

The Open Archives Forum

Philip Hunter
Research Officer, UKOLN
p.j.hunter@ukoln.ac.uk

The Open Archives Forum

Items for discussion:

- The purpose of the Forum
- The Project's deliverables
- Early issues for the community
- Uptake and implementation
- Self-Archiving and the OAI PMH
- General Organisational Issues
- Looking to the Future

The Planned Purpose of the Open Archives Forum

- In outline
- Core objectives
- The Website
- Published Project Reports
- The Workshop series (2002-3)

Open Archives Forum Partners



- European Union IST accompanying measure to support EU projects and national initiatives with funding for two years, 2001-3.
- Partners
CNR, Pisa (Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche);
Humboldt University, Berlin;
UKOLN, University of Bath

The Focus of the OA-F

- Created to promote the idea of Open Archives in the European Community.
- The Forum was interested in the Open Archives Initiative and the Protocol for Metadata Harvesting, but this was not exclusive of other approaches. Other Open Archives ideas are possible.
- The OA-Forum website continues for the foreseeable future at: <http://www.oaforum.org/>

OA-Forum core objectives

- To exploit in the European context the OAI aim to provide a
“low barrier interoperability specification”
- A technology for accessing a “hidden web” of European resources
 - Eprints, the research literature
 - Products of digitisation projects, including multimedia resources
 - Other kinds of data
- Share experience among IST projects, and also other initiatives
- Support European input into OAI

OA-Forum core objectives

- To provide European focus for dissemination and sharing experience
- To encourage building of infrastructure
- To encourage new services
- To raise awareness of technical and organisational issues
- To provide focus for interaction with OAI
- To build a community of interest

Need for OA-Forum

- OAI-PMH provides a simple technical protocol
- OAI-PMH provides a simple specification for data providers

