

Exploring the Scholarly Communications Landscape at the University of Saskatchewan

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INTRODUCTION

The scholarly communications landscape is rapidly evolving with the accelerating growth of the Open Access (OA) movement and the maturation of the Internet.

In the last decade, many academic libraries have responded by developing services to support researchers in their scholarly communications activities in this new environment. Such services include building and managing institutional repositories (IRs), providing e-publication hosting and support, and offering educational programs to raise awareness about issues surrounding OA and author rights.

A recent (2012) survey conducted by the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) found that 93% of responding libraries indicated that their library or institution was involved in scholarly communications services, and that libraries were overwhelmingly the leaders in organizing these services at their institutions¹. And a 2009 survey of Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL) member institutions also found that a majority of responding libraries were involved in OA-related educational activities².

At the present time, the University Library, University of Saskatchewan (U of S), offers no services of this kind for faculty.

OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this exploratory study was to discover the current and emerging needs of U of S faculty in an effort to establish an evidence-based foundation for the potential development of scholarly communications services at the University Library.

An additional objective was to conduct a broad environmental scan of faculty awareness, as well as publishing practices and behaviours in response to the increasing significance of OA. No previous research of this kind has been carried out at the U of S.

METHODS

- A short (~10min) online survey was created using Fluid Surveys software.
- A personal email invitation to participate was sent to all faculty members, in all disciplines, at the U of S.
- The survey remained open for the month of November 2012; two reminder emails were sent.
- In total, 1327 invitations were sent and 291 complete responses were received – a response rate of 22%.
- Basic descriptive statistics were performed in SPSS.

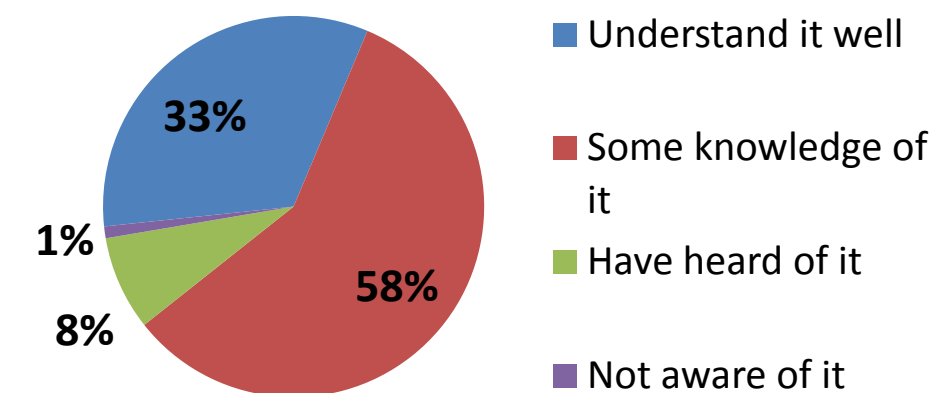
REFERENCES

1. Radom, R., Feltner-Reichert, M., & Stringer-Stanback, K. (2012). *SPEC Kit 332: Organization of Scholarly Communication Services* (p. 173). Washington, DC: Association of Research Libraries.
2. Greyson, D., Vezina, K., Morrison, H., Taylor, D., & Black, C. (2009). University Supports for Open Access: A Canadian National Survey. *Canadian Journal of Higher Education*, 39(3), 1–32.

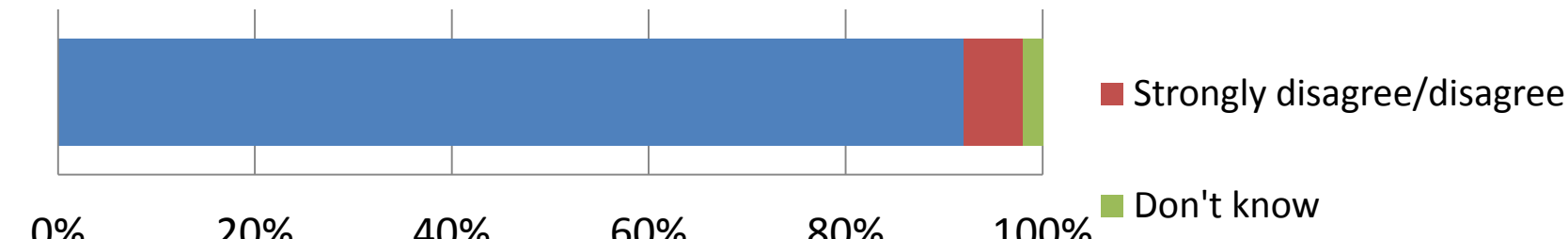
SELECTED RESULTS & CONCLUSIONS

Awareness & Support for OA:

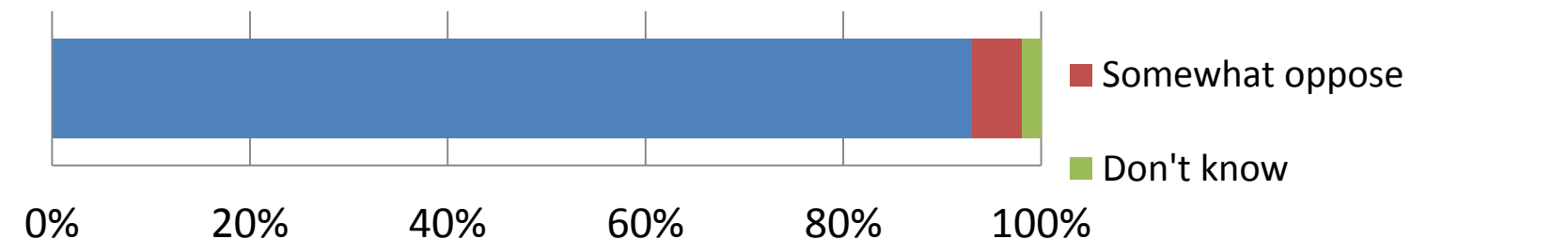
Self-assessed level of understanding of OA



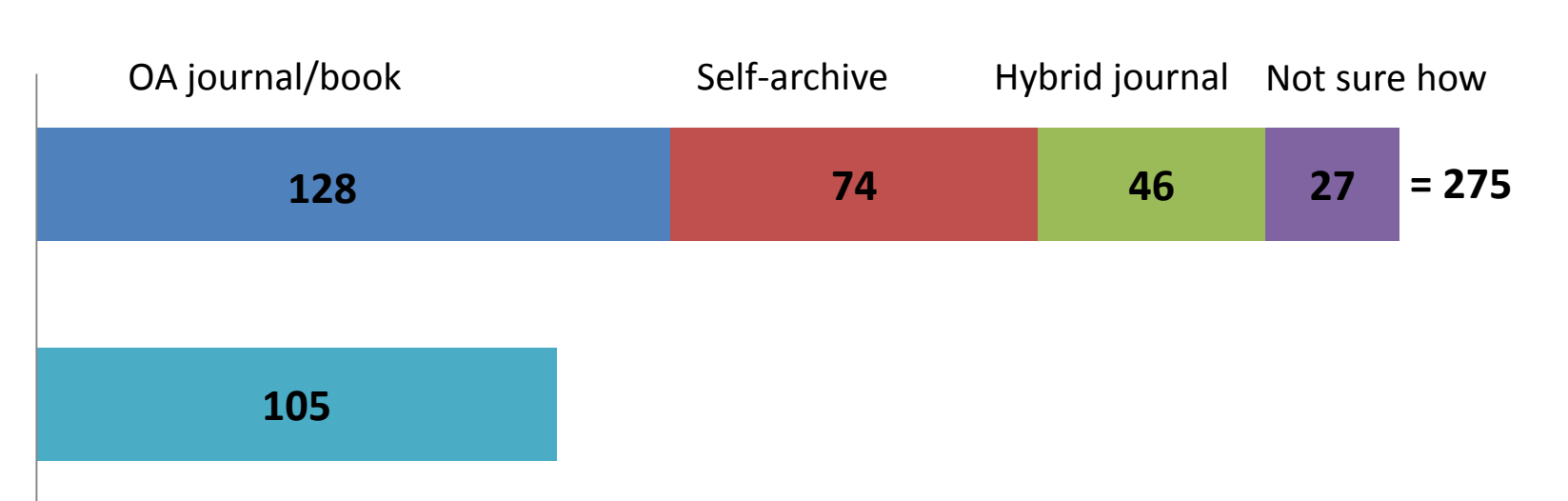
Publicly-funded research should be OA



Level of support for philosophy of OA



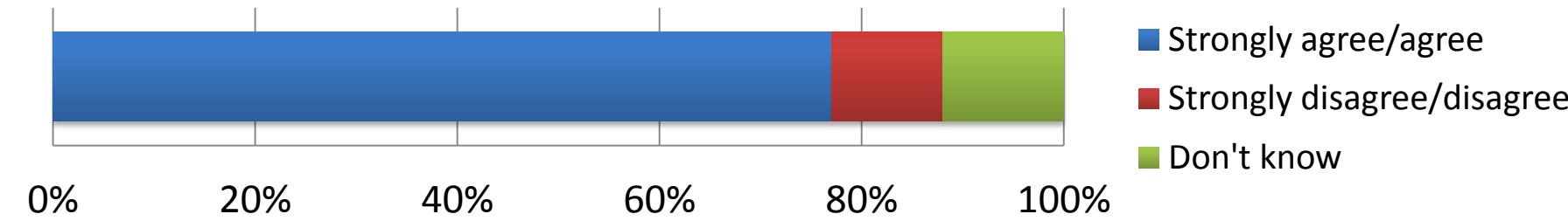
Have you made your publications OA? How? (Check all that apply)



