MOVING OA FORWARD
F O C U S   S E S S I O N S
"Communicating up" and aligning stakeholders around OA negotiation objectives

28 August 2025

Colleen Campbell

00:00:00:00   Thank you very much again for joining us today. We have got participants here from all across the globe, which really reflects the international nature of the OA2020 community. I'm delighted to open this session today. This edition of the Moving OA Forward Focus series, which is a space for our community to engage in candid, strategic conversations about some of the more complex aspects of the open access transition in scholarly communication.

00:00:37:17   Today's session, Communicating Up, focuses on a critical but sometimes overlooked aspect of open access negotiations, and that is building internal alignment and stakeholder buy-in. The shift from subscription models to open access is really reshaping scholarly communication and creating new opportunities for libraries that are no longer just service providers: they're actually becoming essential partners in shaping open access opportunities and advancing institutional research impact.

00:01:14:10   So in this session, we are going to explore some of the practical strategies for framing open access as a forward-looking investment for institutions. We're going to be looking at how to navigate institutional priorities, how to engage leadership, researchers and funders around a shared vision of open access. So, I would like to now welcome our speakers for today.

00:01:45:12   We have three experts on this topic sharing their insights with us. With that, I will now introduce Susanne Aerni, who is Head of Consortial Services at the Swiss Library Service Platform, or Consortium of Swiss Academic Libraries, joined with Thomas Leibundgut, who is Coordinator for Open Science at swissuniversities, and Jon Shaw, University Librarian at Vanderbilt University in the United States of America.

00:02:18:04   Each of these speakers has extensive experience in shaping institutional or national OA strategies and aligning stakeholders around open access objectives. So together they bring a wealth of achievements in their own contexts, and their talks will highlight some complementary perspectives from the consortium and national level in Switzerland to

the institutional level in the United States, offering us some practical approaches, maybe their challenges, lessons learned and different angles of the OA landscape.

00:02:54:14   So with that brief introduction, I think we will go ahead and start on the presentations. We'll have, the slides now, two brief talks back-to-back, from our speakers, after which we will have some open discussion. With that, I think we will go ahead and begin with Susanne. Or Thomas with us. Very well Thomas, then you can start and we'll pull up your slides here. Just one second.

Thomas Leibundgut

00:03:23:22   Thank you very much. And thank you very much for the lovely invitation. It's great to speak to all of you here today. As has been said, my name is Thomas. I'm the co-coordinator for open science here at swissuniversities, Swiss universities rector's conference of Switzerland. So it's not a single institution, but the rectors' conference of universities, universities of applied science and the universities of teaching education in all of Switzerland.

00:03:49:11   And as has been said, we will be talking, me and Susanne together, about aligning stakeholders around OA negotiations objectives. And I'd like to start with a brief presentation of our agenda that we will cover today. As you can see, we will start with some key takeaways, hoping that you're all still fresh here right now and not, don't have to wait for 20, 25 minutes and then till we actually get to the juicy part.

00:04:14:22   We can give some context about the negotiations that we're leading, where they're embedded in and what is special about them and how we approach them. We will then focus mostly on two issues. One is developing the negotiation mandate, how we develop the mandate that we are working with in our negotiations, which has been a lot of aligning stakeholder exercises involved and then also focusing on how we have achieved or are continuing to achieve, what we hope is a robust internal alignment and stakeholder buy-in around the negotiations.

00:04:50:01   There is also some contact information at the end, in case you want to reach out to us and ask us for anything else. And with that, let's start with the key takeaways. The next slide as well. These are a lovely chapter as slides. There we go. Thank you very much. One of the first key takeaways we have is if you want to align stakeholders and you want to communicate up, you have to involve the higher education institution leadership.

00:05:21:14   You have to somehow deal with the leadership. And one of the first steps that we would recommend is that you find among the higher education institution leadership someone who actually does have intrinsic motivation for the topic. Usually, however, your institutions are organized on a super institutional level, there is going to be 1 to 3 persons who are actually interested and care about open science, care about open access,

00:05:46:13   and if you can approach these people and make these people to your allies, a lot of the job that is going to follow will be a lot easier, because intrinsic motivation creates allies,

creates the best allies, and sympathetic and high-level higher education institution leadership delegates can communicate more efficiently with other members of leadership.

00:06:12:02   Another element that I think is crucial to bear in mind is once you move outside of your own space or your own institutional space, or your own organizational space, at some point, if you start collaborating with others, you will have to give up some level of decision-making power. I mean, even if you do a group work, you can't control everything yourself.

00:06:31:22   And if you start working across different institutions and different institutional hierarchical levels, at some point, getting the buy-in of other people, of other institutions, requires you to give up some level of decision-making power. I would like to stress that because in the invitation it said, how we will show how these experiences elevate the role of the libraries,

00:06:53:20   I think they do that, but they also diminish the role of the libraries in some way, or they diminish the decision-making power. Once you involve higher education institution leadership, you will lose some level of decision-making power. And that is because once we involve higher education leadership, they need to have a say in the development of mandates and the signing of contracts and should be involved in an appropriate manner in all aspects of negotiation.

