Research Library Partnership / Works in Progress webinar / 24 July 2025

Open research as a strategic priority

OCLC Research perspectives & insights

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RLP

The OCLC Research Library Partnership

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OCLC Research Library Partnership

- A unique transnational network of research libraries
- Supports engagement and research activities
- Provides a way for libraries to engage directly with OCLC Research
- Skilled "art of hosting" conveners
- Spirit of caring

oc.lc/rlp

Programmatic areas

Research Support Leadership Roundtables

- Informal convenings of library leaders from RLP institutions
- Meet 3x/year on research support topics
- Strategic-level discussions offered in multiple sessions
- Discussions shared on the OCLC Research blog, https://hangingtogether.org/tag/RLP-roundtables/
- RLP offers parallel leadership networks in our other 3 programmatic areas

Open research as a strategic priority

Insights from an OCLC RLP leadership roundtable

Open Research roundtable discussion

- March 2025
- 50 library library leaders
- 33 institutions
- 4 countries
- 4 sessions

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ChodHound, CC BY-SA 2.0 Lewis Chessmen , via Wikimedia Commons

https://hangingtogether.org/open-research-as-a-strategic-priority-insights-from-an-oclc-rlp-leadership-roundtable/

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Aston University

British Library

Carnegie Mellon University

Clemson University

Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory

Colorado State University

London School of Economics & Political Science

Monash University

New York University

Ohio State University

Penn State

Rutgers University

Stony Brook University

Syracuse University

Temple University

Tufts University

University of Arizona

University of Calgary

University of California, Irvine

University of California, Riverside

University of California, San Diego

University of Glasgow

University of Illinois Urbana Champaign

University of Manchester

University of Maryland

University of Miami

University of Nevada, Reno

University of Oxford

University of Southern California

University of Tennessee, Knoxville

University of Texas at Austin

University of Waterloo

Virginia Tech

Yale University

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Discussion questions

1. **Is open research a cohesive institutional and/or library strategic priority?**

   And is the institution/library tracking progress toward open research goals? If so, how?

2. **How is open research being implemented at your institution?**

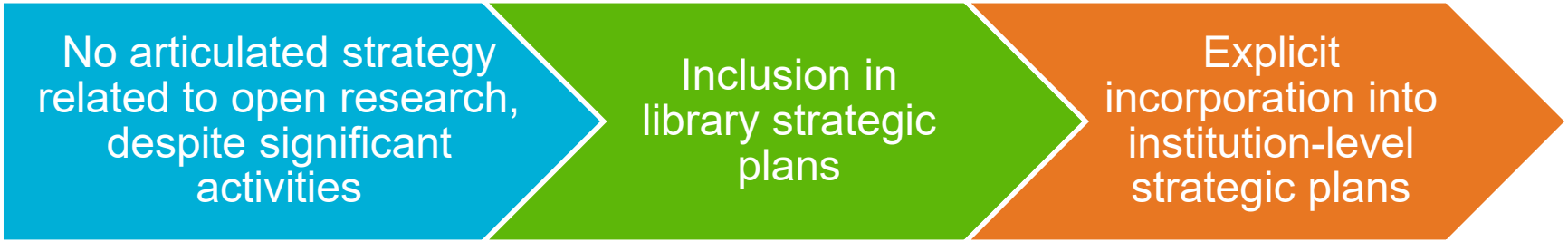
   That is, is it a centralized effort coordinated by the library (or another unit) or is it highly distributed? How are stakeholders collaborating?

3. **How are external factors impacting your institution's open research goals and activities?**

   This might include things like cybersecurity, national security, scrutiny of international collaborations, reputation and prestige, AI, etc.

Open research as a strategic priority

The roundtable discussion revealed a spectrum of institutional practices related to open research strategy, ranging from:



