The University of Huddersfield has a growing research community, in part due to an ambitious five year strategy which sets out the mission for the institution to be an inspiring, innovative university of international renown. The Vice Chancellor’s Office not only expects teaching excellence for its 19,000 students, but also wants to increase the number of research active 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.

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 identification of the 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 CILIP DARTS6 conference where delegates played the game and gave honest and constructive feedback on how it could be improved.

The resource is available to download from our Repository (epirits.hud.ac.uk/id/epirits/338747) and can be shared and adapted under CC BY-NC 3.0

Research Strategy @ UoH

The Game of Open Access is growing year on year and governmental mandates are increasingly important for assessments like the REF. Without doubt, Open Access publication is growing year on year and initiatives such as the EU’s Horizon 2020. Authors are increasingly having to consider compliance with funder and governmental requirements when they go back one space!

How did we create the game?

Several of our librarians used game based learning for their information skills sessions. We decided to use this approach to engage our researchers. In Spring 2017 members of the Subject Team and the Scholarly Communications Team brainstormed ideas for a game with 20 questions. Our in-house graphic designer created the visuals and we then tested the game until we were happy for its first official outing 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 stimulating 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. The University prefers researchers to publish through the Gold Open Access route – true or false?

What’s the answer right…

The University OA policy says that the ‘author accepted version’ of an article should be placed in the Repository, but does this version need to be approved by the publisher?

Summary

The game has given library staff the opportunity to help researchers develop their understanding of OA policy and hopefully with the game, in addition to traditional support, library guides and advisors, we can lighten the stresses of their journey towards publication.