00:07:18:00   So it's not a one-off kind of consultation and then everything's back to how things used to be or might have used to be, or how things, how people would like things to be, but this is a continuing involvement of leadership, and that will include probably some direct or indirect superiors of yourselves, which means that they will be they will want to make some decisions, and you will have to give them some space to make these decisions.

00:07:45:06   Susanne, you wanted to talk about the alignment of stakeholders and communication on that slide.

Susanne Aerni

Thank you. So it's still the slide before. So as you've written here, it really, you need to keep in mind that the various stakeholder groups have differing interests, and you need to cater for those and be aware of those. And the other thing that we think is very important: it requires time and patience.

00:08:11:16   You can't expect to, you know, speed up the process up to more than to a certain degree because people need time to digest information and, and also see what's happening around them, etc. So really be patient, build on previous experience. You know, maybe start small, have something to show for and then build on this. And keep in mind that, even though you have a mandate in place, it doesn't mean that your job is done.

00:08:42:18   Even if you got the stakeholders to agree on the mandate, you have to you have to nurture this because it's, you know, the alliances that we built or the buy-in that we

built is still to a certain degree for each island. And you have to make sure that you keep on communicating also to the various stakeholder groups in an appropriate way.

00:09:03:24   You can't talk the same way to, university leadership as you talk to library leadership, as you talk to the maybe people doing the groundwork. And keep in mind that time and attention span of leadership is probably limited for, you know, they have so many things going on, so you have to be really concise and short and think about how you get your message across in a quick and concise way, but still answering the questions that they might have.

00:09:38:04   And now, heading back to Thomas will do a bit of a ping pong between the two of us.

Thomas Leibundgut

Yes, but we're limited to ping pong to maybe 2 or 3 rounds. So next slide please. Hold the slide after next to be precise. Thank you. I would like now to give you some overview about the context in which we are moving,

00:09:59:04   and that is on the one hand we have our national open access strategy that has been, created on... we have received, as rectors' conference, a mandate from the State Secretariat of Education, Research and Innovation, our research ministry, we have received a mandate to develop such a strategy in 2015, and over the course of 2016, we developed that strategy.

00:10:24:12   We the rectors' conference, together with our science founder, the SNSF. So that has been really a top-level kind of enterprise that has been conducted on a national level. In 2017, our strategy was presented to the public, with the goal of achieving 100% open access in 2024. Spoiler alert: we are not quite there yet. I think somewhere around 75%, which we think is good but not perfect. Given that target date of 2024 and also the changing circumstances between 2017 and 2023, we decided to have a strategy review in 2023 and then have published this revised strategy in 2024, and that is now building the framework for all our enterprises regarding

00:11:13:01   open access. I don't want to go through the entire strategy. You can read about that on our website. I just want to highlight that a few of the objectives and some of the pathways that we've identified through which we want to achieve our objectives. On the one hand, with regard to our objective, we want to have supporting framework conditions,

00:11:33:02   and that is a really broad term that applies both to national framework conditions, institutional framework conditions and the framework conditions that our science funder sets, that really these three in concert should support open access. Through that, we want to establish a culture in our research communities that is characterized by a fully open access mindset. And the whole enterprise needs to be, at some point, financially sustainable.

00:11:58:00   That is something that has been, emphasized time and again. We've used to talk about cost neutrality with regard to the transition. We think that at some point we need to

leave the transition, but the goal needs to be that the whole enterprise is financially sustainable and that we can provide our authors with reasonable publishing options, but also at a reasonable cost.

00:12:19:17   And one of the two elements, the two elements that have been strongly emphasized in our new strategy are strengthening diamond open access and support for long form publications. With that as a goal to have alternatives to simply, so that we are not simply boxed into one way of achieving open access, so that we don't have to rely entirely on the published negotiations.

00:12:46:18   That being said, that continuity that we have built with the publishing negotiations, that continues to be of great importance. We are all aware that a large part of our publications is being published by the large international publishers, and there needs to be a soft transition, if a transition at all, out of that system.

00:13:07:05   But I think it is an important step that we have here, that we have created, or that we want to create some forms of alternatives that also help us in our negotiation strategy. Regarding the pathways, we want to coordinated infrastructures and services. I've mentioned already negotiations with the publishers, but we also want to establish a truly supportive legal framework, focusing currently on a secondary publication right.

00:13:33:04   That will, we hope, will allow us to really make a step further ahead in our open access enterprise. And we want to focus on long form publications on the one hand, so to enable open access, not only for journal articles, for virtually all kinds of scholarly articles that there are. We need to have a look at research assessment, of course, so that our researchers don't feel that they have to decide between their career and doing open access.

00:13:58:11   And last, but not least, we want to have some monitoring in place so we know where we are and where we're going. I've already mentioned a few of the things that are down here. I want to emphasize that the development of that revision that wasn't done in a huge group, and it wasn't sourced out, it was done by a small group of major stakeholders that involved two representations from higher education institutions, the rectors, that involved somebody from the research fund, someone from the academies, and an open science expert from one of a higher education institution.

00:14:30:07   And while they met, I think about a dozen times over the course of a year to do that, really that revision work, after that we haven't had an extensive consultation process, which I think was also very important with regard to achieving an alignment across the higher education institutions. But in that consultation process, we also invited other stakeholders to have a say, for example, the associations of small and mid-sized publishers that we have in Switzerland who have helped us to shore up some of the issues in here, even though we did not agree on everything with regard to open access.

