



 OPEN SOCIETY INSTITUTE  
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This winter marks the fifth anniversary of the Budapest Open Access Initiative (BOAI), the landmark manifesto that gave a name to the concept of free sharing of research and scholarship and outlined the Open Access (OA) movement's principles and goals. During that week in early December 2001, just over a dozen leaders in scholarly communication gathered in Budapest to draft a plan to define the next stage in the evolution of scholarly communication. Few could have predicted the speed with which Open Access and its practical applications, such as institutional and subject-based repositories, would be welcomed by researchers and libraries, adopted by universities, mandated by funding agencies, and legislated by governments around the world.

## Melissa Hagemann

Program Manager of the Open Access Initiative,  
Information Program, Open Society Institute

For Melissa Hagemann, the Program Manager for Open Access Initiatives at the Open Society Institute (OSI), the Open Access movement is the realization of an ideal that can benefit thousands of institutions and millions of people, including those in transitional and developing countries who would otherwise have to do without the benefits of critical research findings. To achieve her goal, Hagemann has worked closely with OSI colleagues, deploying critical resources to launch the Open Access movement; most significantly, OSI convened the 2001 gathering in Budapest. Since that landmark meeting, OSI has funded about \$2.4 million in individual and institutional grants related to Open Access.

Despite the grant and funding assistance, however, Hagemann's contributions to the Open Access movement are not primarily financial. Her intellectual creativity and far-reaching vision led her to conceive of a way forward within OSI to unify the Open Access

movement by linking together Open Access journals with open archiving strategies, an idea agreed upon by the participants in Budapest. In recognition of the new possibilities that now exist for scholars, institutions, and the public since the introduction of the Open Access movement -- and in honor of Hagemann's seminal role in launching the movement -- SPARC has chosen to profile Melissa Hagemann as a SPARC Innovator.

## An Idea Takes Root

Hagemann's strategic, behind-the-scenes planning on behalf of the Open Access movement during the past five years set in motion the series of events that have affected scholarship around the globe. It began in the summer of 2001, following critical developments in the Open Archives Initiative; the Public Library of Science petition advocating free access to research; and the establishment of BioMed Central. An environmental scan led her to layer her own assessment of what libraries and researchers needed on top of the varied, independent initiatives for free access underway among players in scholarly communication. She and her OSI



colleagues brainstormed on a way to unify the movement under one umbrella – the umbrella of as yet-unnamed Open Access – and OSI gave her the go-ahead to convene the initial BOAI meeting.

“Melissa’s recognition in 2001 that the time was right to bring people together to create the Open Access movement was critical,” said SPARC Director Heather Joseph. “The initial BOAI gathering set out the principles of OA to foster change on a systemic level, rather than on a journal-by-journal basis. Her clear focus was on defining this new concept, and then supporting education to plant the concept of OA around the world. Open Access would simply not have had the tremendous impact it has had so far without this crucial first step.”

Identifying potential participants to invite to the BOAI meeting was a very real challenge for OSI. “We looked into people working in this area, but it was very difficult, since the area was not yet well-defined,” she remembered. “Ultimately, though participants’ ideas were very different, we were able to come together over the issue of expanded access. We didn’t have a strict agenda – we wanted to hear about different projects to see what common factors we could pull out and tie together. Everyone was very free-thinking, because we were bringing leaders together who were promoting alternative publishing models.” (Some of those participants included then-SPARC Director Rick Johnson; Stevan Harnad of the University of Southampton; Public Library of Science’s Michael Eisen; then-BioMed Central publisher Jan Velterop; István Rév, Chair of OSI’s Information Program sub-board; Jean-Claude Guédon of the Université of Montréal [and subsequent member of OSI’s Information Program sub-board]; and Peter Suber, now editor of the SPARC Open Access Newsletter, who drafted the manifesto.)

The group decided on using the descriptive term Open Access, and created a definition of OA that has stood up to the test of time. That definition has served as a solid basis to bring other groups into the movement, Hagemann said.

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*Heather Joseph*  
SPARC Executive Director

This focus on inclusion and collaboration is a hallmark of Hagemann’s strategy promoting the Open Access movement across a diverse set of institutions and organizations worldwide. “Collaboration has been the most important thing for us,” she said, and the lesson she would most like to impart to those who wish to contribute to the Open Access movement at any level. “To develop a movement you need to work with all the players involved. OSI has been able to act as a broker among very diverse constituencies, and I think that this has been OSI’s most critical offering.”

The group gathering in Budapest set forward two strategies for achieving Open Access: open repositories (both subject-based and institutional) and Open Access journals. Once the BOAI manifesto was made public, OSI began to recognize its potential impact – and not necessarily because of any positive reception that it received. In fact, once launched, the BOAI was criticized so heavily by some publishers that “we immediately knew what we had done, and the kinds of changes that would follow from unifying repositories and journals under the banner of Open Access.” However, following years of OSI-sponsored educational campaigns underscoring the benefits of OA, OSI now works with those same publishers who first expressed strong reservations against Open Access.



“The response to Open Access is incredibly encouraging once Open Access is understood” by both publishers and the public, Hagemann explained. “But it takes time, in some cases, to understand and embrace it.” That’s why OSI has devoted much of its funding to awareness-raising conferences, grants for individuals to attend meetings on OA, and supporting OA sessions at society and publisher meetings. OSI also organizes independent sessions or roundtables on Open Access when appropriate, and has even held OA workshops among non-supportive organizations. The long-term investment has paid off.

