

A survey on institutional information resources to support the development of an IR using a co-operative approach

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1. Towards an Institutional Repository

The major elements of success of Institutional Repositories (IRs) depend upon a sound synergy among the different stakeholders participating in the process of production, sharing and diffusion of the knowledge produced within the scientific organisation. In fact, in the activities of planning, designing and supporting a new IR it is necessary that a minimum set of conditions are fulfilled:

- The scientific Institution has to declare its official commitment to the OA policy, advocating scholarly open access publication;
 - Scholars have to be personally motivated and supported to populate IRs;
 - An information as well as technological infrastructure has to support the activities connected with the IR development, promoting at the same time an OA culture.
- The National Research Council (CNR), one of the largest Italian governmental interdisciplinary research body constituted by 107 Research Institutes structured into geographically distributed Sections, has not expressed an official position toward OA yet. However, thanks to scientific and organisational autonomy, some CNR

Institutes already make their scientific production freely available either through their own local IRs or through freely accessible web resources.

In order to acquire a more precise picture of the AO CNR practice, a group of CNR researchers and librarians (hereafter called "supporter group") has promoted a survey aiming at identifying documentation, organization as well as technological resources that could be the basis for a future development of a comprehensive CNR's IR.

In this paper working hypothesis and questionnaire are briefly described along with the some preliminary results. However, the major focus is posed on the survey design based on the supporter group that made it possible to promote the survey actively participating in the phases of questionnaire submission and gathering. This allowed us to reach all the CNR scientific units as well as to obtain a good rate response. Moreover, a secondary, but not least important achievement reached sofar, is represented by the enlargement of the supporter group into an extended network of spontaneous collaboration that could constitute the basis for the construction of a participative and proactive consensus on OA.

2. Research hypothesis

Many surveys have been carried out in order to analyse scholars' behaviour and attitude towards publication submission in IRs, which could become "a set of empty shelves", if not adequately populated. Our survey considers the development of a new IR from a slightly different perspective, that is the enforcement of the synergy described in the introduction. For these reasons our research hypothesis is based on the following interconnected issues:

- Identifying actors and roles currently carried out in the development of the different services supporting research activities (i.e. librarians, technical and administrative staff) that contribute to the management of a new IR in terms of system implementation and maintenance, metadata control, and collection definition. The existing cooperative network (for instance the CNR consortia arrangement to support common access to digital resources and document delivery) already constitutes a shared and value added background useful to support an OA culture and practice.
- Identifying information and documentation services already developed to disseminate institution's scientific production such as digital libraries, different types of web pages as well as the annual activity reports that gather research outcomes for evaluation aims. All these resources could be integrated in a future comprehensive CNR IR from a technological as well as from an organisational point of view.
- Analysis of the content deposited into already developed local IRs or contained in other digital free access archives. This implies also the identification of the actors who provide scientific content (researchers, librarians). The qualitative-quantitative analysis of the content as well as of the different actors that make it available can provide meaningful indication on the degree of awareness towards OA culture.

3. The questionnaire

The survey was carried out by means of a questionnaire sent to all CNR Research units. The questionnaire was sent on March 2008 with deadline for return set at the end of June. The survey makes use of a semi-structured questionnaire. It includes 14 open and closed questions items as well as information on the respondents' position. The last question was an open ended question aiming at verifying whether the respondents were in favour of translating the cooperative model used in CNR library consortia into a comprehensive IR. In particular the questionnaire seeks answers to the following interrogatives:

- Quantification of already existing and/or IRs under construction and identification of their characteristics,
- Identification of other types of freely accessible web resources (institutes' and/or scholars' websites, collections of scientific production for evaluation uses),
- Identification of the actors responsible for the content submission, management, cataloguing and dissemination
- Identification of practices for the input of internal scientific production within the library catalogue

survey numbers	CNR Research Units	Received Questionnaire	Coverage
	No.	No.	%
Institutes	107	92	86
Sections	184	65	35
Total	291	157	54

The table shows that 157 respondents, equalling 54% provided correctly completed returns.

Most of the respondents were CNR Institutes and this concentration indicates that the survey reached its major target with a response rate of 86% taking into account that they are among the most important stakeholders for a comprehensive CNR's IR.

The co-operative approach



This figure shows the number of the CNR research units geographically distributed. The boxes contain the names of the extended network, which has progressively grown during the survey.

Distribution of respondents to the question: "Does your Institute have a local IR to collect the publications produced by its researchers"?

More than a half of respondents do not have a local IR (65%). 25% of respondents declare to have a local IR, while 8% plan to set up a local IR in the next future.



In spite of a limited number of local IRs, most of CNR institutes do provide access to their scientific production via freely accessible web resources. These results make it feasible to think on a future development of a comprehensive CNR's IR based on the integration of resources, which are now distributed in different forms as well as on a co-operative existing network.

Distribution of respondents to the question: "Is the Institute's scientific production freely available in other types of digital archives?"