00:15:10:17   But it was truly helpful to have to reach out also to other stakeholders in the publishing enterprise and see where, how are they looking towards open access and what is their perspective. With that, we've managed to have a strategy that really emphasizes that

open access brings added value to society, the environment, politics and economy. It's the first or second sentence in that strategy,

00:15:33:14 so it's not a cost-cutting exercise but it's something that is a value in itself, that the universities really and truly want to pursue. We've also strongly emphasized the whole financial sustainability aspect of it. And as I've already mentioned, the development of alternative to the costly read and publish agreements that at times have been looked at with a bit of skepticism on parts of higher education leadership.

00:16:01:00 So with that, I think I can hand over to you, Susanne, unless I've forgotten already something.

Susanne Aerni

No, I think that's very good. And I can't stress enough how important it is to have this strategy in place that really provides the framework for everything and that we can refer to or don't have to refer to anymore because it's really established knowledge.

00:16:21:13 It's been extensively agreed on and that's very important. So here just a quick overview to show you about the balances of our publishing. We have roughly 40,000 articles per year from our researchers. Roughly 45% of these are published through the three big publishers, and that's the reason why it was decided by swissuniversities that they would focus on those three publishers in their negotiations, because, as I said before, their time and resources are limited as well.

00:16:52:05 And it was felt that it's important to negotiate with them with really a bigger team that is made up of a very broad selection of people, but they're all have a structural reason for being involved in the negotiation. So we have the president of swissuniversities who by force of their job is part of the negotiation team.

00:17:18:08 We also have the president of the steering committee of the consortium, also is part of the team because of their job. And, I myself am also part of the team, but then we also have one additional rector representation and one additional library representation plus representation of the funder and researchers. And this really shows that, you know, the broad alignment isn't just done when we write the mandate or when we write the strategy, but also during the negotiations, because it really helps then to show or to legitimize what we're doing,

00:17:56:02 and to create or continue the buy-in that we have from the different stakeholders. And then the rest of the consortium negotiations, which are really the mid-sized publishers. We're doing this in the consortium, but there we also follow the same mandate. The only difference is that we do the negotiations within my team and don't get the support of the rectors, etc.

00:18:24:14 And that's basically it for this slide. If you could move to the next one, please. As I said before, that really it takes time and patience. And that's what you can see on the next slide. As Thomas said, the first strategy was implemented in 2017, and that's also when

we started developing the first negotiation mandate. And the first negotiation mandate was quite simple.

00:18:50:22   It was one page, and that's what we used for the first round of negotiations, where we were able to show our success, we were able to fulfill the mandate with all three publishers. With some of them, it took a bit longer. Then we really did, we also did an external evaluation of this first round, which I haven't put on the slide here, but, we did this first before we revised the negotiation mandate,

00:19:20:11   but it was really more of a facelift and a complete change of the mandate. But it was already showing some things a bit more explicitly. It was building on the experience from the first round of negotiations, clarifying a few things already. With this, we did the second round of negotiations, and then, as you can see already almost in parallel, we started work on the third negotiation mandate, which Thomas will explain in a bit more detail.

00:19:45:10   But there again, we really built on previous experience from the negotiations, but we also tied it in very closely with the open access strategy. And it it's really very helpful that we can always refer, you know, that first we had the strategy and that already described in broad terms what we should be aiming for, and then the mandate explains this or translates this into a bit more concrete language, but always keeping in mind that it has to fulfill the needs of the various stakeholders and also be suitable to negotiate with more than just the three big publishers, but also with all the other publishers that we're talking to.

00:20:28:19   And that's basically what I wanted to say on this slide. And I think the next one is back to Thomas.

Thomas Leibundgut

Exactly. I want to dive into a bit more detail in how we actually develop that third negotiation mandate, because I think we did spend some time with it, we didn't spend a huge amount of time with it. I think we had two major meetings with the group that was actually developing it, but it was really worthwhile to take that time, and it was also worthwhile how we decided who was going to be involved in the development of the third mandate.

00:21:00:02   We had a working group that was virtually identical with the working group that developed the revised strategy. So these were people who knew the topic, who had just had some success with the just revised national strategy, we've achieved that together. And as you can see, we had the vice-rector of a major research university,

00:21:22:16   we had the vice-rector of a university of applied sciences, we had a library director, we had a head of open science at a major research university and the head of open science at our research funding organization. These were the people who are actually making the decisions. But at least as important, I would say, to having these people in the room

at making this decision was the fact that Susanne and I managed the working group jointly, meaning that we were always in the loop.

00:21:47:16 We were able to bring some expertise and actually do the grunt work, that was needed and required to come up with the mandate. I'd also like to emphasize an intensive seminar we did, only a half day seminar because finding time with so many people in that kind of positions, it's always a bit of a challenge, but we've managed to find half a day with all of them together, where we had an intensive seminar with representatives of international negotiation teams, experts from libraries and higher education institutions and international experts in publishing open access, AI and so on and so forth.