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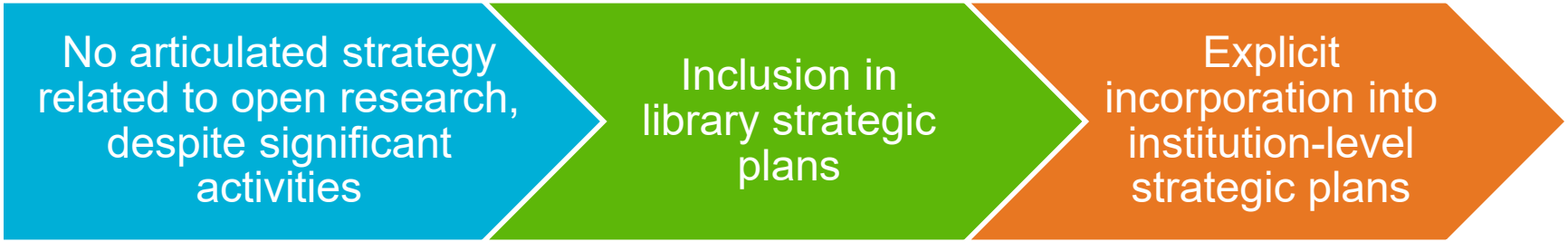

- 18 institutions
- Mostly tacit support for OR

- 8 institutions

- 7 institutions
- Primarily UK
- > centralization

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Libraries support open research
(but usually not in a coordinated service bundle)

Open publishing
- Repositories
- Library publishing programs
- Transformative/read & publish agreements
- OA publishing funds

Library-provisioned infrastructure
- Repositories
- Publishing platforms
- DMP platforms
- Research information management systems (RIMS/CRIS)

Services & expertise
- Research data management
- Scholarly communications
- Research impact metrics
- Open Educational Resources (OERs)

Photo by Robert Ruggiero on Unsplash

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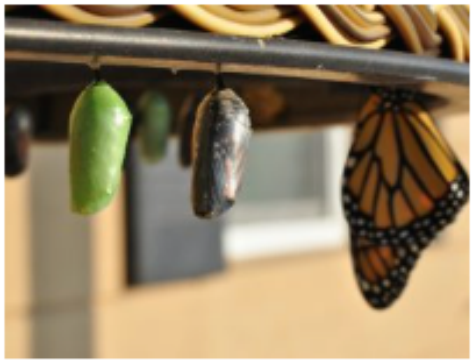
Example: University of Manchester

Institutional “Our Future” plan prioritizes the development of an open and responsible research environment

MANCHESTER 1824
The University of Manchester



RESEARCH INFORMATION MANAGEMENT / RESEARCH LIBRARY PARTNERSHIP / RESEARCH SUPPORT / SOCIAL INTEROPERABILITY

Supporting open research at the University of Manchester Libraries

February 1, 2024 - by Rebecca Bryant

The University of Manchester Library serves as the home for a new Office for Open Research, in support of enterprise open research goals.

https://hangingtogether.org/supporting-open-research-at-the-university-of-manchester-libraries/

Priority three

An open and responsible research environment

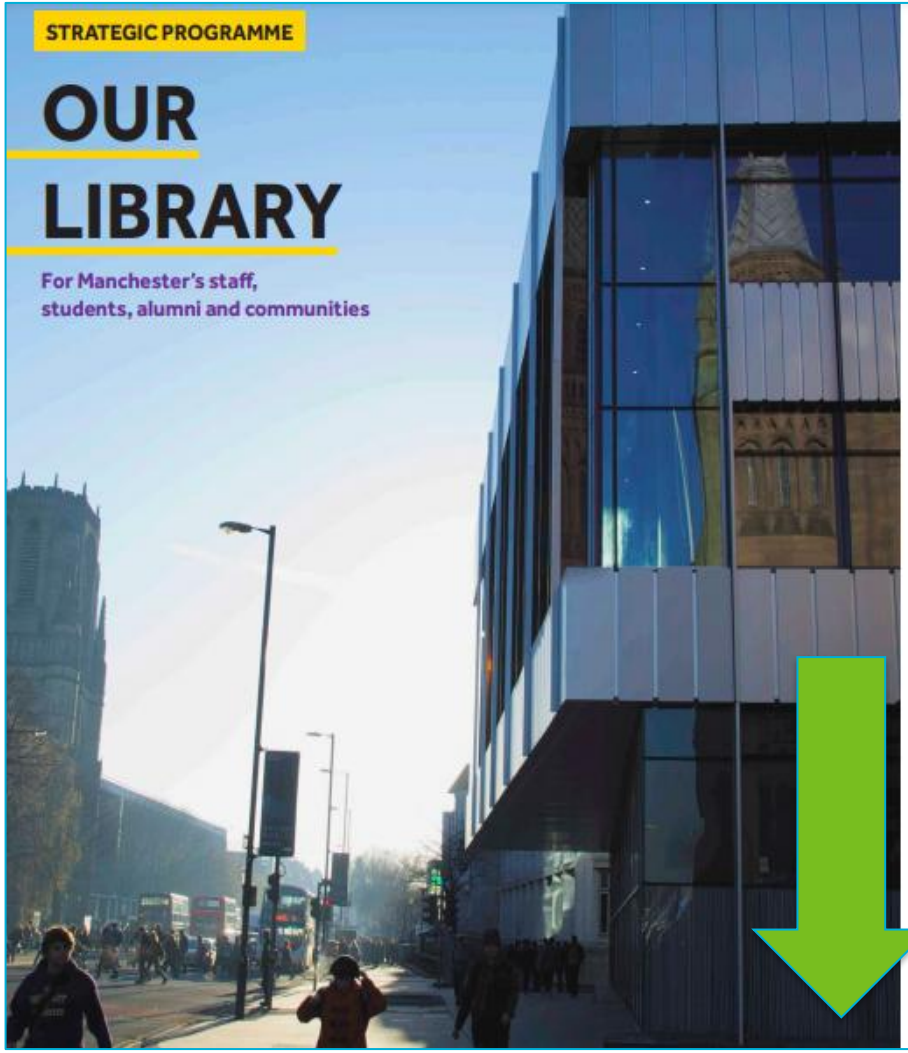
We will complete our strategic investment in transforming our research environment to support open research and a modernised responsible research framework for how we organise, resource, conduct and share our research to meet the highest standards of conduct and integrity; environmental sustainability; equality, diversity and inclusion; and positive economic and social impact.

