

Berlin 11 satellite conference encourages students and early stage researchers to influence shift towards Open Access

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*Open access policy discussions have tended to favour the involvement of established academic leaders, but what about the voices from those set to inherit the future of scholarly communication? **Nick Shockey** provides more details on a call for applications from students and early stage researchers looking to contribute further to the shift toward an Open Access system of scholarly publishing.*



On November 18th in Berlin, the Right to Research Coalition and the Max Planck Society will co-host a conference on Open Access specifically for students and early stage researchers. A one-day satellite conference to the Berlin 11 Open Access meeting, the event will bring together leaders of the Open Access movement with students and early stage researchers for a discussion around the future of scholarly publishing and how the next generation of researchers can lead the way in the transition to a fully open system.

You can apply to join the Berlin 11 Satellite Conference for Students & Early Stage Researchers [here](#). The meeting will highlight the increasing extent to which the next generation of researchers is shaping the future of the scholarly communication system that they will inherit. The event will also serve as a cap to a year that has seen more successful student-led Open Access initiatives than ever.

In Kenya, the Medical Students Association of Kenya helped lead the successful campaign for an institutional Open Access policy at the University of Nairobi. In the United States, American student organizations, including the American Medical Student Association (AMSA) and the National Association of Graduate-Professional Students (NAGPS), made significant contributions to the enactment of the White House Executive Directive on Public Access. In the UK, students from Medsin UK were successful in getting the British Medical Association to pass a policy statement supporting Open Access. Across the world, students have given countless peer-to-peer presentations on Open Access to ensure future authors don't replicate the current closed system of scholarly communication.

In addition to promoting Open Access, students have also demonstrated that breakthroughs can often come from those at the beginning of their scientific careers. No story illustrates this more vividly than that of Jack Andraka, the 16-year-old inventor of a breakthrough diagnostic for pancreatic cancer that costs three cents and takes five minutes to run, making it 26,667 times less expensive, 168 times faster, and 400 times more sensitive than the current test. Jack used articles he could find freely available online "religiously" — including many published by PLOS — and has since become an outspoken advocate for Open Access.

Jack will deliver the first keynote of the November 18th conference.

The Berlin 11 Satellite Conference for Students and Early Stage Researchers will also include four workshops from some of the most promising student-led projects to promote Open Access. One such project is the [Open Access Button](#), a browser-based application in development which promises to visualize users' collisions with paywalls and help users find freely accessible copies of articles online. The Open Access Button was featured [right here on the LSE Impact Blog](#) just last month.



These workshops aim to get participants directly involved in promising projects or even clone them at their home institutions and countries after the meeting. The conference will also include presentations from those at the forefront of the Open Access effort. Confirmed speakers for the meeting include:

- Cameron Neylon (Director of Advocacy, PLOS)
- Mark Patterson (Executive Director, eLife)
- Bernard Rentier (Rector, University of Liège)
- Carl-Christian Buhr (Member of the Cabinet of Ms Neelie Kroes, European Commission Vice-President for the Digital Agenda)
- Alek Tarkowski (Former Member of the Board of Strategic Advisors to the Prime Minister of Poland)
- Heather Joseph (Executive Director, SPARC)

A call for applications to attend the meeting will be open until October 14th, and many participants will have the opportunity to receive travel scholarships to cover the cost of travel and accommodation for the meeting. Those interested can find more information and apply online at www.righttoresearch.org/act/berlin11.

As Open Access Week approaches at the end of this month, it is a good time to remember that students helped start Open Access Week, which grew out of a student-organized National Day of Action for Open Access in 2007. Six years later, students and early stage researchers are contributing more than ever to the shift toward an Open Access system of scholarly publishing, and the Berlin 11 Satellite Conference will help to accelerate and spread these important efforts. We hope to see you in Berlin next month!

Note: This article gives the views of the author, and not the position of the Impact of Social Science blog, nor of the London School of Economics. Please review our [Comments Policy](#) if you have any concerns on posting a comment below.

About the Author

Nick Shockey is the Director of the Right to Research Coalition, an international alliance of 71 student organizations — collectively representing nearly seven million students in over 100 countries — that seek to promote Open Access through advocacy and education. The Right to Research Coalition is an initiative of SPARC, the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition. You can learn more about the Right to Research Coalition at <http://www.righttoresearch.org>.

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