00:22:25:11 On the left hand side, as an illustration, you see what we've done and at the four workshops that were brief but intense and very, very worthwhile, you can see on the left hand side. After that negotiation, after that intensive seminar, we had, I think, two online meetings, which we've used to clarify and sharpen the mandate, which was developed by me and Susanne, as I've said before, and again, once we had the goals and the language in place, we had an extensive consultation process at rectors' conference.

00:22:58:03 We had multiple readings of the draft and the delegation open science, which is our main steering body when it comes to the negotiations with the publishers. We had consultations of higher education leadership of all different kinds of higher education institutions that we have in Switzerland. We had a consultation round at the board of swissuniversities, and then at the end it was accepted by the plenary assembly.

00:23:20:13 At that point that was only a formality. But it also shows at our highest body that we have that only meets 2 or 3 times a year, and where really the very big decisions are made. The negotiation mandate went through that body and therefore was able to get a very good footing among the higher education institutions. And with that, I think we can move on to the next slide about achieving robust internal alignment and stakeholder buy-in.

00:23:52:12 I want to stress something again, that Susanne has already mentioned in the beginning that we were able to build on past successes for creating that alignment. We had experience, we had two rounds of negotiations already behind us. We've just come out of a tense and intensive negotiation with Elsevier, where we've achieved a lot of the things we didn't think or didn't expect to be possible when we started out, but managed to get a lot of what we truly wanted, and we were able to start from a point where there was broad acceptance of open access is something that is important as a value in itself.

00:24:27:15 And there was a higher recognition of the library consortium's expertise and the whole process, which was why nobody ever questioned that Susanne, for example, is de facto leading these negotiations from an operative point of view. And we were also able to build on personal relationships and outside expertise. So now what we have is process management by staff members,

00:24:49:23	so people are really hired to do process management. That is mostly me, Susanne, and one of the collaborators of Susanne. And we have input into the sessions by the leadership, and we do a lot of working the phones. On the left hand side you can see our very beautiful governance for the high-level enterprise, where you see that the higher education institutions mandate swissuniversities to conduct negotiations on their behalf.
00:25:14:24	And together we have the different bodies and swissuniversities who have different roles. And then we have that negotiation delegation right in the center where the actual action is taking place. And there are lots of arrows and going back and forth. And it really is as complicated as it looks. And then there is that working the phones aspect coming on top, because there are specific moments in time where that governance, it is indicated here with the consultation before conclusion or termination with the major stakeholders,
00:25:45:13	where there are rounds of phone calls with major stakeholders, where there are formal or informal meetings between people, so that we know where we're at and we know what we are negotiating right now, truly, in the interest of all stakeholders. That whole process also involved a lot of negotiations between rectors and library directors,
00:26:07:05	and these negotiations are ongoing and probably will never be concluded about budgetary sovereignty over library budgets, about the extent of the mandate. At some point, there was a discussion whether we should expand to mandate and have more negotiations on the level of the rectors' conference. There is also now some inclusion of the rectors in the smaller negotiations, albeit only at the very end, and about negotiation aims and tactics
00:26:32:20	there was also a big decision, a big discussion. And Susanne mentioned it. The mandate that we've managed to build doesn't only need to work for the big three, but also needs to work for the long tail, so to speak. So for mid-sized international publishers where the attention might not necessarily be really on the detail level when we talk about the rectors, because we are not talking about 15 million euro sums a year, but more a lot less.
00:27:02:07	So there was a lot of negotiations going on between rectors and library directors, and that's something that you will have to deal with, or I think we all have to deal with when we are engaging in that enterprise. Importantly, the major decisions are all taken by the rectors' conference when it comes to the big three, both with regard to the aims and the governance of the mandate. That is something that the rectors' conference decides about. The inclusion of rectors in the negotiation team also gives them a platform and gives the major decision-making powers.
00:27:32:10	And as I have already mentioned, the informal consultations before major decisions is another element where we really try to involve the big spenders and the big research universities into that process. And last but not least, but I think that's a very important step, you see it at the very top left on our illustration,

00:27:52:14	each institution must sign the mandate before the negotiations. So we send out a letter, our president sends out a letter to each of our institutions, "dear university of wherever, we will be conducting open access negotiations with that major publisher; if you want to join us in that enterprise, you need to sign that agreement. You need to sign that mandate.
00:28:13:23	And part of that mandate is you're not allowed to do parallel negotiations, and you are required to actively prepare for a no-deal scenario and then be willing to sit through a possible no-deal with the rest of us so that we really have something that we can bring to the table, and we know that if we stand up and walk away from a negotiation at some point, because it really isn't worthwhile, or because we think we're not getting anywhere, we know that a publisher can't just turn around and then work the phones as well and tell the library directors of the individual institutions, 'hey, we didn't manage to grab a big deal.
00:28:46:21	How about we have an agreement just between the two of us' because they were all required to say 'no, we will sit that one out. We stay together and we stick together.'" Last but not least, there is a lot of budget cuts currently happening in Switzerland, which have a lot of detrimental effects on open science as such.
00:29:07:09	But given these increased budget cuts and there is also an increased pressure on rectorates to save money and there is an increased motivation for rectors to actually be involved in these negotiations and actually care about the results of these. Susanne, back to you.

Susanne Aerni

I would like to pick up on the point you said about signing the mandate and sticking to the no-deal.