https://www.manchester.ac.uk/about/vision/

STRATEGIC PROGRAMME

OUR LIBRARY

For Manchester's staff, students, alumni and communities



PROGRAMME MISSION
The Our Library programme will deliver on the legacy and potential of The University of Manchester Library to provide memorable, rich and dynamic services to our staff, students, alumni and communities.
The Library also plays a key role in the University's social responsibility activity.

LEAD PRIORITY AREAS

Main Library Redefined
The University aims to either refurbish or rebuild the Main Library in order to deliver world-leading environments for research, learning, student development and engagement with our print and digital collections. The project will allow us to consider the total student and research experience of our Library, learning spaces and supporting services in line with scholarship, new technologies, shared service cultures, the importance of wellbeing on campus and social responsibility.

Our Students
Manchester provides world-leading depth of content for students via its eTextbook portfolio. Our award-winning teaching and learning programmes support students, PhD candidates and researchers on campus and through digital delivery with rich curricular engagement to ensure that anyone studying at Manchester is working in a great learning environment. Imagine2030 will continue to deliver a great taught student experience and will also focus on developing a new partnership with our postgraduate research community.

Digital Manchester
Through multiple partnerships across the University, the Library shares in the development of The University of Manchester Digital Futures and digital innovation initiatives. This is a programme of activity reaching into every part of academic and administrative work at the University, and will prepare our University for a digital future that enables blended ways of working, research, education and the projection of The University of Manchester globally.

Spirit of Manchester
The University of Manchester Library is as much a part of life in the city as it is in the University. Over 20,000 people from our local communities are members of our Library and we welcome over 350,000 visitors every year at The John Rylands Library. Imagine2030 will aim to increase our involvement in the cultural and educational life of our city through our tradition of radical innovation.

The University of Manchester Office for Open Research
The University of Manchester Office for Open Research brings together our world-leading existing work in open scholarship for all disciplines with new bodies of work in open data, citizen science and open access. It will be one of the most significant investments in the future of publishing, data and open knowledge by any UK university, reaching across all humanities and science disciplines.

Office of Open Research

The University of Manchester

- Launched 2022
- Strategically coordinates the University's response to the Open Research agenda
- Creates a single point of contact with OR expertise across the institution
- Supports OR communities within the university & beyond
- Champions Open Research & shares updates

Office of Open Research

The University of Manchester

Offerings

- Open research skills
- Open publishing
- Open data & code
- Citizen science
- Responsible metrics

Stakeholders

- Library
- Research IT
- Data governance
- University press
- Comms & marketing

Factors shaping open research

- Mandates are a key driver of open research
- Fragmented services hinder researcher access
- Researcher engagement remains low
- Misconceptions about research security create hesitancy
- Resource constraints

GenAI implications

Opportunities

- Repositories: metadata enrichment, workflows
- New AI research librarian and data scientist roles
- AI may support research impact and measuring open research

