



**CO-ORDINATION TO IMPROVE ACCESS IN THE UK:  
the response of the JISC to the parliamentary report  
“Scientific Publications: free for all?”**

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# JISC STRATEGY TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO ACADEMIC CONTENT

- JISC is the Joint Information Systems Committee of the four Higher Education Funding Councils in the UK and also has a responsibility for networked services to the Further Education Colleges
- JISC Strategy includes “improving the effectiveness of scholarly communication”
- This involves implementing cost-effective improvements in access to academic content for learners and researchers in colleges and universities
- One route to cost-effective improvements in access through negotiation of “big deals” – Pilot Site Licence Initiative 1996-99, NESLI 1999-2002, NESLi2 2002-
- This route partially effective but many difficulties – e.g. long negotiations, small publishers not included, many universities and colleges unable to buy in
- Push for Open Access coming from both JISC Journals Working Group and JISC Scholarly Communication Group

# BENEFITS TO UK ACADEMIC COMMUNITY FROM SUPPORT FOR OPEN ACCESS

- For research funding agencies, greater use and exploitation of research results resulting from a higher number of readers, facilitating further research.
- For the author, increased readership and more citations, as academic content on open web-sites is read more widely than content on closed web-sites.
- For universities and colleges, more publicity for the research conducted at the institution and higher citation of research reports.
- For readers of research papers, access to research publications without barriers imposed by subscription or access-prevention technology.
- For the UK Government, greater returns from investment in the funding of research as research publications are used more widely. This can contribute to the public's understanding of science.
- For librarians, new opportunities to improve the service they provide.

# BEFORE THE PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY, JISC'S WORK IN IMPROVING ACCESS THROUGH OPEN ACCESS DEVELOPMENTS

- For three years JISC has been supporting the development of repositories through the Focus on Access to Information Resources (FAIR) Programme
- FAIR Programme has contributed to developing the mechanisms and supporting services to allow the submission and sharing of content generated by the Higher Education and Further Education communities
- Fourteen projects, including SHERPA and RoMEO
- The FAIR Programme is part of a larger area of work being taken forward by the JISC. The JISC envisages the Information Environment as a place where members of the HE and FE community can place and share useful content.
- For two years JISC has been supporting the development of open access journals through discussion with publishers and the transition-funding
- GB£150K made available for each of three years : four publishers awarded grants in first year – bids invited for second round of funding
- National deal with BioMed Central renewed for second year following successful first year – high use by UK authors and quality maintained

# JISC AND THE PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY : HOW THE SYSTEM WORKS

- An Enquiry by a Parliamentary Committee is independent of any governmental or official body
- One of the functions of a parliamentary enquiry is to ensure that value for money is being achieved from funding by taxpayers
- The Committee calls for written Evidence from any interested party and has the legal power to summon Witnesses to appear in person
- The importance of JISC's existing work in relation to scientific publications was recognised and a JISC Witness was summoned
- The oral evidence sessions were very thorough and the questioning revealed the need for change in scholarly publishing
- However, JISC had no advance notice of the recommendations in the Report of the Committee
- JISC prepared a formal Response to the Report supporting the recommendations in the Report and committing to further action
- Recommendations in the Report are not binding upon the Government but they carry political weight



## SOME KEY FEATURES OF THE REPORT

- The Report of the Science and Technology Committee “Scientific publications: free for all?” HC399  
<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200304/cmselect/cmsctech/399/39902.htm>
- Acceptance that the present system of scholarly publishing needs to change to provide cost-effective access to scientific research results
- Need for improvements in licensing terms for subscription content
- Encouragement for universities to set up repositories
- Authors should be mandated to deposit copies of journal articles derived from publicly-funded research in repositories
- Encouragement for further development of open access journals
- VAT should not be charged on electronic content
- Copyright ownership should be investigated

# EARLY PROGRESS FOLLOWING THE PARLIAMENTARY REPORT



- JISC has committed to a new Repositories Programme with substantial new funding
- The JISC Scholarly Communication Group has formed a new action plan to take new developments forward
- The UK Research Councils are discussing a new publications policy which is likely to give more support for deposit of journal articles in repositories and encouragement for open access journals
- Universities UK will also be discussing their response to the parliamentary report
- The UK parliamentary report has been referred to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe for discussion



## LIKELY FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS IN THE UK

- More universities will establish repositories, because the cost is low and the benefits to both research and teaching are huge
- Funding agencies and universities will expect their researchers to deposit pre-prints or post-prints of journal articles in repositories
- The use of the deposited journal articles will grow
- Repositories will also be used for other purposes – e.g. electronic teaching packages and administrative functions
- More open access journals will become available in most subject areas, although subscription journals will continue in humanities
- Learned societies will continue to have an important role, especially if they transition to open access for their journals
- JISC will continue to support universities and colleges in all these developments





# THANK YOU FOR LISTENING!

- Please contact me by e-mail at any time if you wish to discuss open access [f.friend@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:f.friend@ucl.ac.uk)
- The most comprehensive web-site with information on open access is [www.soros.org/openaccess](http://www.soros.org/openaccess)
- The JISC web-site is [www.jisc.ac.uk](http://www.jisc.ac.uk)
- Also useful is the SPARC web-site <http://web3.arl.org/sparc/> with a link to the SPARC Europe web-site [www.sparceurope.org](http://www.sparceurope.org)
- A list of open access journals is available at [www.doaj.org](http://www.doaj.org)
- A new list of publisher copyright agreements allowing “self-archiving” is at [www.sherpa.ac.uk/romeo.php](http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/romeo.php)
- The Report of the UK Parliament Science and Technology Committee “Scientific publications: free for all?” HC399 <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200304/cmselect/cmsctech/399/39902.htm>