

## THE SWEDISH RESEARCH COUNCIL AND OPEN ACCESS

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The Research Council of Norway decided recently to require Open Access to research publications emanating from research funded by them. (See article by Jan Erik Frantsvåg in this issue)

The Swedish Research Council (VR) signed the Berlin Declaration in 2005. At a board meeting in December 2008 VR discussed the possibility of including an OA requirement in their contracts for 2009, but chose to postpone this decision. In their press release [/http://www.vr.se/huvudmeny/pressochnyheter/nyhetsarkiv/nyheter2008/ingetbeslutomkravpaopenaccessan.5.325716ea11d7602a6d1800013111.html](http://www.vr.se/huvudmeny/pressochnyheter/nyhetsarkiv/nyheter2008/ingetbeslutomkravpaopenaccessan.5.325716ea11d7602a6d1800013111.html) VR maintains that few Swedish universities/University Colleges offer the necessary institutional repositories. As a source for this supposition they refer to a survey made by the Association of Swedish Higher Education (SUHF) in October 2008.

Unfortunately, this survey was incomplete (only 15 out of 42 HEs had responded), and thus did not present the true picture. As a matter of fact, all Swedish universities, with the exception of the Karolinska Medical University, have repositories. The University Colleges have repositories (three are planning to set them up), except a couple of small institutions with very few research publications, and seven colleges specialising in music, theatre, art, and dance.

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As researchers at the Karolinska have the alternative to deposit in the PMC (PubMed Central), their lack of a repository could be solved in this way. See more about PMC below. The Lund University Repository - LUP – has offered hosting services for those needing interim help while setting up IRs of their own, and/or for the remaining few, who might not feel the need to set up their own.

According to VR, their postponed decision will be reconsidered later on.

At present the VR and other members of EUROHORCS (<http://eurohorcs.drift.senselogic.se/>) are engaged in a plan based on a proposal to the European Science Foundation (<http://www.esf.org/>) by the Wellcome Trust. <http://www.wellcome.ac.uk/> They propose a single, Europe-wide open access repository of biomedical research outputs, i.e. a European PubMed Central for peer-reviewed

biomedical research papers. The proposal is building upon the success of the UKPMC.

Some of the benefits summarised in the proposal are bulleted here:

- a single, subject-based repository for all biomedical and health research funded in Europe – fully linked to PubMed and CiteXplore
- possibility for funders/countries to integrate the content from this server into existing systems
- in accord both with the recent EUROHORC's recommendations on open access: <http://www.eurohorcs.org/E/Pages/home.aspx> and the open access pilot for research papers published under the EU FP7 programme (<http://ec.europa.eu/research/science-society/index.cfm?fuseaction=public.topic&id=1680>)
- the possibility to develop additional services for the general public, or other defined audiences.
- provide the infrastructure – an author-based manuscript submission system – to enable grant holders to comply with their funder mandates
- PMC (and UKPMC) has hitherto only dealt with articles published in English or French. If the European PMC is realised, there will be a need to ensure that content in any European language can be ingested into the database, and rendered accurately.
- There will also be a need to develop multi-language interfaces.

The proposal for a pan-European PubMed Central is very interesting and deserves all support, as it in many ways would benefit the visibility and accessibility of European research. Not only would the world be able to see a collective presentation of European research activities within medicine and biomedicine, but authors and publishers would be offered a well-functioning submission system, into which publisher submit final versions subject to agreement. An extended coverage of non-English language publications, as well as developments of additional services for the general public, and of multi-language

interfaces are examples of other advantages.

In order not to duplicate efforts, it is obviously essential, that the integration of European PMC content into the institutional repositories goes as smoothly as possible without technical glitches and/or losses of important information.

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