

Open access week 2021 at the University of Eastern Finland Library: how we designed, marketed, and conducted workshop, Cafés, prizes, and postings

Tuulevi Ovaska

University of Eastern Finland, Kuopio, Finland

Abstract

International Open Access Week is a global event that many institutions and organisations take part in annually. Often the libraries of academic institutions are eager to participate. The level of participation can vary from simply sharing knowledge about the week to, for example, organising events. In 2021, the University of Eastern Finland library decided to put more effort to the week than before, since it has a role as an active promoter of open science.

Key words: *anniversaries and special events; awards and prizes; blogging; libraries; open access publishing.*

Background

Open Access Week is an annual global event that offers the academic and research community an opportunity to learn about the open science (OS), and open access (OA) in particular, and to share what they have learned, and to inspire participation in making OA a norm in research. Since 2007, when it began as Open Access Day, the event has grown exponentially and is now celebrated at hundreds of events around the world.

The University of Eastern Finland (UEF) is an international, participatory, and inclusive scientific community that has four large faculties: the Philosophical Faculty, the Faculty of Science and Forestry, the Faculty of Health Sciences, and the Faculty of Social Sciences and Business Studies. The two campuses are in Joensuu and Kuopio.

The UEF Library is a public academic library offering library and information services especially for the UEF staff and students. One of the official tasks of the library is to improve and develop the university's publication activities and services relating to OS. The action plan of the library 2021-2024 (1) describes, among other things, the library as an advocate for OS, and, related to one of the strategic goals of UEF, namely "Science for all – a pioneer of OS and science communication" states that the library will act as an active promoter of OS.

Planning UEF OA Week 2021

In June 2021, it was suggested in a meeting of the research support team that the library should organise at least one OS Café during the autumn term. It was decided to conduct a sort of pilot during the OA Week in October. The team talked about either a live event or an online event, as in June 2021, during the COVID-19 pandemic, it was impossible to predict what would be allowed and possible, and the fact of two campuses (140 km from each other) must always be considered. The team also discussed possible partners and cooperation.

In September 2021, there were several separate meetings around the events and other OA Week activities. It was decided 1) to organise two OS Cafés online, one organised in cooperation with UEF's research funding coordinators, 2) to organise a workshop (part of UEF's data support project), 3) to publish several blog posts, 4) to nominate the contributor of OS (already a tradition), and 5) to announce the open master's thesis raffle winner (also a tradition).

In addition to cooperating with the research funding coordinators / research services, expertise was needed also from UEF's Communications and media relations. Their graphic designer produced beautiful marketing material.

Address for correspondence: Tuulevi Ovaska, University of Eastern Finland, Yliopistonranta 1, 70210 Kuopio, Finland.
E-mail: tuulevi.ovaska@uef.fi

The events on UEF OA Week 2021

There were two OS Cafés. The Teams links to these events were shared openly, and there was no enrolment so that anyone, student, researcher, other staff member, or even non-UEFian could join. The first Café, titled “Identify yourself as a researcher!”, was held on Tuesday 26th October (2) and marketed with these lines:

What's ORCID? And what's it for? Can you even publish without a researcher identifier? Does it have something to do with research funding as well? Join the Café to hear more and discuss and for peer support! The occasion is informal. No enrolment.

In this Café there were introductions by information specialists / subject librarians and research funding coordinators.

The second Café was organized on Thursday 28th October and the title was “Open publishing and self-archiving” (3), the content described as:

Do you have questions about article processing charges? Are you already familiar with UEF publication repository eRepo? What to take into consideration when publishing online in eRepo? Have you wondered about self-archiving to eRepo? Join the Café to hear more and discuss and for peer support! The occasion is informal. No enrolment.

In this Café there were introductions by information specialists / subject librarians.

The third event took place between the two Cafés on Wednesday 27th October. It was a workshop called “Uncovering the data skills and needs of researchers – a workshop for researchers” (4) and introduced like this:

We will ponder and discuss different aspects of research data and data management; what is the required expertise, know-how, and the need for support during the various stages of conducting (everyday) research. The workshop outcomes will be utilized for developing and improving discipline-specific data management support and guides.

Enrolment was required. In the workshop, moderated by the coordinators of UEF's Data Management Project, different aspects of research data and data management were pondered and discussed. For example, what is the required expertise, know-how, and the need for support during the various stages of conducting research. The workshop aimed to gather the insights and expertise of researchers of various fields in matters of research data management. It was a central component of a project to develop the research data support ser-

vices at UEF in collaboration with researchers, faculties, research disciplines, and the experts from the central support services.

Marketing

The events were marketed on almost all possible communication channels: naturally the library website, the library's main channel, and UEF's OS webpages; UEF's internal communication channel Yammer, several communities; the events' page at UEF's intranet called Heimo; UEF's knowledge base for students called Kamu; in social media: Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter; and on big info screens in the lobbies and hallways of the campus buildings.