00:29:30:12	That's one of the examples which I think about when I say it takes constant reworking and it's fragile. You would be surprised—probably you wouldn't be surprised—that even though all the institutions sign and how many times we have to answer their questions, whether they really aren't allowed to do any side negotiations or whether they really have to stick with it, and for how long they have to stick with it…
00:29:54:04	Even though they all agreed about, you know, formally agreed to it, it doesn't end with the signature. On the slide you're seeing now, this is one of the examples I wanted to show what I mean when I say we build on experience. So, as I said before, the first mandate was pretty short and simple, and it just had a one paragraph description of the governance, actually, that's used for the negotiations that we're doing.
00:30:25:07	And then because this did lead to some discussions about who's deciding what and who has to be informed by whom and why are they deciding and which body gets to see the results first and then decides, etc., that's why already in the second mandate, we started with a short illustration of the governance, where we try to depict all the different bodies that are involved, and apparently that was still not enough.

00:30:50:17	As you see on that notice, our mandate that you saw in more detail before, you've seen the very complicated arrows. And yes, it is a very complicated process, but it really helped all of us to create transparency there because it, you know, everyone knows when they ask us and also for us during the process, I actually go back to the mandate to see who has to be involved now,
00:31:13:10	who do I have to ask when about what, which results are shown to whom, etc., and the reason why we have this rather complicated illustration now is because it was always unclear in the second round of negotiations, and that was causing a lot of friction, a lot of extra discussions. It also made us more vulnerable because there was more risk that if someone wasn't really in line with what we negotiated,
00:31:41:07	they could play the system and work against us. So it really helps us also with legitimizing what we're doing, and we can refer to this and say, "no, actually, it's really correct that we don't ask you now because it's another body that decides on this." And, of course you have the informal conversations, but at the end of the day, to some people, you also have to say "you just have to live with it because your boss said it's okay.
00:32:06:09	And if your boss says it's okay, it's okay for you as well." And of course we don't do it in such terms, but at the end of the day, sometimes that's also a message you have to give, and you can only do it if you clarify before who decides what. Yes. If you could move to the next one, please.
00:32:28:20	Here, the other point that I wanted to highlight is that this is also something that we develop over time and none of these documents are static, but still we try to create some continuity and clarity in how we're working both with the negotiation team, with how we are communicating with our members, but also with how we prepare the communication for the leadership.
00:32:51:09	Because, as I said in the beginning, they have very… their time and resources are very limited and we have to be careful with how we use it. And if we follow the same template, it's easy for them to digest the information that we have because they get used to it, they understand what the information they see, where. It also provides continuity in the sense that it makes it easier to compare publisher A with publisher B, because that that's one of the key questions they always ask:
00:33:20:09	how does it compare to the agreement we had before or how does it compare to the agreement we have with the other publisher, so that they really can understand better. One point also that I would like to mention is that we really take it quite far in standardizing our process, that we also provide for the negotiation team a script for the publish meetings, because, there you have different people in the room,
00:33:46:16	they might have different interests. And even though we agreed beforehand what we going to say, it's, you know, how good publishers are at playing divide and conquer, and maybe they come up with one point and it's really helpful to say, look, we stick to what we agreed on before, these are the talking points and we always fall back down on the talking points.

00:34:05:07	It's very frustrating for the publishers. It's not always the most constructive way, but it really helps to keep the alignment going in the team. And then we've also defined, what I call trigger points for communication. Because you know that some information we have to keep within the negotiation team, but of course the broader community is very interested and wants to know what's going on.
00:34:30:18	So we've defined a process when we are giving what information to which bodies. And there are, as I said before, we have a standardized way of doing it, and what we also do very systematically is that if we send something to the university leadership, we send it in parallel to the library leadership and also to our licensing contacts, so that even though they are not officially addressed in this communication, they know what the leadership received,
00:34:57:13	so they have the same information that in case their leadership contacts them, they know what information they have. And then the other points I can't repeat too often, it's really: try to learn from the previous negotiations, try to build on it. And another point. I know we said that you should try to get intrinsically motivated people in the negotiation team, and that's definitely key.
00:35:28:16	You can't always pick them because, as we also said, they are bound to their roles, so some people are just by their role, they are mandated to be part of the negotiation team. But what we found really helped in the past few years was to keep some continuity in the negotiation team, because if you have a new negotiation team every year, you always start from scratch,
00:35:52:08	you have to build up, you know, you have to give them so much more information. That's something that really I find is extremely helpful in this round now is that, for the first time, we have a really stable negotiation team that did the negotiations already for Wiley and also for Elsevier, and they really know what they're talking about.
00:36:15:05	And that's it. And I think we've, already used up more than the allotted time.

Colleen Campbell

So that was wonderful. Thank you again. You can all see the contact information. Thank you, Susanne, and thank you, Thomas, for such really a robust presentation. Obviously you're doing amazing work, and I know folks are really looking forward to talking about it further.

00:36:39:06	So, I'm going to just go ahead and move on over to Jon, to your presentation. And I hope all of our participants online can stay with us and absorb even more information from a completely different context. Now, all right, Jon, over to you.

Jon Shaw

Thank you. That as great. And this is this is going to shift things a little over.

