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## **Nereus and its NEEO project. A library consortium serving a specific subject-community can use its strengths to make progress in repository and corresponding service development**

Nereus is an international consortium of academic research libraries with strengths in economics. Nereus has members from over 10 countries, and they include LSE and the universities of Tilburg, Toulouse, and Oxford. Nereus believes that library collaboration in a subject domain using distributed digital library expertise can stimulate repository growth and bring faster and more cost-effective added value services. The Consortium's EU project, NEEO, and its Economists Online service is proof of this.

Economists Online is a unique subject repository in bringing together leading institutions in the area of economics who are focussing on making more high-quality content on economics available open access. NEEO is thereby aiming to raise the profile of research records for the benefit of the international community of academics, students, policy-makers and economists in the public and private sectors. Economists Online is bringing that content into an international context by providing a new international search service for economists. It is also aiming to ensure IR deposit visibility by maximising access to that content by other online generic and economics-specific information services to ensure that research can be found where researchers explore and discover.

Economists Online is striving to bring something new to the economics information community. It is collaborating with researchers and their Deans and Vice-Deans to 1) bring more content online open access, 2) to showcase leading research, and 3) to develop a new search service. By bringing quality research results into an international network of leading economics players, participating libraries are getting to know their faculty and senior managers better and vice-versa.

In the middle of the project, thousands of bibliographic records and full text material are being made available in several languages. The first version of the portal is online with over 600,000 records including both records from the 6 partners (offering new content open access) and RePEc data. Anecdotal evidence has shown that Economists Online is providing more open access full texts and bibliographic records of participating leading researchers than any of the current online generic or economics-specific search services.

The final service will provide access to the research results of over 800 leading economists from 20 leading academic institutions by the turn of 2010. It will allow searching in 4 European languages, will provide linking between publications and its corresponding data and other services such as statistics on downloads.

The Economists Online service is sustained by using an innovative organisational model. Libraries serve as the backbone to the service, conducting quality control on the metadata it provides for example. Institutions work collaboratively and are focussed on increasing efficiency by co-operating on managerial, technical and administrative tasks. They are developing skill sets in the repository and economics information communities which no one institution could hope to acquire on its own. Economists Online is partly funded by the EU until early 2010, and partly through partner annual membership fees. Economists Online will live on supported by Nereus membership fees in the future. We are developing a sustainable business model that could be replicated in other disciplines to enhance community-building amongst subject areas by using repositories as infrastructures.

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