The prizes

Each year, during the OS Week a UEFian (a person or a unit) is awarded as the contributor for OS and OA. The award was now given for the sixth time and handed over to the House of Effectiveness (5). It is an open, multidisciplinary collaborative network of well-being and health-related impact research and education, as well as a discussion forum that promotes collaboration and networking in the field both nationally and internationally. The award was a small ceremony at Kuopio campus (6).

Also, every year, during the OS Week, UEF Library raffles off a grant worth 100 euros among those UEF students who published an OA master's thesis during the preceding 12 months. This year 55 students signed up for the raffle.

The blog posts

To kick off the OA Week, two information specialists wrote under the title “It Matters How We Open Knowledge: Building Structural Equity” (7) on Monday 25th October about the general theme of the OA Week in 2021, in line with the then recent UNESCO Recommendation on OS. On Wednesday 27th October the title of the blog post by an information specialist was “Promoting Open Cooperation through Citizen Science” (8) and the third post of the week announced the contributor for OS 2021 and the Open master's thesis raffle winner 2021 on Thursday 28th October.

Participation

Each event had 10 to 15 participants, though many of them were from the library. The events thus acted also

as internal training. Unfortunately, many other UEF events took place that week, for example, there was a benchmarking afternoon, it was also the international week, and one of the four big faculties had the strategy day. But, in a big organization there is always overlap. The blog posts did not gain an exceptional number of readers but the usual, or average, number of visitors, though, of course, they will continue to receive readers. The posts on social media did not gain more audience than any post by the library (fooling around, e.g., in Halloween costumes or as Christmas elves, is most popular).

Feedback

Feedback was collected using a short anonymous form (MS O365 Forms). In the OS online Cafés, the link to the form was shared in the chat during the MS Teams session, and after the workshop the link to it was emailed to the participants. The link was also shared on the same channels as the marketing of the events. One reminder was sent, but only three responses were received. On a scale 1 = not useful, did not learn anything new to 5 = very useful, learned a lot, the mean value for both the first OS Café, and the workshop was four and for the second OS Café the average was five. Two open comments were received, in Finnish, here translated into English. One person would have liked to have recorded events: *It would be if these would be recorded if one cannot attend at the certain time.*

We decided not to record these events as their format – discussions in Cafés and interactive workshop – was not suitable for that. They were not formal trainings but aimed to be interactive. Recording would have changed the nature of the events. We already offer videos and other training material on these topics.

The other open feedback was positive and encouraging: *Good topics, more of this kind.*

We also asked for suggestions for events on future OA Weeks but did not receive them.

Conclusions

Organising events and prizes, as well as writing blog posts, requires a time and cooperation, but not a big budget, unless time is counted. Therefore, it would be rewarding to have more participants and readers. Yet, we did not consider the time wasted, as all who took part were contented, or even very satisfied. It would be

great to reach more audience and we will continue our efforts to support OS.

Received on 16 February 2022.

Accepted on 11 March 2022.

REFERENCES

1. The action plan of the library 2021-2024 [Internet]. University Eastern Finland. 2021. Available from: [https://www.uef.fi/en/library/The action plan of the library 2021-2024](https://www.uef.fi/en/library/The%20action%20plan%20of%20the%20library%202021-2024)
2. Open Science Cafe Online #1: Identify yourself as a researcher! [Internet]. University of Eastern Finland. 2021. Available from: <https://www.uef.fi/en/event/open-science-cafe-online-1-identify-yourself-as-a-researcher>
3. Open Science Cafe Online #2: Open publishing and self-archiving [Internet]. University of Eastern Finland. 2021. Available from: <https://www.uef.fi/en/event/open-science-cafe-online-2-open-publishing-and-self-archiving>
4. Uncovering the dataskills and needs of researchers – a workshop for researchers [Internet]. University of Eastern Finland. 2021. Available from: <https://www.uef.fi/en/event/uncovering-the-dataskills-and-needs-of-researchers-a-workshop-for-researchers>
5. The house of effectiveness [Internet]. 2019. Available from: <https://sites.uef.fi/vaikuttavuudentalo/?lang=en>
6. Contributor for open science 2021 [Internet]. University of Eastern Finland. 2021. Available from: <https://www.uef.fi/en/article/contributor-for-open-science-2021>
7. Hartikainen K, Rosti T. It matters how we open knowledge: building structural equity [Internet]. UEF Library blog. 2021. Available from: <https://blogs.uef.fi/ueflibrary/tieteen-avaamisella-on-valia-oikeudenmukaisuutta-rakentamassa-it-matters-how-we-open-knowledge-building-structural-equity/>
8. Rosti T. Promoting open cooperation through citizen science [Internet]. UEF Library blog. 2021. Available from: <https://blogs.uef.fi/ueflibrary/avoimen-yhteistyon-edistaminen-kansalaistieteen-keinoin-promoting-open-cooperation-through-citizen-science/>