... but building coherent services that meet user requirements is more complex

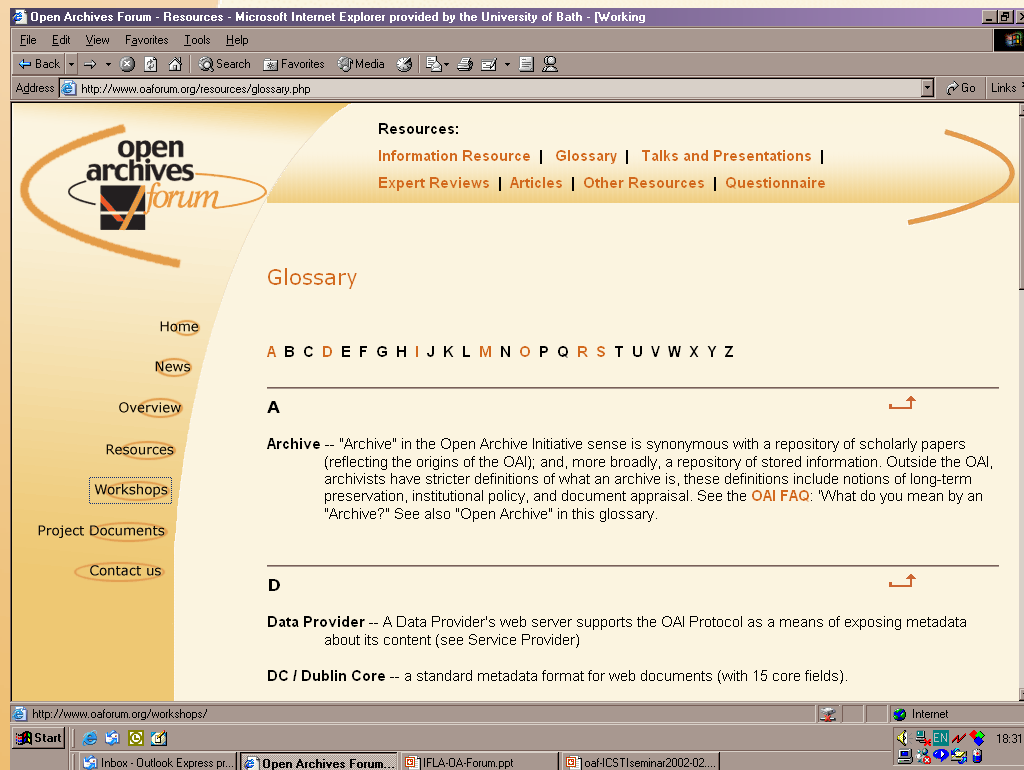


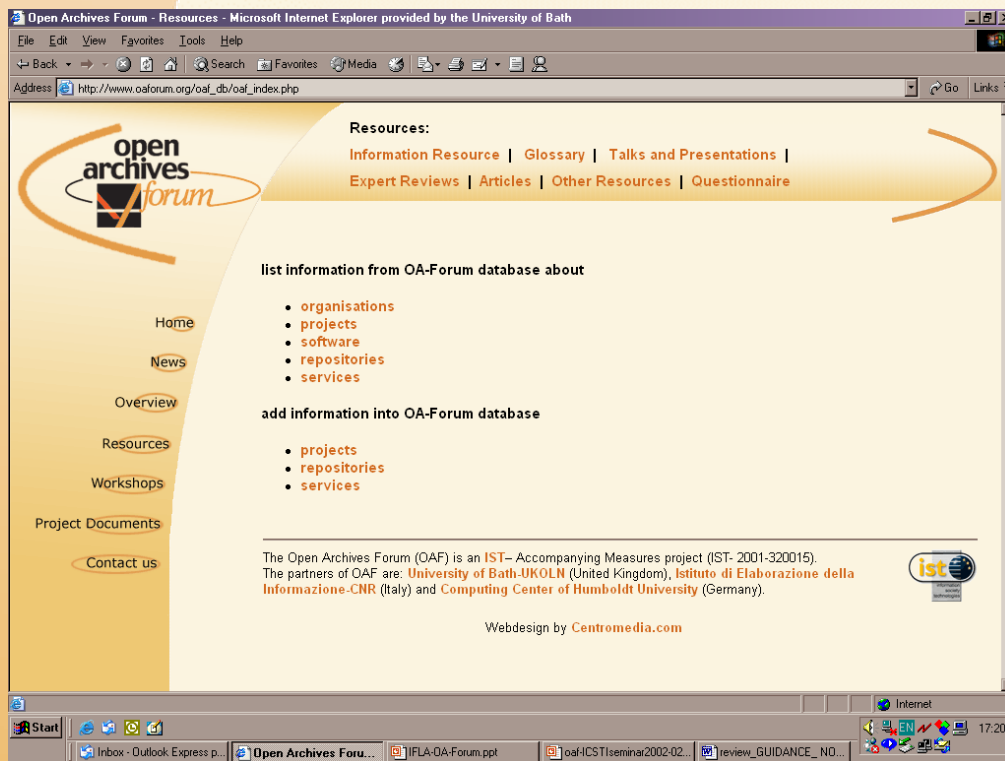
The OA-F Website



➤ OA-Forum Home Page gave access to news, resources, workshop details, and project documents.

➤ Glossary pages give definitions of important terms used to describe the OAI Protocol for Metadata Harvesting, and also of associated terminology.



