

# Open Access Initiatives at the University of Calgary

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Open Access (OA) content is material of a scholarly nature (chiefly journal articles though OA is being extended to other formats) that is freely accessible online. There are no subscription fees, pay-per-view costs, or other tolls; all users need to do in order to view openly accessible items is to get to the World Wide Web.

There are many advantages to making content so widely accessible. For readers, it means that material that was previously limited to those who were associated with institutions or organizations that could afford frequently expensive subscriptions can now be found by everyone. In addition, the general public can now more easily locate the results of research that was paid for by public dollars. For authors, distribution and impact are the key things. OA material tends to be downloaded more frequently than toll-access content and there is evidence to suggest that openly accessible content has greater impact than restricted material.

There are two broad “roads” or “arms” in the Open Access movement, green and gold. The green road involves the depositing of content that was published elsewhere into Open Access repositories (OAR). These can be institutional repositories, which are most often hosted by universities, particularly university libraries. Alternately, some repositories are subject or disciplinary databases, which contain articles and other items connected to specific disciplines. The gold road is Open Access publishing and mostly involves making journal articles openly accessible direct from the publisher. This can be in either fully OA journals or in “hybrid” OA journals, where the entire journal may not be free to access though certain articles within issues may be.

Over the last several years, the Libraries and Cultural Resources (LCR) at the University of Calgary has taken a number of steps to support Open Access. These have dealt with both the green and gold arms of the OA movement and include:

## **Institutional Repository**

The University of Calgary has had a repository in place since March 2003. This OAR, which employs the DSpace software, is designed to collect the digital scholarly output of the University of Calgary. As of May 2009, the U of C repository is the second largest university repository in Canada (after the University of Toronto), with citations for over 14,000 items, approximately 9,000 of which connect directly to full text. Material types include journal articles, reports of many different sorts, datasets, and theses and dissertations. While

some content is restricted, the vast majority of material in the U of C repository is openly accessible and is viewed and downloaded by users around the world.

### **University of Calgary Press**

Though most of the books and journals from the University of Calgary Press are toll-access publications, the Press also has a presence in the Open Access world. On the journal side, there are two fully OA journals, Currents: new scholarship in the human services, and the International electronic journal for leadership in learning, the latter of which has been freely available online since 1997. On the book side, the Press is actively investigating plans for open monograph series.

### **Synergies**

Synergies is a national program with the initial aim of bringing Canada's social sciences and humanities journals into the online environment; many of these journals are still limited to print. The University of Calgary is one the chief partners in this project and has a particular focus on the long-term preservation of content. The Synergies project, while not requiring that journals be open access, is fostering awareness of open access among publishers and providing the tools for online publishing.

### **Open Access Authors Fund**

Established in mid-2008, the Open Access Authors Fund is designed pay the fees charged by publishers for articles to be published in Open Access journals that have such fees. To be eligible for money from this fund, University of Calgary authors must meet certain criteria as must the journals in which they publish. As of writing, the Fund has covered submission fees for 37 articles written by U of C authors in 28 journals from 7 publishers and is carrying into a second year of operation. The Open Access Authors Fund was the 1<sup>st</sup> fund of this type to be set up in Canada and the 6<sup>th</sup> in the world.

### **Libraries and Cultural Resources Open Access Mandate**

In spring 2009, the academic council of Libraries and Cultural Resources, which includes librarians, archivists, and curators, unanimously voted to establish an Open Access mandate. Under this mandate, the members of this group have committed to deposit their scholarly output in the University of Calgary institutional repository, thereby making this content openly accessible (the material can also be published elsewhere, both open access and toll access). LCR faculty felt that this was an important step to take in that it sets a good example for the library, archival, and museum professions and for other departments, faculties, and universities. It also broadens the dissemination of LCR-produced scholarly material. The LCR OA mandate is the 1<sup>st</sup> mandate among a library group in Canada, the 2<sup>nd</sup> of that nature anywhere, and the 79<sup>th</sup> mandate of any sort worldwide.

Awareness of Open Access is growing internationally, with Open Access mandates being passed by other institutions and granting agencies, such as the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) and the U.S. National Institute of Health, requiring that researchers deposit their scholarly output in open access repositories. Institutional Repository statistics demonstrate that access to scholarly output from a broad and new audience is increasing. Organizations like the Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL) and the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC), are helping libraries to get the message out. Look for Open Access week activities in October (October 19-23) at a library near you!



Some resources:

University of Calgary Institutional Repository: <http://dspace.ucalgary.ca/>

University of Calgary Press: <http://www.uofcpress.com/>

Synergies: [www.synergiescanada.org/index\\_en.html](http://www.synergiescanada.org/index_en.html)  
(main site), <http://synergiesprairies.ca/> (Synergies prairie site)

Open Access Authors Fund: <http://library.ucalgary.ca/services/for-faculty/open-access-authors-fund-0>

Libraries and Cultural Resources Open Access Mandate:  
<http://library.ucalgary.ca/open-access/libraries-cultural-resources>

Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) Policy on Access to Research Outputs: <http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/32005.html>

National Institutes of Health (NIH) Public Access Policy:  
<http://publicaccess.nih.gov/>

Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL): <http://www.carl-abrc.ca/>

Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC):  
<http://www.arl.org/sparc/>

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