TO FOLLOW-UP OPEN ACCESS POLICIES

WHAT TO MEASURE, HOW TO DO IT AND WHO TO TELL

INTRODUCTION

The implementation of open access has gained momentum in Sweden with policies being adopted by universities and funding bodies. Representing two organizations with policy decisions from 2010, we now face the question how we should evaluate the impact of the policies. It is clearly important for us to be able to measure and to evaluate the progress at the early stages in this process. We also believe that different stakeholders – university management, research group leaders and the individual researchers – will benefit from different kinds of feedback and that we should be able to provide appropriate indicators for these groups.

At Chalmers University of Technology, research and teaching are conducted on a broad front within technology, natural science and architecture. Chalmers has about 11,000 students and 2,300 employees.

Malmö University’s educational profile and subject areas are mainly social sciences, odontology, humanities and religion, medicine and interdisciplinary research areas. Malmö University has about 24,000 students and around 1,400 employees.

Both organizations have been working with the preparations of the policies over a long period of time before the actual decisions, which were made by the President/Vice-Chancellor at the two organizations. The policy at Chalmers is mandating open access copies in the institutional repository as the general rule by making Chalmers research freely available. Malmö University’s policy covers open access in the same way, but also consists of a mandate for open access to local publication series.

MEASURING OF IMPACTS AND BENEFITS

Typical indicators of interest would be:

- Total amount of open access publications
- Percentage open access publications
- Publication types / open access
- Papers in open access journals
- Visibility in Google/Google Scholar
- Development over time, monitoring progress

MEASURING DIFFERENT LEVELS

Typical levels of interest would be:

- Individual researchers
- Research units and departments
- Organizations

PROVIDING FEEDBACK

Researchers

Researchers typically would like feedback that focus on:

- Visibility
- Usage
- Impact

Management

Policy making needs systematic overviews and support by reliable information sources and quantitative indicators. Decision makers need feedback to make appropriate decisions about strategy and policy.

Examples of questions that could be answered on the basis of this feedback:

- How effective have our strategic decisions been regarding open access?
- Do we need to adjust our focus?
- How can we best allocate resources?

Stakeholders

Funders, for instance EU OpenAIRE

An important aspect of visibility, and to some degree impact, is being indexed by Google and Google Scholar. Both organizations’ repositories are well indexed by these search engines. Chalmers and Malmö deliver data from their repositories to the national database SwePub. The database can be used for an overview of what is published in different research areas, to get titles in full text, abstracts and citations. The data is processed for a search service and not yet suitable as a tool for statistics.

Both organizations have groups working with the responsibility of management. At Malmö, group members come from different departments at the university and from different organizational levels. It is partly this group’s responsibility to assure that the policy becomes implemented. At Chalmers, the group consists of persons from the Library, the Communication and Marketing office and the Central Administration office. At Chalmers there is a regular dialogue between the Library and the Vice-Chancellor about issues concerning the policy.

FUTURE PLANS

- Adapting and improving existing indicators (reports, visualization, presentations etc.)
- Developing and applying new indicators (bibliometrics, interviews, downloads etc.)
- National/international comparisons and benchmarking

Where should these tools be placed? Where are stakeholders interested in having them? Should every university provide funders and stakeholders with reports, or should statistics be collected on e.g. a national level?