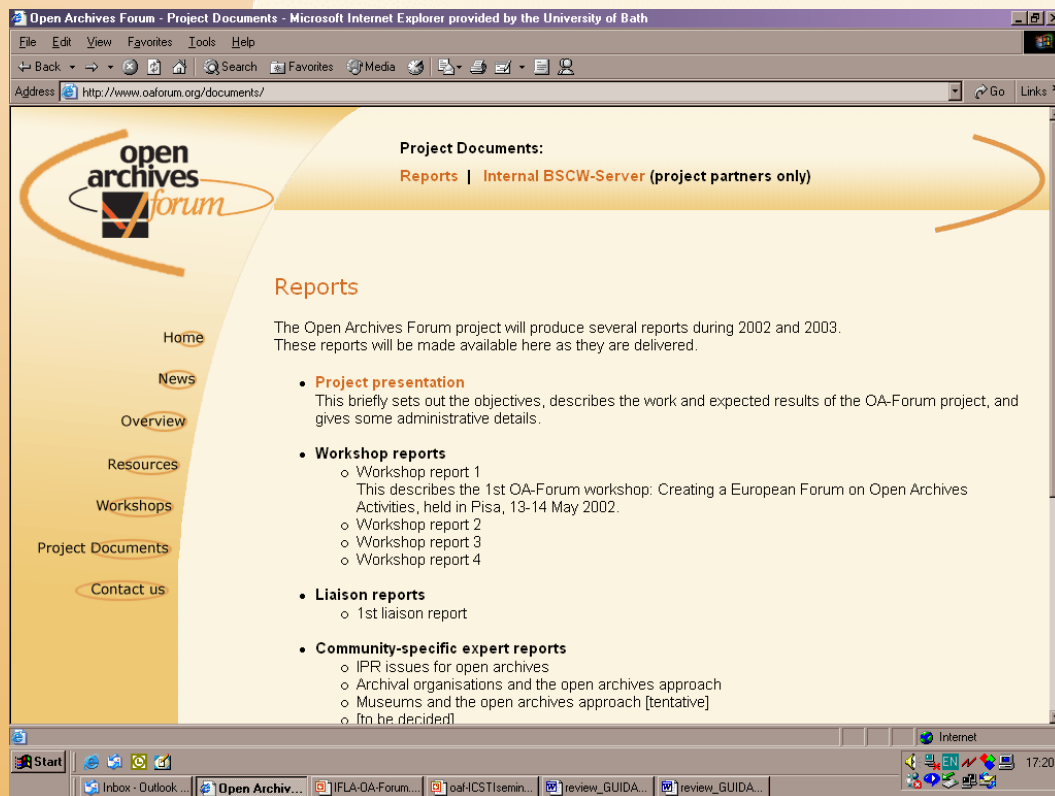


➤ This section gives access to the Open Archives Forum Database, which contains information about organisations, projects, repositories, services.

➤ Information can be added by users.

http://www.oaforum.org/oaf_db/oaf_index.php

Project documents



- Documents produced in the course of the project are available, including presentations, workshop reports, community specific expert reports, etc.

Summary of Project Deliverables

- Website www.oaforum.org

Contains glossary, reports, events, links to external information, an open archives information source, current implementations database, inventory of software tools, interoperability issues register
- Mailing list info@oaforum.org (now closed)
- Technical Issues Review
- Organisational issues Review
- Workshop Reports (four altogether)
- Three Community Specific expert reports
- Interactive Web Tutorial on Open Archives
- Final Project Report

OA-Forum Workshops

Information sharing and dissemination - Workshop subjects
:

- **1st Workshop: 'Creating a European Forum on Open Archives Activities' (Pisa) 2002**
- **2nd Workshop: 'Open Access to Hidden Resources' (Lisbon) 2002**
- **3rd Workshop: 'Networking Multimedia Resources' (Berlin) 2003**
- **4th Workshop: 'In Practice, Best Practice' September 2003, (Bath)**

Community Specific Expert Reports

- Mark Bide (Rightscom): *Open Archives and Intellectual Property: incompatible world views?* [November 2002]
- George MacKenzie and Goran Kristiansson (National Archives of Scotland & Lansarkivet i Lund): *How Real Archivists can learn to love the OAI.* [March 2003]
- Muriel Foullonneau: *The Open Archives Initiative Protocol for Metadata Harvesting: Practices of the Cultural Heritage Actors.* [September 2003]

‘Open Archives and Intellectual Property: incompatible world views?’

