

Transcript of a conversation between Bill Hubbard (Head of the Centre for Research Communications, University of Nottingham) and Steve Burholt (E-Learning systems developer, Oxford Brookes University).

The conversation took place at the RSP Summer School in Matfen, Newcastle, UK on 15 September 2009.

SB: I'm talking to Bill Hubbard, who's the Head of the Centre for Research Communications. He's the JISC Research Communications strategist. Hello Bill.

BH: Hello

SB: Thanks for talking to us. Can you tell us a bit about your role?

BH: Sure, I'm the Head of a new Research Centre at the University of Nottingham, the Centre for Research Communications. This is a group that's been set up to look at and take part in some of the quite exciting new developments in scholarly communication that have been developing over the past few years, most particularly with regard to Open Access. This is an area that myself and my team have been active in for the past six years, through the SHERPA partnership, and we've been looking at the development of Open Access repositories within institutions to help institutions get their research more widely read and more widely cited.

SB: OK, for those who don't know what a repository is, is it the same as a database, is it different?

BH: It's slightly different. A typical open access institutional repository, such as I think that you're building with RADAR, typically takes in research results and other materials and makes these openly accessible to anybody with an internet connection. This means that the contents are free for anybody to read and reuse. Now, this includes typically full text of the article, so this isn't just some sort of publications database where you can look up the title and an abstract. The purpose of this Open Access movement which has been gaining strength over the past ten years, is to actually make the full text of research articles freely available. This means that their readership is widely...is *vastly* increased...you get a far wider readership, because an awful lot of people that were unable to afford a subscription to the journal, now have access to the full text of the article. This means that the readership goes up. With the readership going up, the use of the material goes up. With the use of the material, the

citations also go up. So, in addition to actually getting your research more widely read and more widely used, and *more quickly read* and *more quickly used*, you also have the personal benefit of seeing your own citations rise.

Various studies have been done across different fields, and typically the citations go up by about 100 percent. In some fields there is actually evidence to show that citations rise 300 per cent: it's a significant effect.

SB: OK. And what are other universities doing? Is everyone following this sort of strategy?

BH: Pretty much, now, yes. For the past six years I've been active with my team in a project called SHERPA. SHERPA started in 2003 and helped a lot of the research-led universities, a lot of the Russell Group universities put together repositories; it acted as a self-help group to get these things established. Over the past six years, we've seen a rise in repositories, such that now virtually the whole of the research base of the UK is now covered. The amount of institutional repositories I think has now risen to something over 80 in the UK. We run a service called Open DOAR, which is a quality-assured list which acts as a directory for all of the open access repositories in the world, and we now have well over 1000 entries. So this isn't just a UK Higher Education phenomenon, it's not just a UK phenomenon; this is an international, global phenomenon.

One of the advantages of open access repositories in the way that they've developed is that they're far more than just a research publications database: they actually share a way of exposing the metadata, the bibliographic details about that content. They share these in a global network, so that if you go to a service such as the Institutional Repository Search project which has been developed by MIMAS at the University of Manchester, or even if you just use something like Google, when you search one repository, you're actually searching all of them, so that this repository network acts as a virtual global repository of research information. For academics that put their material into an institutional repository, they're actually contributing to this large global repository, so that people searching that global repository will find worldwide research, quickly, easily and full text.

SB: And the place of RADAR? Where does that fit in, the Oxford Brookes system?

BH: RADAR fits in very well as being the Oxford Brookes institutional repository: exposing Oxford Brookes research to the world and with a consequent increase in readership and we would hope citation. I think it's very exciting what Oxford Brookes is doing with RADAR in also incorporating teaching and learning material, in having a wider spread of material in this. Certainly, open access to teaching and learning material is something that's equally been developing over the past few years, and I think it's a very exciting, and very...maybe sometimes challenging, but a very exciting development.

For more details see www.brookes.ac.uk/go/radar