00:37:05:02	And here's the slide deck. So my name is Jon Shaw, University Librarian at Vanderbilt in Nashville, Tennessee. Vanderbilt, a couple facts of it. About 4500 faculty, most of those faculty are clinicians. So our health system has about 3500 of those faculty. And then a few, thousand researchers, postdocs, and then roughly 6500-7000 grad students on top of that.
00:37:34:09	So it's a pretty large system that's focused primarily on the sciences, but balances the arts with it as well. Next slide.
00:37:48:18	And so what are we going to cover today? I'm going to go to the very beginning, and it's kind of an aside on how we got into the OA part. Then, I will fast forward to where we were like last week. Then you'll get the narrative on how our friends are our best champions.
00:38:06:21	Some of the internal alignment stuff and what we did within the library to make, you know, a kind of claim, and then how did we socialized that across the institution. The primary thing for us, and which I will try to stress, is that making that economical case for our institution, I mean, we'll get into all of the values of OA on campus,
00:38:30:08	but it really was that economical case that got us the green light to go forward. Reinforce strategy through foresight, and that that's going to be really focusing on bibliometrics. And then I'll close out with constant vigilance, and that will then enter us into the long discussion area, which Colleen's looking forward to because she's like, trying to be provocative to get everybody to ask a lot of questions.
00:38:54:19	So I'm actually not going to be that provocative. So… maybe I will be I don't I don't know. All right. Let's get into it.
00:39:05:08	All right. Oh you just you want me to go fast through these? Okay. Let's go back one. All right. It started with our board of trustees. The university is governed by a board of trustees, 20 or so individuals, and this is who the chancellor of the institution reports to. And back in 2022, in the fall, they asked me to come give a presentation on digital preservation, among all things.
00:39:30:00	And it was a lovely presentation and I had a really nice discussion, but where the where the discussion ended was, the chair of the board asked the question about digital preservation, which I think, lattices well into our broader OA conversation. It was, what is the value of this to the institution and what is the benefit to society?
00:39:54:21	And as we, you know, and that was a fun answer. But I'm pretty sure if we surveyed all of us, we would have relatively the same answer around digital preservation and OA, but it would be interesting to see in the discussion what some people think. So I'm not going to give that part away. But we also had that idea kind of undergird our thinking moving forward,
00:40:13:16	it was, that the institution wants to see demonstrated value, but also wants to see benefits. And so that kind of was our ethos going into our OA strategy. And this was roughly at the same time that in the US the White House had an Office of Science, Technology and Policy had a memo saying in 2025 it was going to mandate things.

00:40:38:07	This was coming out of the pandemic for us. So there were conversations of like, how do we move? Like, what is our foresight planning in terms of our agreements with publishers, seeing that we had… this is 22 and we had no OA agreements in place. And then it had our faculty members saying like, you know, these APCs are starting to add up in terms of our grant,
00:40:59:12	it's actually reducing how many graduate students we can buy or lab equipment, you know, like it had various echo effects. And so this was coming to us at multiple angles and we were like, all right, we can demonstrate value and we can show the benefit to society through this. So next slide. That was the beginning. Let's go to that and fast forward to 2025.
00:41:25:17	And we'll get through the three intervening years. Fast forward to 2025. We just finished our… we have dozens of agreements, but we just finished our Springer Nature, one with getting Nature in there as well. And so we had, you know, we considered what our big five, with Elsevier, Wiley, Taylor & Francis, Sage and Springer Nature, and we had them complete,
00:41:49:19	and the collection strategist sent me this article and said, well, here's the first Nature article that we published, Jon. It's, you know, you should check it out. And I didn't look at it. You know, it's sat in my inbox for like three weeks of, like, you know, I should go back and look at it.
00:42:07:21	But, at the same time, the Association of Research Libraries, has a committee called the Research and Analytics Committee, which I'm the chair, and one of the projects that we've been focusing on is we do all this quantitative analysis of like what makes up large research libraries in the United States. But we were like, we should start publishing a monthly impact report on how libraries, research libraries, impact kind of society.
00:42:35:04	And I was like, I've got a good one. I've got the OA stuff that we've been doing for the last three years. But I need I need an article. And I was like, oh, wait, I have an article, it's in my inbox. I'll look at it. And so, quickly I, you know, click on the article and it's like, you know, a month in at that point, it was published like within that month.
00:42:57:03	And I'm like, why does it have 50,000 views? And you kind of see in the background that it was like something that actually like really hit. So we kind of lucked out with our first Nature article. It was something that like was super highlighted and, you know, the article views are kind of a leading indicator in the citations will be a lagging indicator that it's going to have a ton of citations,
00:43:16:17	and you can see kind of like the percentile rankings. And I said, okay, I'll write the story on this. And so I wrote the story for the Association Research Libraries on the impact of open access. And it was really focused on this, this as kind of being an example of the broader impact. Go to the next slide. That's fine and good,
00:43:38:05	and that's something like many of us would do instinctively just based off of communicating out and a lot of the OA stuff that we'll be talking about today, it's all about communication. But I was at a fundraising event for the university in Boston, right when I was writing this piece and before it was published, and I ran into the dean of

medicine and his comms director, and I was like, hey, that article was published, you know, did you know that it caught so many views and like, that was going to… and they're like, that's fantastic,

00:44:10:14   we didn't know about it. So like there wasn't a like a mechanism, internal, and so we set that up to make sure they know when there's stuff that sets up. But the next week the comms director emailed me this. So she met with the researcher and the team and did a story on it. Now the story is interesting, but the first two paragraphs lead off in how the library is transforming scholarship through these open access agreements.

