

Japan - Open science country note

Open science and the national context

In the 4th Science and Technology Basic Plan (FY2011-FY2015), with a view to forming an international-standard research environment and foundation, the government is promoting open access through the construction of institutional repositories at universities and public research institutions; the digitisation of research paper journals published by academic societies; and the digitization of and open access to documents and materials.

The Japanese Government signed the G8 Science Ministers joint Statement (London, 12 June 2013), which proposes that the G8 consider new areas for collaboration and agreement on global challenges, global research infrastructure, open scientific research data, and increasing access to the peer-reviewed, published results of scientific research.

The Cabinet Office has set The Expert Panel on Open Science based on Global Perspectives in November 2014 to identify the guiding principles to promote open science based on the whole government approach. The members were experts of stakeholders from universities and R&D institutions with various hearings including publishers. Based on these discussions, the expert panel has defined the principles in a report which was finalized on 30 March 2015. Among these principles, the outcomes of publicly funded research, such as published results and underlying data were defined to be accessible, unless they interfere with personal privacy, national security or direct commercial interests.

To follow up the status and progress of the relevant ministries and funding agencies to formulate a specific implementation plan, the Cabinet Office has set up an follow up expert panel on 27 April 2015.

Open science research and innovation actors

Japan Science and Technology (JST) recommends open access of publications through institutional repositories. JST also provides J-STAGE, a free-of-charge platform for scholarly publishers to receive submissions, manage peer reviews, and publish their journals online. Most of their content is freely available for readers.

The Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) supports helps its members publish their research (e.g. in scientific journals) under its Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research programmes. In 2013, a new initiative (the Reinforcing International Dissemination of Information scheme) began supporting the launch of open access journals.

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) oversees the programmes of JST and JSPS, above. Also, MEXT mandated open access to Ph.D. theses by decree.

The National Institute of Informatics (NII) leads developing institutional repositories of universities. NII also developed Japanese Institutional Repositories Online (JAIRO) to collect academic information (journal articles, theses or dissertations, departmental bulletin papers, research papers, etc.). In 2003, NII launched the International Scholarly Communication Initiative (SPARC Japan), which now focuses on the implementation of open access in Japan.

The Digital Repository Federation (DRF) is playing a central role in developing domestic institutional repositories.

Policy design - Open/increasing access to scientific publications

The 4th Science and Technology Basic Plan (FY2011-FY2015) of Japan asserts the country's promotion of open access. In 2012, the MEXT Working Group issued Infrastructure Development for Strengthening the Capacity of International Scholarly Communication, which underlines the need to develop and strengthen institutional repositories as the basic infrastructure of scholarly communication, and to promote open access journals. This initiative gave rise to the programmes described above.

Open science and international co-operation

In Japan, 14 institutions are registered as supporting members of arXiv.org. Based on the proposal from the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN), the High Energy Accelerator Research Organization (KEK) and the Coordinating Committee for Japanese University Libraries (CCJUL), NII signed an EoI (Expression of Interest) in SCOAP3 (Sponsoring Consortium for Open Access Publishing in Particle Physics). DRF is one of the founding members of COAR (Confederation of Open Access Repositories) and has been participating in its activities through working groups. NII supports the international Open Access Week (OAW). JST collaborates with RDA (Research Data Alliance) and DataCite, and NII and JST are members of ORCID (Open Researcher and Contributor ID).

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