“We’ve seen many organizations and individuals come around over the course of workshops that are held year after year,” Hagemann said. “First comes the education on OA, then comes the adoption of OA. People first have to see how it can work for them.” This has been true of libraries, too. “OA is so obviously a benefit for libraries, and once they understood it, they became among the most enthusiastic constituencies. In the development of repositories, libraries have become the leaders, with thinkers in the forefront of the movement,” she said.

Hagemann’s unwavering commitment to OA has won admirers from the library community. Lars Bjornshauge, director of the Lund University Libraries in Sweden, which developed the OSI-funded Directory of Open Access Journals project, says that Hagemann is “a committed advocate for Open Access. She has an extremely effective way of networking among diverse individuals and institutions.” Hagemann works behind the scenes “fixing things, connecting people and getting things done,” he added.

## An Expanded Debate

Neither the BOAI nor the first debates on Open Access explicitly acknowledged the pivotal role that the funders of research would eventually play in the expansion of Open Access. But by 2002, Hagemann said, “we saw that the key

is the funding agencies.” OSI immediately commissioned a briefing paper on OA funding, and the discussion on the future of OA quickly expanded to include key funding agencies at the government level, such as the National Institutes of Health (NIH), as well as independent grant-making institutions, such as the Wellcome Trust. In fact, Hagemann believes that the Wellcome Trust has played a pivotal role in OA adoption: “The leadership the Trust has shown by being the first funder to mandate OA is probably the most important turning point within the movement.”

Ever since the discussion of OA funding was elevated to a government-policy issue, Hagemann says there have been “huge implications” for the future of access to research. She notes that there have been important lessons learned from the original NIH proposal to expand access to research results, and that the bipartisan Federal Research Public Access Act legislation currently making its way through the U.S. Congress “holds huge potential.” In the U.K., she points out that five out of the eight U.K. Research Councils have mandated OA; the British government’s Science and Technology Committee’s encouraging statements on OA also stand to benefit British research considerably.

While noting the enormous strides forward that OA has made in both the U.S. and Europe, Hagemann now devotes a portion of her energy to OA-related work in developing and transitional countries which she believes can gain from more generous policies on access to research. She points to critical advances in the OA movement in South Africa and Ukraine, where “leaders on the ground” have played important roles in advancing the idea through government channels.

But she also values more informal, unofficial paths forward – avenues that rely more on social networking among researchers than on policy making. To this end, OSI funded an Open Access conference in India last month that brought together Indian and Chinese scholars and librarians to learn from each others’ experience on OA.



She notes that the countries OSI feels are best positioned to realize greater future Open Access development are China, India, South Africa and Brazil, largely because they are among the largest transition countries and can lead the way for others.

The international focus on Open Access comes naturally for Hagemann, not only because Open Society Institute initiatives are global in scope, but because of her own background. She earned an MSc degree from the London School of Economics in international history and diplomacy following an undergraduate degree in political history. After graduation, she worked for an Irish member of the European parliament in Brussels, and she joined OSI in 1994. Once there, she ran the regional library program and then managed the Science Journals Donation Program, which worked with publishers to negotiate discounts on hard copies of their journals. She has been in her current OSI post as Program Manager for the Open Access Initiative since 2001.

### The Next Big Thing

As Hagemann has become more intimately involved in the issue of Open Access and the distribution of scholarly communication resources, she has noted with dismay how little original research from developing and transitional countries is published, read and built upon by others. She thinks that open repositories, an important component of the OA strategy embraced by the original BOAI gathering, can help share that content among a worldwide audience. Among OSI's most successful projects in the OA arena are the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), based at the Lund University in Sweden, and the Directory of Open Access Repositories (DOAR), based at the University of Nottingham in the U.K. Together, these global resources help users find, contribute to, and access repository-based research they need. Hagemann believes that their usage will increase exponentially with time.

OSI is also interested in exploring the concept of overlay journals – online publications created on top of repositories which can act as a vehicle to drive research into the scholarly community. Hagemann believes that overlay journals complement the original BOAI dual strategy for achieving Open Access, and she thinks they can help push the OA movement in a new and important direction.

While this idea percolates, OSI has identified several other areas of future interest which build on the success of Open Access and expand into open content issues. For example, OSI is now exploring Open Access textbooks and Open Access to law in developing countries.

Hagemann believes that the reception to overlay journals, open content issues, and the other “next big things” that the Open Access movement has to offer, may be more positive than the initial shock that followed the launch of the movement in December 2001. After all, she says, the benefits of Open Access have been made clear; funding agencies like the Wellcome Trust have taken enormous risks to change their policies; governments are altering their legislative agendas; and Open Access business models have proven their financial mettle. “In the last two years, the tide has turned toward OA,” Hagemann said. Though OSI initially committed support for three years, following the birth of the BOAI, funding “has gone well beyond that,” Hagemann pointed out, “and as of now, there are no plans to discontinue funding.”

### About the SPARC Innovator Program

The SPARC Innovator program is a new initiative that recognizes an individual, institution, or group that exemplifies SPARC principles by working to challenge the status quo in scholarly communication for the benefit of researchers, libraries, universities, and the public. SPARC Innovators are featured on the SPARC Web site semi-annually.

For more information or to nominate an Innovator, visit <http://www.arl.org/sparc/innovator/>.