

Notes from #CISPC18 3rd December 2018

Collaborating at CISPC 2018 – now we need action...

Sunday afternoon saw me heading over the border to the bright lights of London town ready for my first [Challenges in the Scholarly Publishing Cycle \(CISPC\) 2018](#) conference the next day. Around 50 people attended with a mixture of information professionals, researchers, publishers, intermediaries and consultants. Overall the conference was great, I heard valuable feedback and insight from different stakeholders and most importantly met some new people and old faces.

People travelled from all over the country, some flying in from Israel, the US, Belgium and Ireland for example though no representation sadly from further afield like Asia Pacific, India etc however we did have a number of people with a great deal of experience in these areas to enrich the insight.

As expected, the majority of attendees were publishers/intermediaries keen to find out what the other stakeholders had to say so it would be great for future events if more can be done to encourage further researchers and information professionals, in addition to lower delegate rates. Maybe publishers/intermediaries can sponsor researcher/information professional delegate places. It would also be great to see representation from the funders themselves, I am sure they would find this event really invaluable and we of course want to hear what they have to say. Also, consultants are usually one man bands and having to pay the same as a large publisher can be challenging when there are several events to attend during the year and the registration fee is roughly five times more than UKSG annual membership and double that of a CILIP annual membership for example. Interestingly as consultants work with a number of stakeholder groups on various projects, we can bring even more perspective to the different discussions, fresh insight and can be very open with our feedback without feeling repercussions.

You'll notice that I talk about Information Professionals – most there were academic librarians and those who weren't e.g. from a corporate background found the discussions to be too academic focussed and didn't feel well represented in their feedback from the morning breakout discussions when presented to the room – a real shame and a missed opportunity for all as they weren't around for the afternoon sessions.

The London Art House was quite a quirky venue and in some ways a refreshing change from the usual hotel/conference venue and surprisingly the internet was pretty good! Sitting having open discussions in the highly decorative 'Egyptian' themed room was certainly something I've never experienced before – here's [Erin's tweet](#) to give you a visual!

The day's agenda was set around collaboration and discussion for the three 'identified' stakeholder groups - Librarians, Academics and Publishers. This classification posed challenges – as a consultant I somewhat floated between and had feedback from all parties through research/interviews we undertake on a regular basis. As mentioned previously, it would be great to include funders in the discussions, we'd love to hear that feedback, and them to hear everyone else's.

[Tim Gillett](#), Editor of Research Information chaired the agenda throughout the day. I've summarized my thoughts below on each session – I realized I took far too many notes and so have condensed them down you'll be pleased to read to more digestible chunks though there is probably still way too much!

Survey Findings Presented

[Warren Clark](#), Publisher of Research Information and [David Stuart](#), Research Consultant, Stuart Information Research presented their recent survey findings for 'The Scholarly Publishing Research Cycle 2018' survey.

Interestingly from my all my years in publishing, my perception of Research Information readership was more of a publisher trade publication and so I was pleasantly surprised to hear that the readership is 60% librarians, 20% publishers and 20% others. There was the recognition that there needs to be more researcher involvement in these types of events and surveys.

Warren Clark raised some interesting points – more metrics available however abundance doesn't mean improvement, rebalancing of power (Germany/Sweden and S Plan), collected action with librarians which should continue. Most notable issues from the survey were around Open Access and Licensing, Discoverability, Accessibility, Trust and Validation, and Policymakers' Scholarly Publishing Policies. The room commented that it would be interesting to understand the regional differences as well as the stakeholder differences, including Funders, interviewing those that didn't respond, including more regional responses e.g. APAC, and stakeholder categorization seems a bit old hat now. All great feedback for next year's report.

