Three innovative ways that librarians are supporting their patrons

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Introduction

Throughout this year we have had some great conversations with librarians at conferences and on visits. We've heard about many exciting ways that librarians are responding to their patrons' ever-evolving needs, and so we picked three which were too good to not share! Why not consider implementing something similar for your library?

Innovative ways that librarians are supporting their patrons:

1. Ready, Steady, Publish – Liverpool John Moores University
2. Research Footprint Service – University of Southern Denmark
3. Open Access Escape Room – University of Essex

Ready, Steady, Publish

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Liverpool John Moores University

Research support librarians at LJMU have joined up with the Leadership and Development Foundation to run a regular interactive workshop called 'Ready, Steady, Publish.' Where and when to publish should be a strategic decision and therefore require careful planning.

The workshop encourages participants to reflect on how they currently make their publishing choices. It explores ways that researchers can plan their publishing strategy even before they start writing up their research. The workshop examines how being proactive about publishing and joining up with publishers where possible can increase a researcher's chances of getting their work "out there".

It considers journal and article-based metrics and discusses the importance of both qualitative and quantitative data for deciding where to publish. The workshop also looks at alternative places to publish work and the implications of Open Access and the REF.

Liverpool John Moores University, Redmonds Building

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Research Footprint Service

University of Southern Denmark

Researchers are increasingly judged on the quantifiable output of their research, such as the number of publications, or citations, the impact factor of the journals they publish in, or the h-index. The Research Analysis (RA) Support team at the SDU Library can help to gain insight on how the rest of the world sees individual faculty members' research and gives them the tools to use their metrics to their advantage.

For example, faculty at SDU are invited to the library for a 1-on-1 consultation on their Research Footprints. The Research Footprint[1] is a short report on what their individual metrics look like in WoS, Scopus, Scholar and more. During an one hour consultation, faculty are guided on how to improve the accuracy of their online footprints and are informed about field-normalized metrics that could help them to boost their research. Please see an example of the "*Research Footprint*".

Screenshot examples from a Research Footprint Report

References

1. Deutz, Daniella Bayle, & Wien, Charlotte. (2019, June 20). Template for a "Research Footprint": An overview of a researcher's online academic presence. Zenodo. HYPERLINK "https://protect-us.mimecast.com/s/YRwPCW6w8Df5EjyqGH6VqPb?domain=doi.org" http://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.3250552

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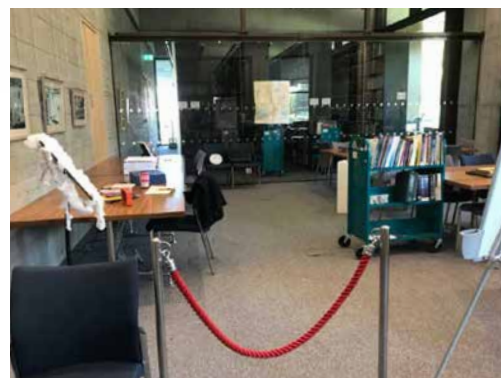# Open Access Escape Room

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University of Essex

The Finch Report in 2012[1], The REF OA requirements for 2021[2] and now the international Plan S[3] are all initiatives to help accelerate the uptake of OA – but are all academic staff aware of why OA has become such a huge imperative or are they just engaging in order to comply with the rules?

According to studies[4], around half of researchers are unsure about their intention to publish OA in the future – a finding that was consistent across all subject areas. It was suggested that this uncertainty might be because researchers are confused about OA, and suspicious about what the implications of making something freely available are. Another study from 2014 found that about a third of PhD students were not familiar with OA and that many were still confused about the concept and concerned about the credibility of OA journals.[5]

This is how the idea of creating an OA-themed escape room was born. Studies[6] have indicated that fun and enjoyment can help adults absorb learning and can motivate them to attend classes or training. So creating a training session that would seem fun even before anyone attended was important in order to get academic staff, professional staff and students to engage. The aim was to create a fun way to learn about OA as well as providing a positive environment where conversations could happen.

The Escape Room has three main OA parts and seven puzzles. The game is set in a virtual future where all research is published with no cost to the reader or author. The game was designed this way to introduce diamond OA to players without bombarding them with information about all the various routes to OA at once. It is also a way to create more discussion around the current publishing landscape after players finish the game.

The Open Access Escape Room was, and continues to be, a huge success and has resulted in many positive interactions between academics, early career researchers and research support staff. Given the increasing focus on reward and policy in academia, it was timely to set up something light-hearted to increase engagement with such a relevant and important topic in scholarly communications.

Open Access Escape Room Layout, University of Essex, October 2018

A team from the UK Data Archive after they completed the Open Access Escape Room, University of Essex, October 2018

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For more in-depth information about the Open Access Escape Room, read the full case study *here*. And for instructions on how you can set up your own Open Access Escape Room, all the instructions can be found *here*.

References

1. "Accessibility, sustainability, excellence: how to expand access to research publications" The Association of Commonwealth Universities (June 2012): https://www.acu.ac.uk/research-information-network/finch-report-final (accessed January 24, 2019).

2. "Guidance – REF 2021," REF: https://www.ref.ac.uk/guidance/ (accessed January 24, 2019).

3. "'Plan S' and 'cOAlition S' – Accelerating the transition to full and immediate Open Access to scientific publications," Plan S: https://www.coalition-s.org/ (accessed January 24, 2019).

4. Jennifer Rowley et al., "Academics' behaviors and attitudes towards open access publishing in scholarly journals," Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology 68, no. 5 (March 2017): 1201–1211; DOI: https://doi.org/10.1002/asi.23710 (accessed January 24, 2019).

5. Julia E. Rodriguez, "Awareness and attitudes about Open Access Publishing: A Glance at Generational Differences," Journal of Academic Librarianship 40, no. 6 (November 2014): 604–610; DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.acalib.2014.07.013 (accessed January 24, 2019).

6. Dorothy Lucardie, "The Impact of Fun and Enjoyment on Adult's Learning," Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences 142, (August 2014): 439–446; DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.07.696 (accessed January 24, 2019).