Concerns

- Researcher concerns re: use of open publications in LLMs
- AI bots are straining repository infrastructure

AI in Metadata Working Group

- 17 members from US, UK, Canada, and Australia
- Examining metadata workflows related to
  - Cataloging
  - Repositories
  - Archives and special collections
- Repositories: self-deposit workflows, legacy metadata cleanup and enrichment
- Results later in 2025 on OCLC Research blog
- https://www.oclc.org/research/partnership/working-groups/managing-ai-metadata-managers-wg.html

Evolving library roles & value proposition

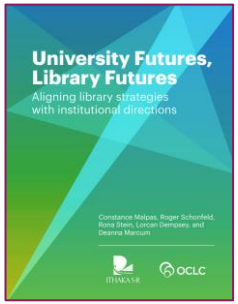
Role of library often unrecognized

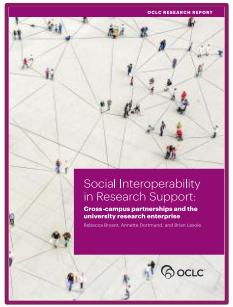
Photo by Majestic Lukas on Unsplash

- North American university
- Library providing expertise & services
- Office of Research launches new Open Science initiative
  - Unaware of library offerings
- Now relies upon library for programming

Other stakeholders often fail to recognize the library's evolving value proposition

Thought leadership on research support





2014

2020

2025

The Library Beyond the Library

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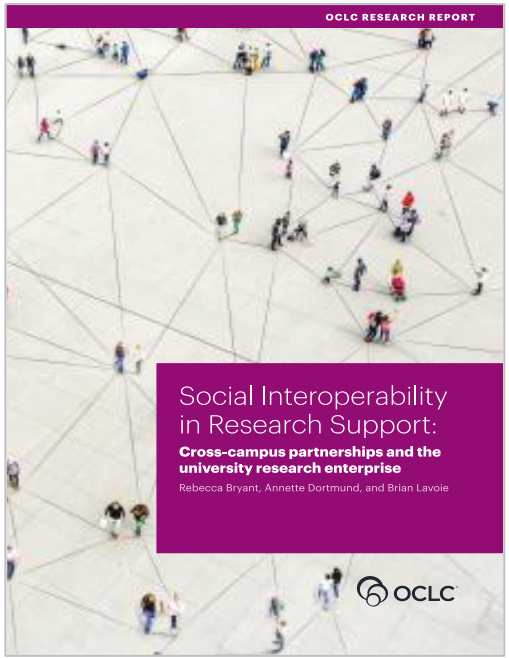

Social Interoperability in Research Support: Cross-campus Partnerships and the University Research Enterprise

https://doi.org/10.25333/wyrd-n586

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Social interoperability

Photo by Anna Samoylova on Unsplash

Social interoperability is the creation and maintenance of working relationships across individuals and organizational units that promote collaboration, communication, and mutual understanding.

Universities are complex adaptive systems

- Self-organized
- Independent agents
- Conflicting goals
- Non-linear & dynamic
- No single point of control

Example: Montana State University

Photo by Quino Al on Unsplash

- Established a central Research Alliance
- Unites 5 campus units providing research support within the library
  - Library research support
  - Research development
  - Undergrad research
  - Research cyberinfrastructure
  - Center for faculty excellence

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MSU Research Alliance

Benefits

- Improved services for researchers & students
- Improved collaboration between units
- Increased interaction with campus leaders
- > visible library value proposition

Challenges

- Turnover in executive leadership
- Ill-defined scope
- Poorly defined leadership roles & decision-making structure
- Internal pushback

Extending the Library Beyond the Library

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:MUTCD-OH_W4-H1a.svg

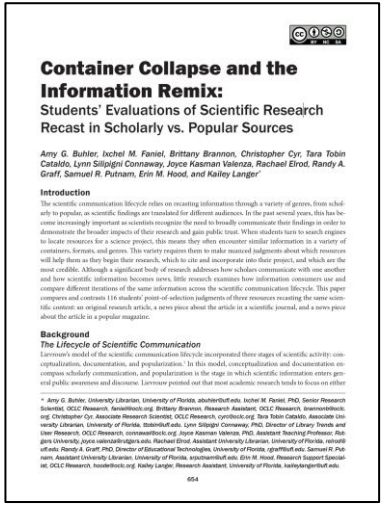
- Increasing library provision of research support services & expertise in support of institutional priorities
- Libraries extend & combine their expertise beyond the library through collaborations
- Libraries must communicate an increasingly complex value proposition

https://www.oclc.org/research/areas/research-collections/library-beyond-the-library.html