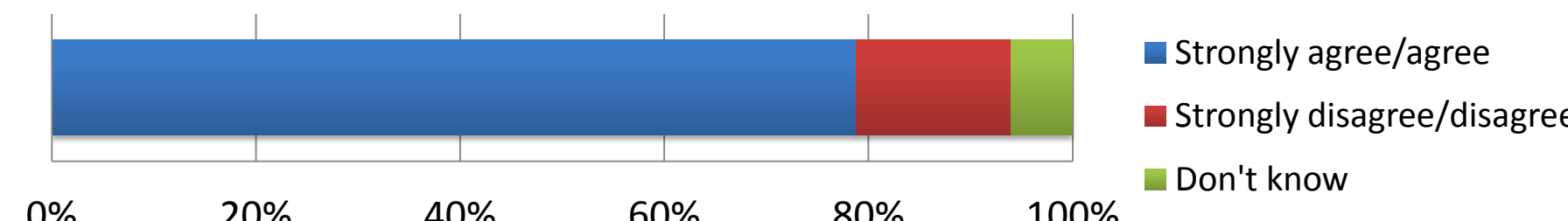
Conclusion: Level of understanding of, support for, and activity in, OA is already high among U of S faculty.

Copyright Issues:

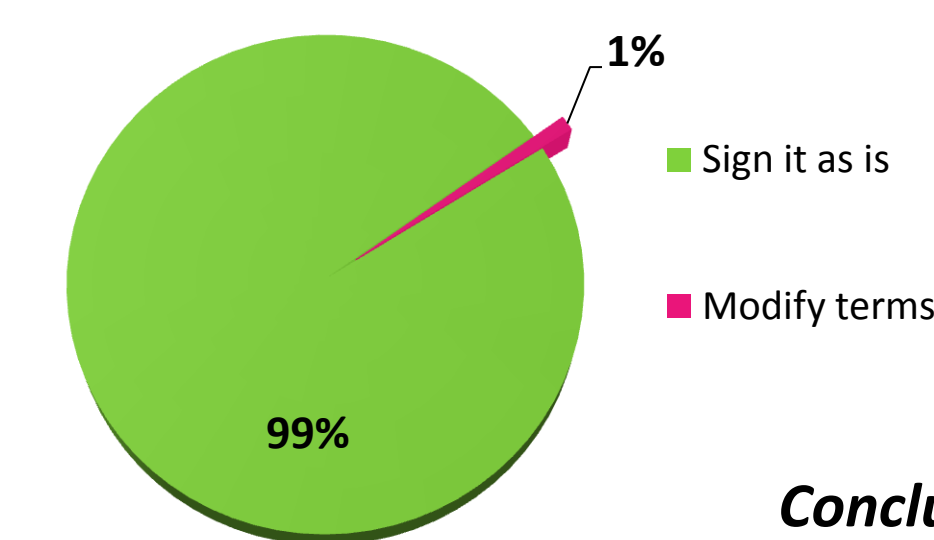
Researchers should retain their copyright



I do not have the time/interest/expertise to negotiate copyright terms



How do you usually handle copyright terms in your publishing contracts?



Selected Respondents' Comments

"What choice do we have? If we want our work published then we must agree."

