

## **Publishing peer-reviewed papers twice: a contribution to Openness.**

*These notes are for discussion at the URC. They follow discussions earlier this year on open access .[Mtg. 1, Item 10, 'Open Access: a Policy Proposal', and Mtg. 3, Item 5].*

Peer judgement is in the heartland of scholarly practice and is arguably the most important means by which scholarship is valued and the quality of works assured.

Papers published after they have been peer reviewed play a distinguished role in the broad system of communication within and across scholarly communities. In addition to their status as records of advances in scholarship and associated attribution to scholars, peer reviewed publications form a collection of papers upon which bibliometric techniques are widely used to assist in judging the quality of contributions made by individuals.

Within this scholarly communication system, authors, peers, and publishers produce distinctive literatures, that is reference records, which are made accessible to the public largely through subscriptions to thematic, serial publication streams. Because costs associated with authors and peers are not passed onto publishers, production costs become those incurred directly by publishers and are largely independent of content. Those costs are met through publisher controlled prices paid by a consumer base consisting, again largely, of publicly funded libraries. The assignment of author copyright to publishers is an important factor for the stability of the system.

While these notes do not attempt to cover the way the peer-reviewed publication system relates to the interests of universities and the scholarly communities they support, there are several characteristics of the current system which are relevant to the value of 'publishing twice'. They are:

- publisher tolls and associated licensing restrict access for scholars and the public more generally;
- publishing dates typically lag behind scholarly creations and discoveries by significant periods;
- publication formats for reference records often restrict open discovery methods.

Changes in ICT infrastructures over the past two decades have led to proposals for improving scholarly communications. In particular the development of pre-print archives (eg arXiv) and open discovery techniques have led to proposals for supplementing the current system with openly published 'author's final versions' of papers as soon as they have been accepted for publication. Institutional repositories form a practical publication base for this purpose.

By publishing twice in this manner the advantages of the current system are preserved whilst access, discovery and timeliness are improved.

Acceptance of this approach by publishers is important to its success since permissions tied to copyright assignation are involved. The list of publishers who support this approach, or one very like it, is now substantial. Although many such publishers impose special conditions, such as embargo periods, overall the improvements listed above can be realised through a 'publishing twice' practice.

The ANU support for the practice includes:

- facilitating transfer, to the University, of a 'final copy' of a peer-reviewed paper accepted by a 'publisher';
- establishing the conditions under which the 'final copy' can be openly published by the University without infringing 'publisher' conditions;
- providing long-lived references for the openly published version.