Thought leadership on OA and academic discovery

RDM challenges echo history of **green OA**

2018

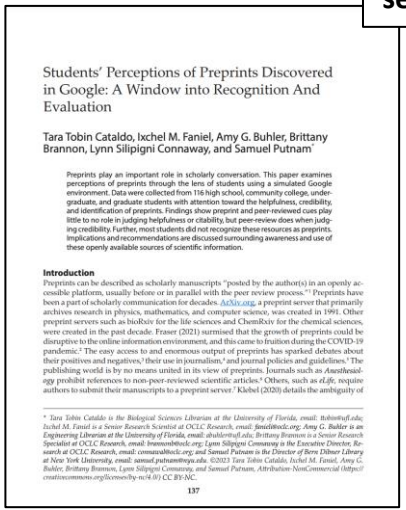


2019

Publication **formats** shape **perceptions of credibility**

Prioritization and progress of OA diverging regionally

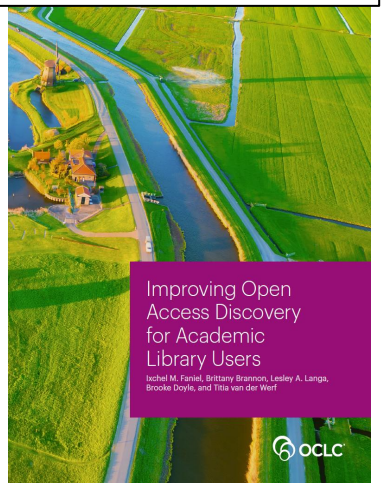
2020



2023

Nuances of OA publication types **confound undergrads**

Librarians prize **OA discovery**; users prize **seamless access**



2024

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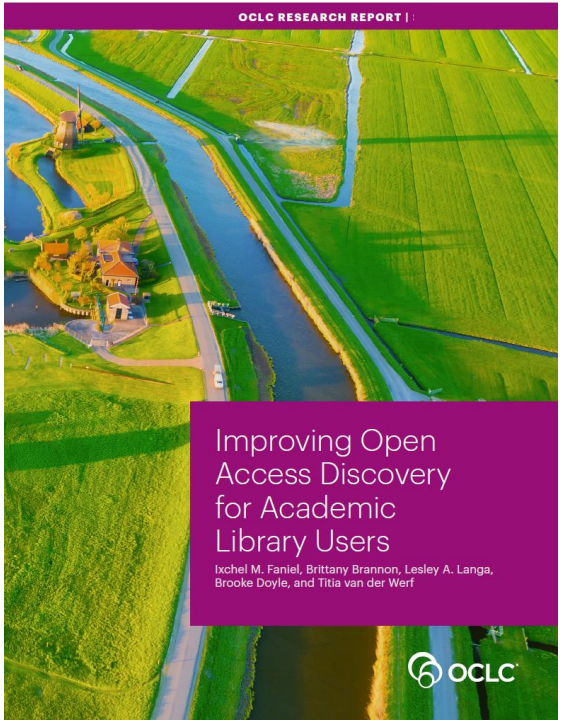

Improving Open Access Discovery for Academic Library Users

https://doi.org/10.25333/3q7x-5722

Conceptualized and conducted in partnership with two Dutch library consortia.

UKB

shb

OCLC

Seven academic libraries

Four universities, three universities of applied sciences (UASs)

Library efforts to improve discoverability of OA publications

- Library survey (n=7)
- 2-hour group interviews with 4-6 people at each institution (n=37)

User experiences with scholarly, peer-reviewed publications and open access

- User survey (n=461)

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Selecting and adding OA publications to library collections

- Used common selection criteria
  - relevant, trustworthy, with good representation of Dutch research
- Added OA publications from various sources
  - publishers, OA platforms, own institution, and national aggregations of other Dutch institutions were added
- Wanted to put OA publications in user workflows
  - teaching and learning, general discovery, student life

