



THE BUDAPEST OPEN ACCESS INITIATIVE

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BOAI an initiative of the OSI Information Program www.osi.hu/infoprogram/

- “The Information Program promotes the equitable deployment of knowledge and communications resources—providing access to content, tools, and networks—for civic empowerment and effective democratic governance.”
- Open Society Institute is part of the Soros Foundations network
- “All the foundations’ activities share an overarching common mission: to support the development of open society and to promote critical thinking”.
- BOAI is managed from OSI New York (Melissa Hagemann, Information Program Officer), working in conjunction with colleagues in OSI Budapest



BOAI : uniqueness and close relationships

- BOAI has good working relationships with other movements for change in information but has its own unique role
- BOAI is **not** the Open Archives Initiative but welcomes the OAI standards as leading to easier access for information users
- BOAI is **not** SPARC but works with SPARC on new publishing initiatives leading to open access
- BOAI is **not** eIFL – another OSI initiative – but complements eIFL's work on good purchasing deals for consortia
- BOAI was born from a recognition that all these initiatives are working to improve access to academic information but that new publishing models are necessary if open access is to be achieved.



HOW BOAI WAS BORN

- OSI invited a group of people working in this area to a discussion in Budapest December 2001
- The group discussed various strategies to achieve open access and agreed on two main strategies: self-archiving and alternative journals (N.B. numbering of strategies does not indicate importance – both equally important).
- In early 2002 the group agreed on the text of a statement which was circulated to a wider group on individuals before it was made public on 14 February 2002
- Text of BOAI statement at www.soros.org/openaccess/



BOAI vision

- If we want to achieve change, we need a vision of the situation we wish to reach.
- BOAI vision : “An old tradition and a new technology have converged to make possible an unprecedented public good. The old tradition is the willingness of scientists and scholars to publish the fruits of their research in scholarly journals without payment, for the sake of inquiry and knowledge. The new technology is the internet. The public good they make possible is the world-wide electronic distribution of the peer-reviewed journal literature and completely free and unrestricted access to it by all scientists, scholars, teachers, students, and other curious minds. Removing access barriers to this literature will accelerate research, enrich education, share the learning of the rich with the poor and the poor with the rich, make this literature as useful as it can be, and lay the foundation for uniting humanity in a common intellectual conversation and quest for knowledge”.



BOAI Strategy 1 : author self-archiving.

- “Scholars need the tools and assistance to deposit their refereed journal articles in open electronic archives, a practice commonly called, self-archiving. When these archives conform to standards created by the Open Archives Initiative, then search engines and other tools can treat the separate archives as one. Users then need not know which archives exist or where they are located in order to find and make use of their contents.”



BOAI strategy 2 : alternative journals using new business model

- “Scholars need the means to launch a new generation of journals committed to open access, and to help existing journals that elect to make the transition to open access. Because journal articles should be disseminated as widely as possible, these new journals will no longer invoke copyright to restrict access to and use of the material they publish. Instead they will use copyright and other tools to ensure permanent open access to all the articles they publish. Because price is a barrier to access, these new journals will not charge subscription or access fees, and will turn to other methods for covering their expenses.”



HOW IS OSI SUPPORTING BOAI?

- US\$3 million over three years available for grants to support open access
- Two grant programmes announced to date : (i) \$100,000 in funding to support the publication in open access peer-reviewed online journals of articles by authors residing and working in countries where the Soros foundations network is active, and (ii) OSI will provide funding to support 50 BioMed Central Institutional memberships for institutions in countries where the Soros foundations network is active.
- Support for meetings, e.g. OAI Workshop; meeting with ALPSP publishers in London; meeting of Academies of Sciences from the former Soviet Union and Central and Eastern Europe to promote open access (January 16-18, 2003, Budapest).



WILL BOAI SUCCEED?

- YES! The vision is realistic.
- Authors can self-archive without losing normal publication channels
- New journals are beginning to succeed on open access economic model
- Links between BOAI and other initiatives – e.g. SPARC advocacy programme - will help to spread the message that the BOAI strategies are realistic.
- The question is not “will BOAI succeed?” but “how soon?”