

Best Practices in Institutional Repositories

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Abstract:

In the era of electronic publishing, the academic community has recognized the significance of Institutional Repository (IR). This paper illustrates the importance of IR for authors and institutes also and role of librarian and authors in building up IR. Further the paper highlights the key best practices in developing IR. The evolution of institutional repositories and the function of academic libraries in supporting and fostering them are highlighted in this paper.

Keywords: *Institutional Repository, pre-prints, post prints, Open Access Repositories, Open Access Resources etc*

Introduction:

Development of ICT and its implementation in academic community resulted in the emergence of Institutional Repository for the preservation and dissemination of institutional research outputs. Institutional Repository is a digital repository of the community's intellectual output that is designed to be easily accessible free of charge knowledge and institutional outputs can be promoted and disseminated through institutional repositories. Academic community uses their IRs for archiving published works and to increase their visibility and collaboration with other academic community. A digital platform for gathering, conserving, and sharing an institution's scholarly and intellectual output is called an Institutional Repository (IR). The objective is to support long-term digital preservation while enhancing the institution's research and academic contributions' impact, visibility, and accessibility. Generally the contents for IR includes preprints of journal articles, seminar papers, technical reports, research data, theses, dissertation, work in progress, important print and image collection, and those material documenting the history of institution.

Definition of Institutional Repository:

“An Institutional Repository (IR) is an archive for collecting, preserving, and disseminating digital copies of the intellectual output of an institution, particularly a research institution.”(Crow, Raym, 2002).

Role of Librarian and Authors in Building IR:

According to the fifth law of library science, which states that "a library is a growing organism," libraries are expanding their collections and services on a daily basis. As a result, they are using IRs to manage and grow

their holdings. Libraries will need to contribute in a variety of ways to the development of an IR. For the past 150 years, academic libraries have been essential to the process of scholarly communication. Through shifting social, philosophical, and educational paradigms as well as the introduction of new technologies, they have witnessed significant changes in the production, sharing, and preservation of knowledge during this time. Academic librarians have demonstrated their ability to adapt to these developments and take the initiative to further knowledge, research, and scholarship. Since institutional repositories have been established, they are being asked to adopt another new technology, one that brings with it the potential for a further paradigm shift in scholarly communication.

Role of Librarian:

Librarians must be involved in the planning, execution, and operation of IR for it to develop successfully. Librarians are essential to the development of IR in the following ways:

- The librarian must create an advocacy program, promote IR via institutional news, and address stakeholder inquiries.
- To encourage interaction with faculty members and assist in content creation, librarians can use marketing and advocacy techniques. They can also help by actively looking for content on their own.
- As a metadata expert and collection administrator, librarians have important responsibilities.
- Staff members and students should receive training from librarians on how to use the IR and assist them in creating digital products.

Role of Authors:

Similar to librarians, authors are also responsible for the following:

- Obtaining permission to upload their research results.
- Answering user-posted queries and remarks.
- Revising the results of their research.
- Making sure their material is standard and of high quality.
- Discussing copyright concerns with publishers, this must be done prior to release.

Importance of IR:

By improving visibility, academic standing, public value, and efficient knowledge management, institutional repositories (IR) provide substantial advantages to both authors and institutions. IR is essential to institutions because it helps them become more visible and prestigious, stores and distributes a variety of institutional outputs, and standardizes institutional records. Additionally, it supports teaching and learning by giving access to scholarly materials and makes it easier to analyze and track research performance. According to studies, open

access articles typically receive more citations than commercial, ensuring that authors' research outputs are widely disseminated. Additionally, it facilitates scholarly communication and collaboration by enabling authors to receive and reply to feedback on their work. Furthermore, work included in an IR can improve their research profile, and open up opportunities for awards and recognition.

Best Practices for Institutional Repositories:

The main three components of best practices for institutional repositories (IRs) are Proactive stakeholder engagement, strong content management, and strategic planning. However, some of the key best practices for institutional repositories are discussed below:

- **Develop a comprehensive Institutional Repository Policy:**

A thorough IR policy offers the structure required to guarantee the ethical and consistent handling of digital content, encourage open access projects, specify the roles of contributors, and match repository procedures with organizational objectives.

- **Select a suitable repository platform:**

A successful Institutional Repository (IR) depends on choosing the appropriate platform. The institution's objectives of preservation, open access, scalability, user experience, and integration with current systems must all be supported by the platform.

- **Implement strong content management:**

For successful Institutional Repository's (IR), a strong content management strategy is necessary and it regulates the collection, description, storage, preservation, and user accessibility of content. Quality content management promotes long-term digital preservation, and enhances accessibility.

- **Promote the repository and encourage self-archiving:**

Promoting the repository and encouraging self-archiving i.e. where authors deposit their own work are key strategies to achieve full potential of IR. This requires coordinated efforts between authors and institution.

- **Ensure long-term preservation:**

One of an Institutional Repository's (IR) primary responsibilities is robust preservation guards against obsolescence, file deterioration, and data loss. It guarantees that, in spite of advancements in software, file formats, and technology, academic and institutional content will continue to be authentic, usable, and accessible for upcoming generations.

- **Focus on Discoverability and Accessibility:**

The contents of Institutional Repository (IR) are readily discoverable and widely available regardless of location, skill level, or platform to achieve its goal of open access and knowledge sharing. By concentrating on these two factors guarantees that research outputs reach the largest audience possible.

- **Track and evaluate repository performance:**

To produce useful insights, a thorough evaluation approach blends quantitative data with qualitative comments. Institutions can better understand usage trends, evaluate impact, enhance services, and defend investment by tracking an Institutional Repository's (IR) performance.

- **Provide training and support:**

Users, authors, and administrators also are empowered to confidently manage and promote repository content through customized training and timely support. Encouraging self-archiving, preserving content quality, and optimizing the advantages of an Institutional Repository (IR) all depend on thorough training and support.

- **Consider Open Access licenses:**

Author rights are safeguarded, ethical and legal sharing is made easier, and open scholarship ideals are upheld by appropriate licensing. Selecting and overseeing suitable Open Access licenses is essential for establishing precise guidelines for the use, sharing, and reuse of repository content.

- **Establish clear copyright policies:**

For an Institutional Repository (IR) to be managed successfully, copyright policies must be transparent and unambiguous. The copyright policy is guaranteeing adherence to legal frameworks and publisher agreements by helping to make clear the rights of authors, and institution also.

- **Integrate with other campus systems:**

Integrating the Institutional Repository (IR) with other campus information systems minimizes effort duplication across departments and promotes thorough research management, reporting, and visibility. Efficiency, data accuracy, and user experience are all improved by such interoperability

- **Foster community engagement:**

Building a thriving and active community around an Institutional Repository (IR) enhances repository value and guarantees continuous content growth. The main goals of engagement strategies are to raise awareness, promote teamwork, and cultivate a sense of ownership among all parties involved.

Conclusion:

Regarding the importance of institutional repositories and their connection to the conventional scholarly communication system, libraries and the academic community hold divergent opinions. To maximize the advantages of repositories, it might be necessary to reevaluate their development and marketing strategies as well as their intended use. Academic institutions can effectively distribute their intellectual outputs globally through institutional repositories. The paper suggests that an IR be regarded as the primary standard of digital scholarship since it can optimize scholarly communication. Thus, the evolution of institutional repositories and the function of academic libraries in supporting and fostering them are highlighted in this paper. It is hoped that this paper will raise academic institutions' awareness of IR.

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