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The Game of Open Access - poster presented at Repofringe 2018

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The Game of Open Access

What’s it all about?

The Game of Open Access is a teaching resource created by library staff at the University of Huddersfield to engage researchers with the key concepts and tools required to meet Open Access mandates. Through the use of playful learning, it aims to develop an understanding of the role of Open Access through the initial idea for an article to its acceptance for publication. The game has been played by researchers and librarians in the context of library roadshows, in Open Access information sessions with PGRs and more recently at the OAJ WRLD (DARTS6) conference where delegates played the game and gave honest and constructive feedback on how it could be improved.

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The Vice Chancellor’s Office not only expects teaching excellence for its 19,000 students but also wants to increase the number of research activity staff improve the quality of their outputs see a rise in the quantity and quality of the postgraduate research community as well as improving the quality and range of our external research, enterprise and innovation income.

Research Strategy @ UoH

Without doubt, Open Access publication is growing year on year and governmental mandates are increasingly important for assessments like the REF and initiatives such as the ELS Horizon 2020. Authors are increasingly having to consider compliance with funder and governmental requirements when they

Your route to Open Access publication

The University of Huddersfield is committed to making its research outputs available from the point of acceptance for publication. This is at odds with the traditional support, library guides and advocacy, we can lighten the stresses of

How did we create the game?

Several of our librarians use game based learning for their information skills sessions so we decided to use this approach to engage our researchers. In Spring 2017 members of the Subject Team and the Scholarly Communications Team brainstormed a game with 25 questions. Our in-house designer created the visuals and we then tested the game until we were happy for it to be used at the annual Computing and Library Services Showcase in July.

And it seems we are in good company, as games seem to be a very popular way of disseminating information and encouraging understanding. The game has been played by researchers and librarians at library roadshows and in Open Access information sessions.

Future

Following on from the DARTS6 conference, some delegates played the game with researchers at their institutions with some very positive feedback, and, most importantly, lots of discussions around Open Access mandates. At UoH we can now take on board the feedback given and after some questions, add more scenarios and even adapt the gameplay with the potential for some ‘wildcards’.

A ‘special edition’ version for REF 21 could also be an option with the potential for more academic and researchers. We are thinking of an online version too.

Feedback

The Game of Open Access is an innovative learning method that encourages imaginative thinking. It allows participants to reflect on their Open Access knowledge and question their understanding of OA through the initial idea for an article to its acceptance for publication. The game has been played by researchers and librarians in the context of library roadshows, in Open Access information sessions and in classrooms at their institutions with some very positive feedback. It has given our library staff the opportunity to help researchers deepen their understanding of OA and promote their work via a range of access routes.