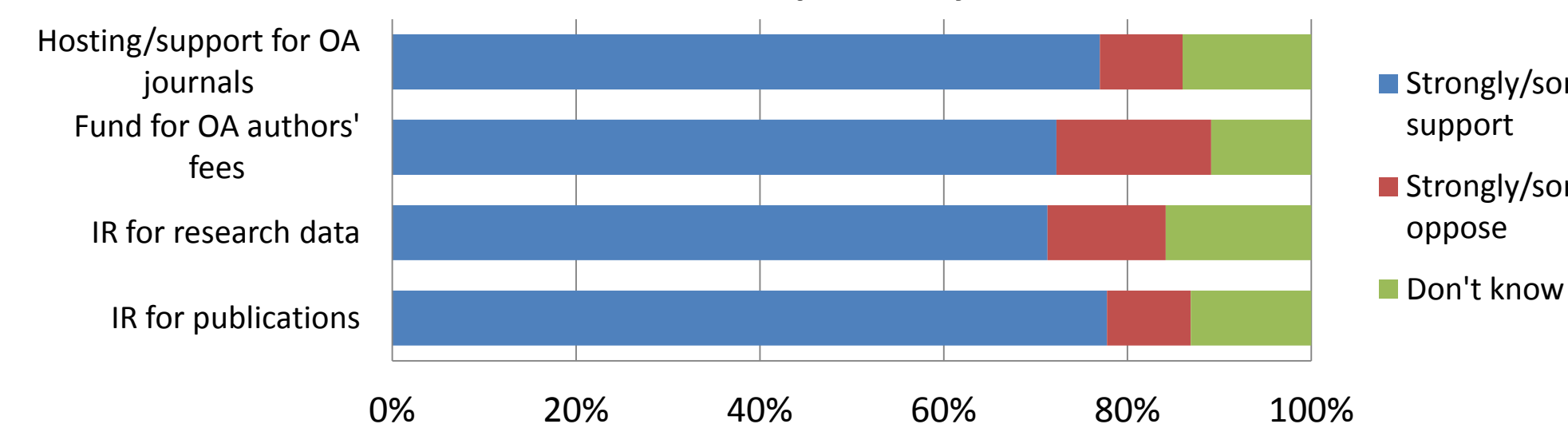
"I pay as little attention to them [copyright terms] as possible."

"I didn't know that I can modify copyright terms."

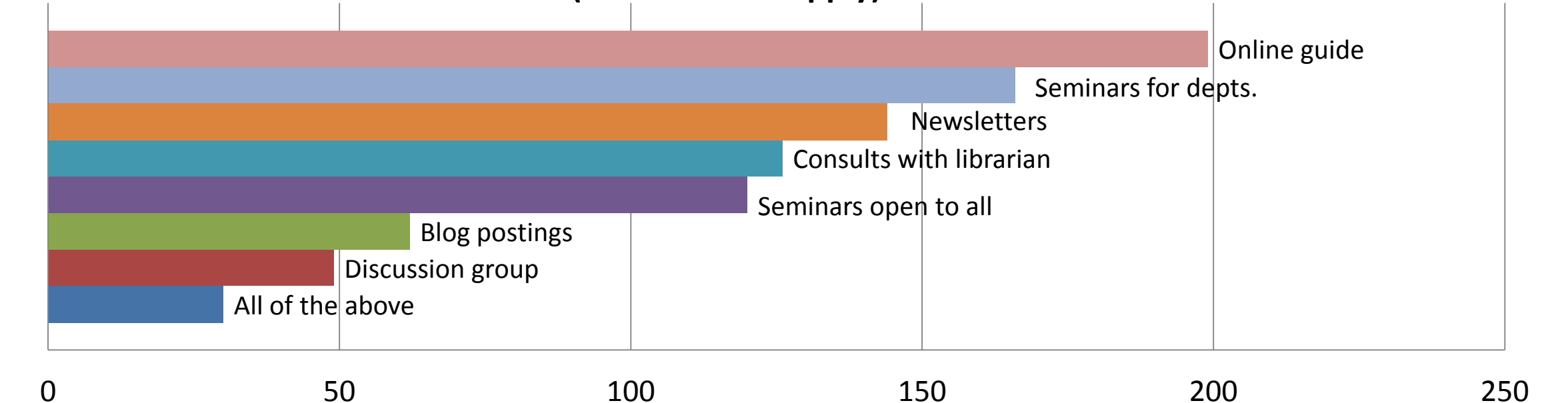
Conclusion: Although researchers are highly supportive of authors retaining their copyright, they are not fully aware of their rights in this regard and do not feel that they have the time/interest/expertise to follow through.

Support for Possible Library Initiatives:

Possible major library initiatives



Which possible library initiatives would you find useful to learn about OA topics? (Check all that apply)



DISCUSSION

- Results indicate that faculty already have a high level of awareness and familiarity with OA; any scholarly communications educational program developed by the library may assume some basic knowledge is already there.
- Strongest need is in education and support on author rights issues such as how to modify and negotiate copyright transfer agreements from publishers.

- Relatively high response rate (for online surveys), and high use of comments boxes suggests an overall interest in this topic on campus, and possibly a desire for further discussion.
- **Limitations:** It is likely that this survey experienced "non-response bias" – those who already had an interest in, and favourable attitude towards, OA were more likely to respond. Results may be skewed as a consequence.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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