Morning Breakout Sessions

The room was split into the predetermined stakeholder groups - Researchers, Librarians and Publishers to engage in stakeholder specific discussion. I ended up on the Researchers table, Publishers had three tables and it became very apparent about the ration of Librarians, Researcher and Publishers in the room. Some key points from each below:

Researchers – [Alastair Horne](#), Doctoral Researcher, Bath Spa University and the British Library

- Group of many hats, the divided self - what the researcher wants as a producer and a consumer
- What is the biggest impact for them, less concern with Open Access (OA) to publish in - more for accessing content, focus on compliance can lead to tick box

approach, do we need publishers? GitHub as a collaboration tool etc, differing problems balancing requirements and prestige

- Researchers publishing more on blogs as finding it hard to publish in journals
- Turning the publisher business model upside down – libraries publishing with little cost
- Elsevier is the devil in the room
- No one understands how Article Processing Charges (APCs) are decided

Librarians – [Helen Blanchett](#), *Scholarly Communications, Subject Specialist, JISC*

- Costs – double dipping and tied into multi-year deals
- Value for library users
- Researchers’ slaves to REF, moving goal posts - everything changing all the time in the policy landscape, keeping systems is difficult, changes in publishing industry
- Predatory publishers
- More transparency around APCs
- Time to publish
- OA monographs
- Lack of understanding about publisher processes
- Some institutions struggle to fund APCs and a business case has to be done to support it
- Internal structures in libraries – e.g. collections and OA were separate but now teams talking more to each other and need to talk more

Publishers – [Tasha Mellins-Cohen](#), *Director of Publishing, Microbiology Society*

- We don't have a 'landscape' but a 'seascape' which is changing all the time
- Idea of balance of power, ship of many souls - no individual has the same idea as everyone else about where we are heading
- A lot of individuals are negative to publishers, are we facilitators or blockers? There is no knight in shining armour - we need to work together with the other stakeholder groups
- Publishers 'tolerate' the impact factor
- Value add, transparency, collaboration and education

Open Room Discussion

We then took some time to discuss some of the feedback raised as well as other thoughts in the room – to be honest I felt this should have been longer to give more people the opportunity to speak and really hash out some of the issues that some people really felt strongly about. I felt that some people were overly quiet. Some of these topics are included below:

- Gatekeepers – are these publishers now as well as information professionals – is the publisher a curator (e.g. because of DOIs etc) as well as an information professional? If we have no fences, do we even need gates?

- Feeling the need for more transparency and support for what an author should do after publication from Publishers – [Emerald](#)'s post publication email was mentioned as a great example and I know from personal experience and contribution that [Wiley](#) do a great job here too as another example
- JISC looking to support UK level of archiving and accessibility
- UCL is a great example of a press
- Publishers should be transparent with APCs - what money is going where - John Tenants report on [Elsevier](#)

**Jeremy Frey, Professor of Physical Chemistry, Department of Chemistry,
University of Southampton**

- What is open? Be transparent as possible – record the story behind the research (notebooks), coding in GitHub, sharing standards etc
- Life as an academic can be impossible - ideas, funding, people to collaborate with, admin, results, teaching, publishing and demonstrating/improving impact
- Research is a cost to universities unless have funders
- Impact is important - what goes in the REF, what assessed for and how he keeps his job
- Some research is immediately impactful, some will be relevant in 100 years
- Vision - look at the impact of digitization on the whole process
- Publishers to support new technologies - e.g. QR code and augmented virtual reality in article
- Publishes at the beginning of the academic year as library has the money
- Importance of students understanding publishing process - not ticking a CC BY box and not being able to update an article once published – cohort of students to be responsible for own research
- Open data - how can we get the data from an article and reuse – how do we know the provenance of?
- More supplementary data to be on publishers' site – hosting on own sites at moment and linking to from article
- How do we go from here? 2019 is a dramatic year for chemistry and science - anniversary of periodical table, IUPAC 100 years, and redefining SI – loss of the kg
- Transition from print to e and pre-print support
- Scientists not believed anymore - how do we change this?
- Not all chemists wear lab coats

**Helen Dobson, Scholarly Communications Manager, University of Manchester
Library**

- Sense of feeling like making it up as you go along
- Policy - complex framework that is so complicated – in six years already seen two rounds
- Importance of library voice being heard by University
- REF - that is where the money is and the pressure is

