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Johann van Reenen

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## Could Brazilian research organizations support the Berlin Open Access Accord? A proposal to the ISTEAC Board of Directors

Johann van Reenen, DLL Director, ISTEAC  
ISTEAC Board of Directors Meeting, December 1, 2004

This proposal is made to the Board of Directors of the *Ibero-American Science & Technology Education Consortium* in my role as Director of the Digital Library Linkages initiative and as a strong proponent of open access to scientific research. ISTEAC has a golden opportunity to encourage and create a symbolic event for Brazil to announce its intention regarding open access as many other countries in the world has done already.

**Proposal:** Celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of [Instituto Brasileiro de Informação em Ciência e Tecnologia \(IBICT\)](#) at the Second Annual ISTEAC/FAPESP ([Fundação de Amparo à Pesquisa do Estado de São Paulo](#)) Digital Libraries Workshop at UNICAMP in May 2005 with a global announcement that Brazil has joined in the Berlin Open Access Accord.

**Rational:** This is internationally important news as Brazil will be the first Latin American country to participate officially in this important research and open access movement. Secondly; Brazil has an excellent record in providing affordable electronic access to its scientific output (e.g. **SciELO**, Scientific electronic library online, and the IBICT's EDT initiative) and can regulate publication access through its government funding agencies.

The 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 worldwide 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.”  
From the *Budapest Open Access Initiative*.

History of events leading to this proposal:

1. **The Open Archives Initiative** ([www.openarchives.org](http://www.openarchives.org)) was established in Santa Fe, New Mexico, USA in October 1999. It is now accepted worldwide. It is an effort to enhance access to Electronic-print (E-print) archives as a means of increasing the availability of scholarly communication.

The best-known and pioneering example is the High Energy Physics E-pre-print server developed by Paul Ginsparg at the Los Alamos National Laboratories (now called *arXiv*) about 12 years ago. Basically and ideally an E-print service works as follows:

- Accredited authors submit pre-prints to a subject E-print service through a semi-automated process
- The process authenticates and assigns basic Meta-data based on the information from an existing author's profile and the author's template (description) for a specific submission.
- Readers (somewhat like reviewers) read and comment
- The author revises then, after various versions a final version is created for the archive and/or published (after formal peer review) in an e-journal.
- The archive contains all versions and comments.
- An Open Archives Harvester cumulates metadata for searching across multiple archives (of an institutional, society, etc.) and a search engine searches the accumulated metadata and make links to the original documents

2. Since then, many Open Archives has been established providing free access to research information. The Brazilian Electronic Theses Initiative is Open Archives Compliant.

### **3. Budapest Open Access Initiative**

In Europe there is a similar initiative called the Budapest Open Access Initiative (BOAI) at <http://www.soros.org/openaccess/> . The BOAI arises from a meeting convened in Budapest by the Open Society Institute (OSI) on December 1-2, 2001. The purpose of the meeting was to accelerate progress in the international effort to make research articles in all academic fields freely available on the Internet. It is at once a statement of principle, a statement of strategy, and a statement of commitment.

### **4. Bethesda Declaration on Open Access Publishing**

This declaration was developed at a meeting held on April 11, 2003 at the headquarters of the Howard Hughes Medical Institute. The purpose is to stimulate discussion within the biomedical research community on how to proceed, as rapidly as possible, to the widely held goal of providing open access to the primary scientific literature. There was agreement on significant, concrete steps that all relevant parties —the organizations that foster and support scientific research, the scientists that generate the research results, the publishers who facilitate the peer-review and distribution of results of the research, and the scientists, librarians and other who depend on access to this knowledge— can take to promote the rapid and efficient transition to open access publishing.

**5. USA political initiative:** In June, 2003, US Representative Martin Sabo (D-MN) introduced a bill calling for a revision of Copyright Law that would put the results of research substantially funded by the federal government into the public domain. This is pending and will be revised to include open access.