00:44:36:15   So it was celebrating our initiative, and this makes it through our administration kind of like saying like, hey, look what we're doing in terms of supporting this kind of research enterprise across the institution. And it's not us touting it. And so that had actually a much more grand impact on our OA, where like different deans and different faculty member are reaching out, how do we learn more about this,

00:45:01:16   and it's already embedded in. So next slide. So let's start this now back to the beginning in 2022. After that Board of Trust conversation, we had an internal meeting where it was various stakeholders from across the library system, but a few people from our… our vice provost for research office and, a couple of the research deans from across the institution.

00:45:30:24   And the conversation really was like, how do we want to do this? How is it most impactful? And it was wonderful seeing the Swiss institutions, because I think we came up with the same solution of, like, we're not going to do it piecemeal. We're not going to do just like, you know, to pick 2 or 3 transformative agreements.

00:45:49:05   We're going to like try to make everything possible, saturate the campus with open access. And because it will have the most impact for the longest time. And the thing that resonated most with me with the previous presentation that I will stress with ours, we came into this with a lens of sustainability, like, this is not worthwhile unless we're doing it for in perpetuity, and it kind of like has that same ethos of digital preservation,

00:46:17:11   I mean, preserving this in perpetuity, but this in terms of the open access agreements. So we did a white paper, we did an environmental scan. Our European institutions were our inspiration for a lot of the work that we did. I mean, and MPDL and swissuniversities were like two of the ones that we know a lot about you guys.

00:46:37:17   And then we started to talk about what is the data that drives this. So we did a deep dive in Scopus and Web of Science and trying to understand patterns so that we could say, where do we publish and what are the agreements that we like, rather than picking the publisher driving it through like our negotiations, we picked it through where we saw the most impact on the research output that we had and started with that kind of publisher agreements.

00:47:07:04   Switch to the next slide. Once we had a strong foundation internally, we were like, okay, let's make this tacit knowledge we have about the benefits explicit. And what I love about this is you'll see later on how much we've changed in terms of this. Like maybe it'll become over complicated, but in the beginning, we just had these six kind of

principles that went along with the benefits of OA, and I'm not going to go through each one of them, but… that one arrow is pointing up, it looks like it's arrowing down, but it really is pointing out… I'm not going to go really through these, but this

00:47:44:21   as kind of when we would go to faculty meetings, we would go, we would just cover this in a slide saying like, what are the benefits to you and your department and the institution? And then next slide, what they really cared about was this. So, currently when they were publishing within these journals, they saw you know, average citation of this.

00:48:05:19   And then we had a multiplier when we had made it open access. And the multiplier was like two and a quarter of times what they saw. And so we were like, you know, if we do this for one faculty member, it's kind of nice. But if we do this at scale for the institution, you could see Vanderbilt being set at two and a quarter times more on average across all of our faculty that I talked about it at the beginning,

00:48:28:17   it has a pretty substantial effect, not just on the institutions, scholarship, but on its reach and kind of the global community that gets to use content. Next slide. So we moved from internal to and then socializing. And this was an incredibly methodical process in terms of… we originally looked at what are the groups that we can do this with first,

00:48:55:23   what are the best groups. And there were three. One it was our faculty senate. So that's roughly 60 faculty members, and they had a subcommittee called the Academic Planning Services Committee. And so I was an ex-officio in that group, and that was about 15 faculty members. And so it was socializing what we did internally to this group.

00:49:16:20   And what I found is and, we heard this in the last presentation, it needed to be more to the point and more concise. And that's where the couple of slides, the previous slides really came in handy of, like, here's what we're doing, here's the benefits, here's how it impacts you positively, what do you think. And that led to the discussion. The associate deans where the next group and these were the associate dean for research.

00:49:41:14   These were the ones who looked at like all of the, you know, the ORCID profiles of the faculty members, what the h index score of all of them are. And they could do the modeling with us. And that group got into the weeds of like, what is the scope of data showing for the before and after?

00:49:57:05   And what is some of the foresight strategy that you have with this? That group, I enjoyed the discursive nature of those conversations. The next group, then we said, let's do this across the schools. So there's ten schools and colleges and within the School of Medicine, in the hospital system, there's like 32 departments. And so we just mapped it out as, pretty much an Excel sheet,

00:50:22:07   and I assigned people and we did a "train the trainers" of how do you talk about OA, and bringing to campus. And so we just did this full-on road show of talking about OA and took all of that feedback in of like, here are the questions, here are the comments, here's what people are looking for and use that as kind of the basis for arguments of like, here are the problems that we're solving,