- explores the relationship between open archives and Intellectual Property, and argues that there is ultimately no conflict between Open Archives and Intellectual Property – but open archives must work within the framework of Intellectual Property law.

(discuss!)

- A conflict between a university’s claim on the IPR of the work of its staff, and the assertion that they retain copyright in their work?

'How Real Archivists can learn to love the OAI'

The report looks at:

- the potential for using the OAI-PMH as a simple means of **disseminating and exchanging archive catalogues**.
- the **appropriateness of the term 'archive'** as part of the description of the protocol.
- Problems with **linkages between levels of description** in different archives.
- at **alternative means archivists are using for exchanging metadata**, particularly the **Z39.50 protocol**.

'How Real Archivists can learn to love the OAI'

The report concludes that OAI will be used by conventional archives only if three conditions are fulfilled:

- archivists must be confident that compliant descriptions will respect archival principles
- descriptions must be produced with little effort from existing systems
- archivists must believe that the wider OAI user base contains sufficient numbers of potential users.
- Argues that sensitive intellectual property rights in the catalogue descriptions ought to be protected. The report suggests possible strategies in which archives would produce OAI compliant records for parts of their descriptions only.

‘Practices of the Cultural Heritage Actors’

Authors: Muriel Foullonneau and David Dawson

‘The main interest of aggregated resources seems to lie in the possibility to build **cross-collection services based on cultural heritage resources**. The OAI model then offers an opportunity for memory organisations to build cooperation policies **The overall opportunity the OAI architecture offers, to facilitate the collaboration between institutions for cross-domain resource discovery**, is key to the integration of cultural heritage institutions in the digital networks.’

'Practices of the Cultural Heritage Actors'

- Curators and librarians indicated that they were motivated to join the project because it provided them with the impetus to do a number of things that they considered were **institutional priorities** but often had been **un-funded mandates**, including:
 - Focusing on a community outreach project
 - Forming new partnerships with previously un-served or under-served groups; and
 - *Identifying and assessing collections for digitization.*

The Online OAI-PMH Tutorial

- Open Archives Forum tutorials on the OAI-PMH: **Lisbon workshop** (December 2002) and the **Berlin workshop** (March 2003), in response to a clear public demand.
- Led to a self-learning tool devoted to the OAI PMH
- Commissioned in place of the Forum's 4th Community Specific Expert Report
- Authored by Leona Carpenter
- This morning's tutorials on the OAI PMH were based on the OA-F's Online Tutorial.

The Online OAI-PMH Tutorial

- This tutorial is based on the pre-workshop half-day tutorials which were part of the second and third workshops in Europe (Lisbon and Berlin, December 2002 and March 2003).
- The online tutorial is now available as a resource to the Open Archives community from the Open Archives Forum website.
- The tutorial was completed before the 4th OA-F workshop in Bath (September 2003).
- Versions in Japanese and German (and possibly other languages) will be available shortly.

OA-F Organisational Issues Review

Organisational Issues include questions like:

- Do you have to be able to do everything in order to have a decent harvestable resource?
- Should you use Collection Level or Item Level Description?
- Do you need a statement of Service Level for users?
- How important is publication of the parameters and character of your metadata, and of the resources available in your eprints archive?
- Preservation issues – addressed at all by the protocol?
- Persistence of the resources – addressed at all by the protocol?

Other related issues are considered in the *OA-F Organisational Issues Review*

Organisational Issues

- Is your archive an archive? (covered in the MacKenzie and Kristiansson expert report)
- What is the legal status of the eprints in your archive – are they legally eprints, or are they owned by a publisher?
- Is material submitted to your archive owned by your institution or the author? (at the University of Bath....?)
- Should the regulation of IPR issues be by copyright law, or by the law of contract?
- Do you really want every resource for which you have metadata to be available to users?

Organisational Issues

- Librarians might be concerned that the development of ePrints might result in budget reductions
- Does it make sense to promote ePrints archives as locally browsable resources, rather than as part of a global harvestable resource?
- Physicists and others already have subject-based eprint archives – why should they deposit with institutional archives?
- Do institutions actually want ePrint Archives?

