge of OA publishing, highlighting a need for further engagement and education. The literature states that authors need accurate, objective information on OA publishing. [5 articles]

"Reference and instruction librarians, in their roles on the front-lines, have tremendous ability to influence library user behaviour, and could potentially provide a needed impetus to the momentum of the open access movement"  
-Laura B. Mullen<sup>2</sup>

## Practical Implications

- Much research has been done on the role of reference librarians in the success of IR.
- However, more comprehensive research needs to be conducted on the role of reference librarians towards engaging scholars in publishing in open access journals.
- There is a demonstrated need reported in the literature for reference librarians to integrate outreach on scholarly communications, and open access publishing more specifically, as a regular part of their job functions.

## Originality/Value

This poster makes an original contribution by identifying what is missing in the literature and offering recommendations for future research on the role of reference librarians in open access journal publishing.

"Reference librarians have to become change agents ... librarians have to work with faculty in a variety of ways, 'creativity, courage, visibility, perseverance and driving motivation are all indispensable characteristics of people who instigate change rather than observe it.'"

-Marianne A. Buehler and Adwoa Boateng<sup>3</sup>



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