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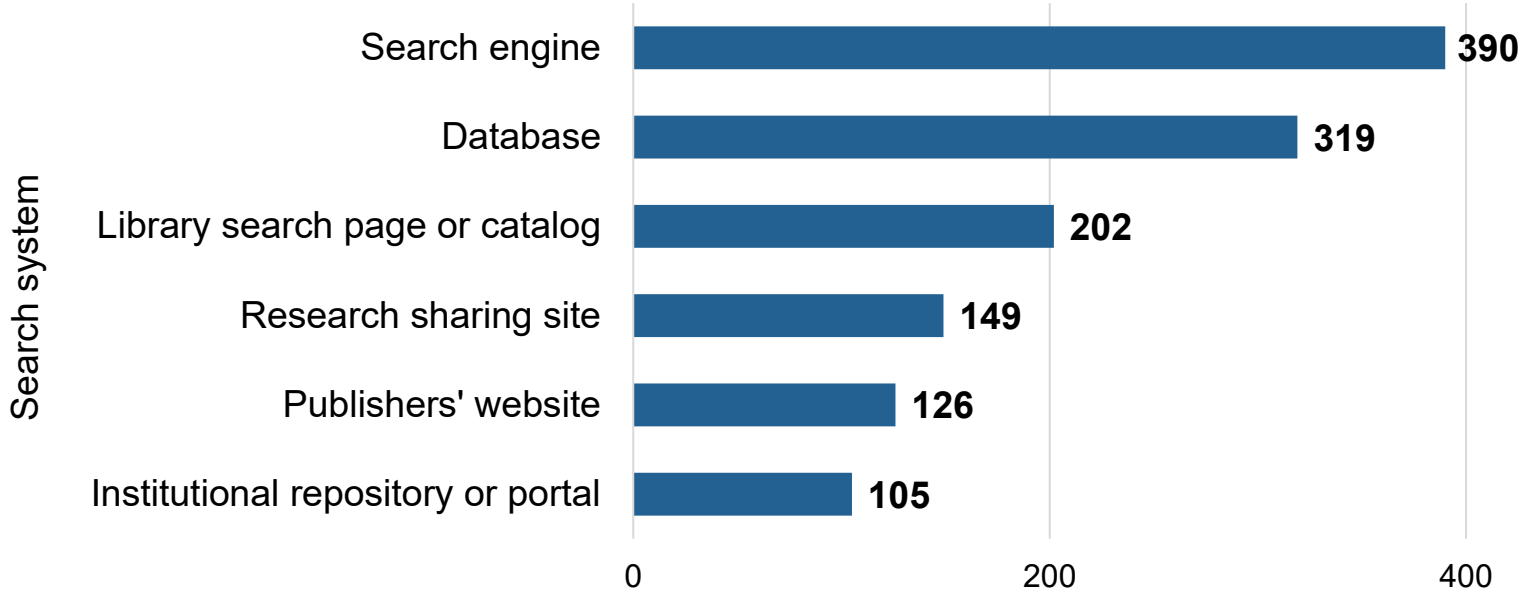
Where users normally search for scholarly peer-review publications



The total number of respondents was 450. Users could select all categories that applied. Categories with fewer 50 responses were not reported in the figure.