### **6. Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge in the Sciences and Humanities**

On Wednesday 22nd October 2003, nineteen (19) international research and cultural heritage organizations signed the "Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge in

the Sciences and Humanities." See: <http://www.zim.mpg.de/openaccess-berlin/> and then click on Declaration.

Among them were seven large German research organizations and two of their French counterparts. The signing of this declaration was preceded by a three-day conference at the Max Planck Society in Berlin-Dahlem where leading, international experts discussed new ways of accessing scientific knowledge and cultural heritage via the Internet. For the first time ever, the Internet offers the possibility of making knowledge universally accessible. As a result, publishing practices and the system of quality assurance used thus far in the sciences and the humanities are expected to undergo considerable changes. In signing the "Berlin Declaration", the research organizations advocate consistently using the Internet for scientific communication and publishing. Their recommendations in favor of open access are directed not only at research institutions but also and to the same extent at cultural institutes such as libraries, archives, and museums.

The "Berlin Declaration" is in accordance with the spirit of the "Bethesda Declaration on Open Access Publishing" and the "Budapest Open Access Initiative". Both also endorse fundamental changes to the practice of scientific publishing. The "Berlin Declaration" incorporates cultural heritage, a point stemming from the ECHO (European Cultural Heritage Online) initiative, one of the pilot projects supported by the EU Commission.

#### **7. Norwegian Council for Higher Education (NCHE) conference on Open Online Access to Research**

This conference took place on November 11, 2003 and may result in Norway being the first country to actually \*implement\* the Berlin Declaration (rather than merely endorse it, as other nations have so far done), mandating open-access provision for all Norwegian research output, Norway could trigger at last the long-awaited cascade of the open-access dominoes. We must make clear that Norway has not yet implemented the Berlin Declaration, nor even decided at this meeting to do so. But all the key pieces as well as the will to make a way seemed to be in place at this national meeting, with representatives of the government, of the administrative and academic heads of the universities, of the research funding councils, of the library and information science community, and of the research community, nationwide. The next step will be national discussions of potential nationwide Norwegian implementation, see: <http://www.ecs.soton.ac.uk/~harnad/Temp/oslo.htm>

#### **Summary:**

Clearly all these initiative rests on the foundation of implementing **Institutional Repositories** based on the OAI/PMH (Open Archives Initiative Protocol for Metadata Harvesting) discussed at the Symposium in Campinas in March 2003 and implemented by many organizations in the US, as well as by ISTEAC. Several funding sources outside Germany (Wellcome in UK, NSF in the USA) took the message to heart and are now discussing if they can require people who receive grants from them to publish in open access mechanisms.

It would be of great significance if Brazil signs on to the Berlin Declaration at the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of IBICT and goes even further to declare an Initiative for Open Access to Brazilian Scientific Literature funded by Federal and State grants.

ISTEC can commit to ensure that the major representatives from the *Berlin Declaration*, the *OAI*, and the *Budapest Open Access Initiative* attend the symposium for maximum impact and international publicity. Speakers such as Rick Luce (OAI, Berlin Declaration) from Los Alamos, and Theresa Velden (Berlin Declaration) from Max Planck Institute has already been contacted.

**Why is this so important?**

1. It places Brazilian science and technology in the spotlight
2. It helps the global movement toward open access and affordable scientific publishing
3. It offers hope for all libraries, and including Brazilian libraries, to stop the spiraling cost of journal prices and to keep up with demand for information
4. It will publicize IBICT ([Instituto Brasileiro de Informação em Ciência e Tecnologia](#)), FAPESP ([Fundação de Amparo à Pesquisa do Estado de São Paulo](#)), CNPQ (Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico), and UNICAMP in new and valuable ways, such as being the first Latin American participants in the Berlin Declaration
5. Brazil could then join Europe and the USA in a global movement to change the way scientific communication is conducted. This could mean participations in international events to further the concept, new partnerships, new grant opportunities, et cetera.

Respectfully submitted,  
Johann van Reenen  
UNM/ISTEC