Organisational Issues

- IPR (covered in the Bide report)
- The Branding and Ownership issue in a world of distributed resources – ‘can I build services on the British Library metadata?’
- Rights management & Payments – how will this be done on a technical level?
- Quality Assurance
- How important to the owners of resources is control over the context in which the resource appears?
- Just because it is possible to make everything available, do you want to do this?
- Project funding is limited – what are your priorities?

Self-Archiving and the OAI-PMH

- The history of the Open Archives Initiative – preprints to eprints
- The past, but is it the future?
- Are the self-archivers and the principal academic publishers locked into a symbiotic relationship with each other?
- Technology versus the uses of technology
- Possible futures for the OAI PMH

The Future of Electronic Publishing

- Is the OAI PMH limited to the world of self-archiving?
- Is the traditional publishing model something apart?
- Is manual metadata sacrosanct?
- Is the status of the preprint and the eprint really that of ‘unpublished items’?
- Are we at the mercy of risk-averse legal departments?
- Are our legal systems unable to keep up with the technology and the pace of change?

eBank Project

- FAIR Programme project, funded by JISC In the UK
- integrating OAI PMH technology with Grid Services
- Overall objective is building links between research data and eprints
- encouraging better access to research data for re-use

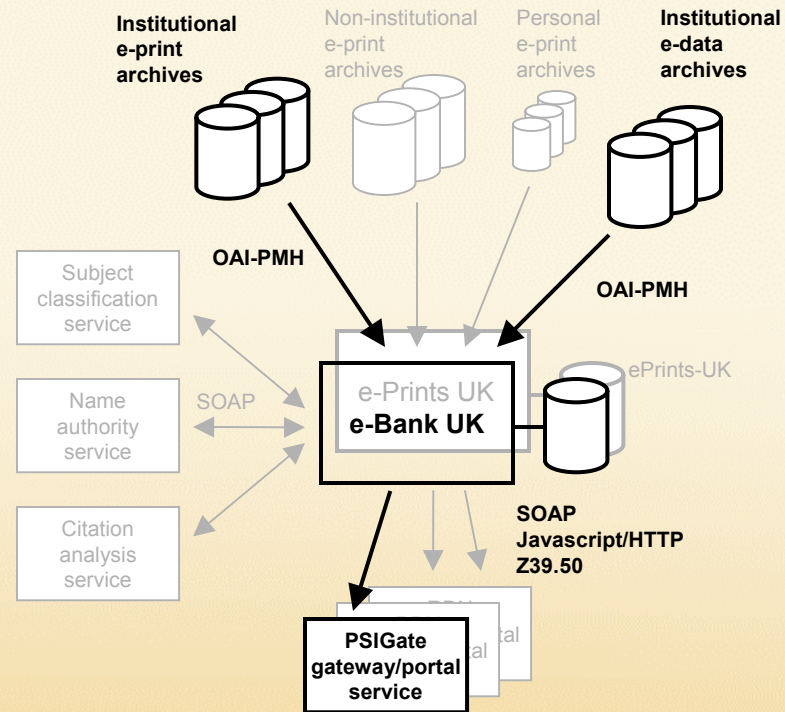
Will do this by:

- a proof of concept demonstrator using crystallography e-data output from **Combechem** project at the University of Southampton
- linking metadata about articles (within ePrints UK) to metadata about research data (in eBank) and thence to more detailed research data in institutional archive at Southampton
- eBank service provider will harvest metadata from Southampton describing research data

Some of the issues arising –

- 'what is data, what is metadata?' finding a common terminology between scientists, software developers and information scientists is tricky!
- can we construct a schema describing research data that can be generalised to other scientific disciplines.... while still being useful to particular scientists?
- what is the business model? are we trying to create new services or integrate existing services?

Looking to the Future - eBank





<http://www.oaforum.org>