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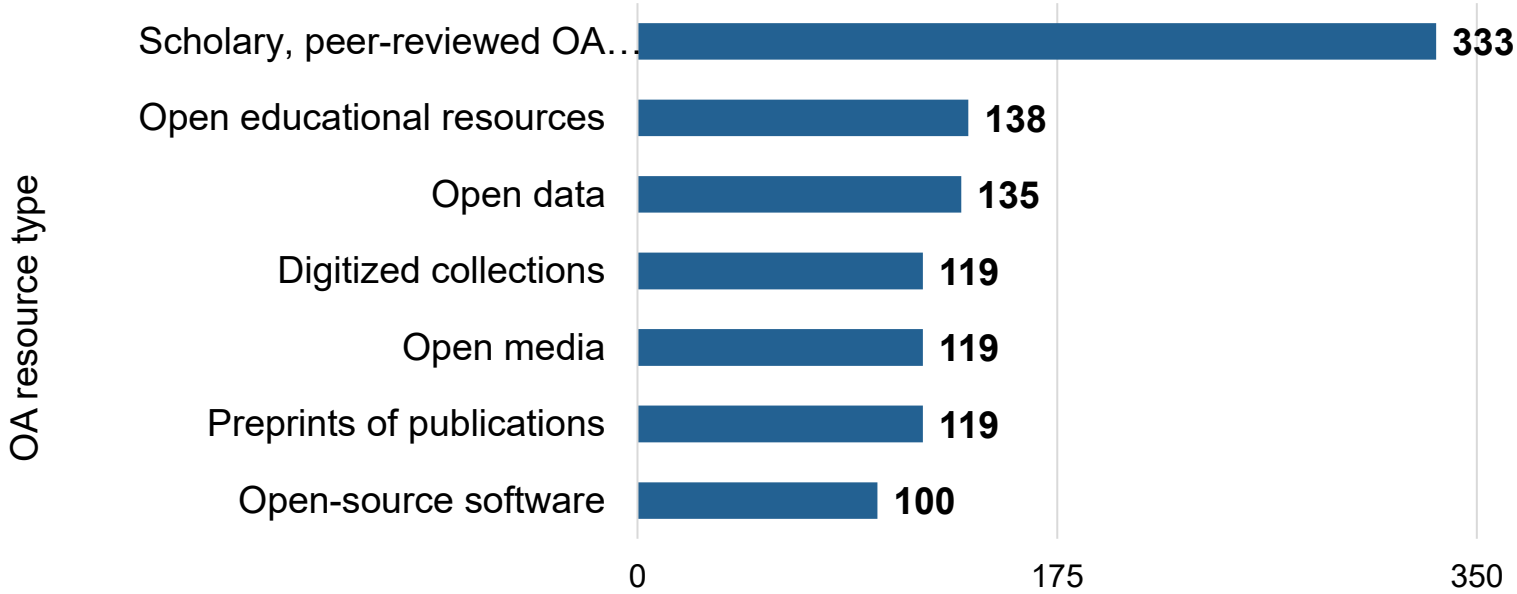
Types of OA resources users searched for



The total number of respondents was 420. Users could select all categories that applied. Categories with fewer 50 responses were not reported in the figure.