00:50:45:0	here's the value that it is to the institution, and here's the benefit it is to society. Next slide.
00:50:55:11	And so we then developed our list. And this is not in any order, I mean it's in alphabetical order, but it's not in the order that we negotiated them. The list wasn't ordered by where we saw impact. And so we went through each one of these, and the negotiation was a little different than the swissuniversities',
00:51:17:13	and we'll get into that reasoning for a second. It was primarily an individual, our collections strategist did all the negotiations individually, because we were willing to walk away from every single agreement and just do a read. Next slide. What was the most important was after we did the socialization across the institution and got everyone's essential buy-in,
00:51:49:03	but also it wasn't just buy-in, it really was… we built excitement on campus around it where it was this kind of want and desire. And so the economical case to the provost was essentially this: we can do all of these agreements within our current budget, plus a little more, which saves the schools and the colleges and more specifically, the faculty, millions.
00:52:18:04	And so we showed in US dollars how many millions it would we would save, and longitudinal savings across the institution. So like not just the year one, we saved like $2 million, but like year 14 we're saving $11 million based off of inflation and different publisher agreements. And we were going in these negotiations with the sustainability like and we're making sure we're adding clauses that nothing becomes outsized in the out years so that when we're doing renegotiations, we're not being caught off-guard by additional increases.
00:52:49:14	So it had all these like, kind of levers in place that ensured that we were secure in making this decision for the long haul, as opposed to just this being a three year one. And that entire explanation was in one paragraph. And so that then was overwhelmingly positive. And then we had the citation impact stuff.
00:53:11:19	And so it was approved. Next slide.
00:53:18:01	The approval was actually great because it led to how do we operationalize this to do it at scale and ratch it up quickly. The operationalize is the last three years. The takeaways that we had from that mostly were streamlining faculty workloads and making sure when we had these agreements with a publisher, they're embedded into the faculty side so that the publication site, that way, as faculty members were going through these they're publishing, they could just check a box or select something by putting in their Vanderbilt email,
00:53:50:19	and then it would make their way. We also found that them being on the publisher's site and not in our institutional repository, because we do both for a lot of this, we see a lot more traction on the publisher's site than we see in our institutional repository on this content. But we will we will continue to do both

00:54:07:02	because of the digital preservation goals. The other one is we created an author services page, and I can have, when Colleen sends out the follow up, I'll send a link to our author services that has every single journal involved. It has the process and troubleshooting if you run into any problems, it also will connect you to a librarian
00:54:27:10	if you need hand-holding to get to it. And so this way, for those 10,000 or so researchers that we were talking about, each one of them can have a personalized experience on having a seamless experience in making their content OA. Next slide. And we created like a bunch of charts for faculty members as well and this is an example of one of them of like make sure your APC waiver is in there and what are the different steps in it.
00:54:57:23	It's just a visual. I'm not going through it. And then where we are now in this is we keep doing a bibliometric analysis of the work that faculty are doing and trying to do some foresight planning. So we talked about the long tail of the economic model, but one of the ones that has been most interesting to especially institutional research, is we are seeing like what content we flipped to OA and what is the citation impact in the long tail.
00:55:28:21	So one of the ones, one of the analyzes that we just did recently was, if we were to stay static in 2022, we projected what our citations would be. Now with what we've done, 2022 to 2025, we're seeing a 27% increase overall for the institution in citations. And that's just one vector of many analysis that we have.
00:55:54:06	But one of the things that we are also finding that's really important to the institution is we are finding not just strengths in research areas, but we're identifying new areas of research that we're touching and how those have an impact on the institution. So like, all of this is based off of our OA agreements, but it's changing institutional strategy in terms of the areas that we're investing in terms of the research.
00:56:19:17	So it's going even more upstream of the publications. Next slide.
00:56:27:18	And so this, you know, through all of these conversations and through the last three years, one of the, and this is not meant for you to read this, this is more of an example, and you'll have this recorded, but one of the major takeaways that we had from this is like, what are all the benefits that we're seeing?
00:56:46:14	And it actually has a two-fold impact on it. One, we consider this and it's actually a much longer list than this, but we consider this as kind of our toolkit for when we're making comms with other departments or other people. And like you take two or three or four of them, depending on the audience. Like today, I've talked a lot about citation and the economical case, but there are, I mean, like providing equitable access worldwide is another one that like frequently comes up, or one that comes up in the US context is enable policymakers, NGOs and journalists to play research directly, especially in like articles and things like that.
00:57:23:04	So this this becomes kind of our use cases of "here all the benefits that we're seeing in our individual contexts of making things open access." Next slide. And so where we are now in addition to the benefits is the toolkit and expanding the case, the organizational

growth. So we've been using open access as I also as building a learning organization out of the library system so that it understands what's happening on campus

00:57:54:03   in terms of the research, what are those impacts in terms of the people citing it and kind of that longer research lifecycle, and it has us intersecting with the faculty more often in kind of a… we did this roll out in 2022, we've been doing the roll out continuously in terms of where are we right now with open access.

00:58:13:20   So it's this elliptical arrangement where we are continually engaging faculty on how to make their content more broadly available and to identify, like, journals that are more aligned with their research has been a new one for us, where we have like almost a recommender service of like your thing would have the most exposure and impact here as opposed to there.

00:58:35:06   Next slide. And so, we are in year three. I mean, it is definitely something that is ongoing. We expect, you know, over the next seven years to be fascinating. But this is an ongoing conversation. I look forward to the discussion. So thank you all.

Colleen Campbell

Wonderful. Thank you so much, Jon, for an amazing presentation.

- End -

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