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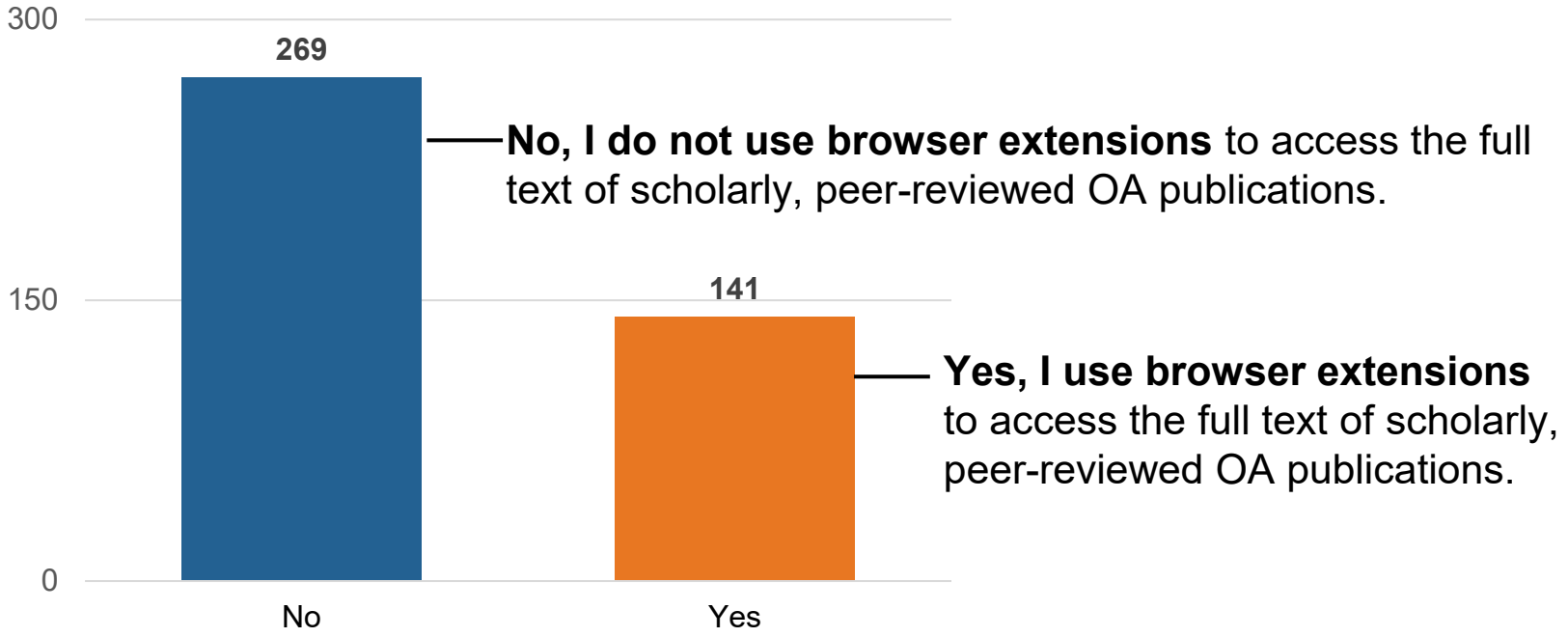
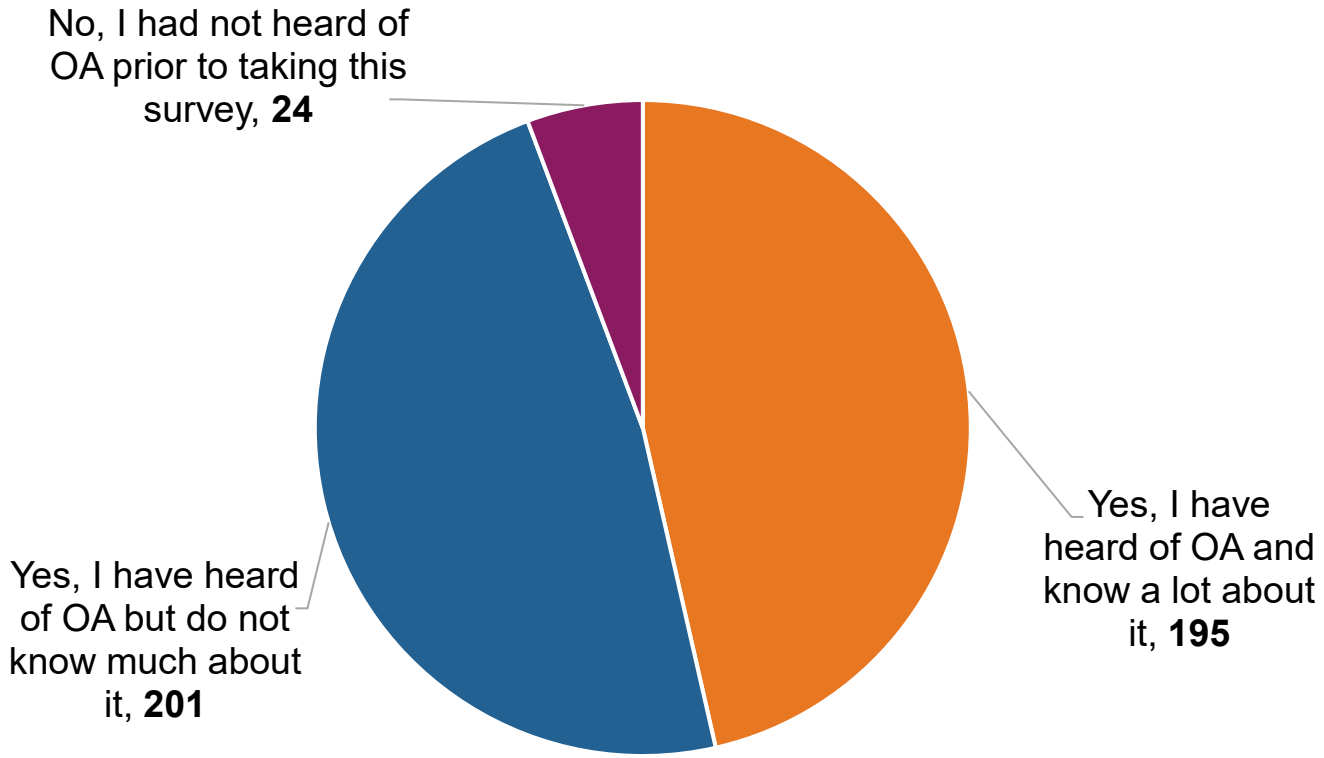
Use of browser extensions to access OA publications



The total number of respondents was 410. Users could select all browser extensions that applied.

User awareness of OA



The total number of respondents was 420.

Increasing OA awareness, knowledge, and engagement

"So, I think a lot is being done on getting them [users]... aware of publishing open access, but not that much on how open access is discovered, which I think is kind of a bit my task, [laughter] to maybe have workshops or presentations on that."

- Open access librarian, U4

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Discussion

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