- S Plan – helping to standardize policies but publishers taking parts of it and not clear which parts yet – funders should standardize
- All these conversations going on separately, we need to talk to each other, are we talking the same language just sometimes using different terminology. We need to all start talking the same language
- Is part of RLUK - invited by publishers to review products, when that works, works really well. Emerald is good at the communications - send an email for OA – at the moment only given to corresponding author but should be given to all on the paper so they are looking into
- Share the information with OA teams that most libraries can help with language and making sure we are talking to the researchers in the right way
- Developed a system with a deposit form to make it easier for researchers to deposit their work - give library the paper with two pieces of info and they do the rest to save in institution repository
- Developing simple systems to reduce OA admin
- Library has to do lots of checking - they use PURE - really manual process for Green OA. Need to be specialists in this area and they have now introduced University of Manchester criteria as well
- Team of four people doing the work, 100 conversations at any one time to researchers
Worse thing is reporting, always monitoring internally - every institution trying to work out - are we OK, are we doing it? PURE doesn't help with this, takes 1.5 days of one person's time every month in Excel to report what they need so now reduced to bimonthly
- JISC monitor local to report on Gold OA - misses key information like if a payment has been made
- Need to keep talking about systems - working smarter together on quick wins whilst waiting on the bigger developments

Bill Kasdorf, Kasdorf and Associates

- The Oxford word of the year – TOXIC, The word of Scholarly Publishing is Open
Open = Toxic?
- 'Open' feels precarious to many publishers
- Researchers feel OA is not as open as you think it is
- The world we are in is all about open science - funder info, research, etc
- Open doesn't equal free
- Open standards and open technologies are key to open access
- Open examples - Editoria, eLife and Accessibility
 - Editoria - open source platform
 - eLife - actively collaborating - Coko and Hindawi partnership to develop xPub MS submission and peer review. Have an initiative called ScienceBean - open tools - looking to unlock 40million records
 - Accessibility - make it something we take for granted - the publication should be born accessible

- EPUB3 is based on Open Web Platform - schema.org
- Room comment - No one is talking about the China policies - what about policies from other countries? China data policy issues - China publishing landscape changing - more open access journals being created that are good quality. In 10 years there will be a more Chinese centric approach. We'll start submitting to English language Chinese journals. People will be going over there for research jobs

Afternoon Breakout Session – Group 2

- Plan S - licensing regime around Plan S - lack of collaboration - CCBY is not good for humanities and social sciences. Didn't consult, around 15 funders supporting Plan S which is small percentage - is it really supporting funders?
- Grumpiness of librarians comes from Green access, embargoes - we don't seem to be moved towards collaboration, scholarly comms license, most of publisher associations don't speak when Alicia Wise is in the room
- [UK SCL](#) - who has adopted it? No one yet, who knows the copyright? Need an IP policy. Rather than handing over rights to publisher, rights retained by author and organization - like the license model at Harvard in the US
- Non-exclusive right for institution to put in their own repository
- Library to be the memory of the university - what is made by the university to be kept for the future. Do not see role for themselves as publishers - as facilitators. Look after academic heritage and university archive
- Disappoint about Plan S from librarian
- Library Publishing Coalition - so many presses – why do we have University and Library Presses E.g. [University of Minnesota Libraries Publishing Services](#) and [University of Minnesota Press](#)
- Libraries needing to demonstrate ROI as a business unit and fill the skills gap to accommodate change
- Is there something that the publishers can help with for REF - JISC pulled together a list of [transformative agreements](#)
- Dublin City - setting up a press, publishes a journal from scratch with other institutions, collaborates with UCL Press
- Feeling that arguments of commercial publishers' costs is not as strong anymore with open source software and collaboration available – senior execs paid incredibly high wages – money should go back into research
- Library presses are more collaborative
- Feeling of conflict for the roles and responsibility if library starts publishing
- University of Michigan Press has now moved to library ownership
- University press can serve a certain niche but mostly don't get the dissemination in wider markets like APAC
- Preprints is researcher led
- How do we deal with the funding issues?
- Diamond open access - no charge, library/research funding for press
- COPE give a lot of support

- Researcher publishing charges have gone down – look at how much it costs in the 80s – thousands...
- What advice are researchers asking for - REF compliance, outreach, helping people understand how to get published
- Huge migration of western brain power going to China
- Author needs to be made aware of the different processes that the article goes through - e.g. AUTHENTICATE
- Journal needs to be more transparent
- Crowd reviewing – Thieme
- Preprints - journals not transparent enough about this
- Predatory Journals - Jeffrey Beall - <https://beallslist.weebly.com/>
- Share knowledge - not reinventing the wheel
- Researcher engagement - AGU, SenseAboutScience, statement of public engagement, lay scientists - collecting pollution in certain regions - Citizen Scientists. Libraries can help to train the Citizen Scientists – e.g. public libraries
- Media training for researchers

Summary of Sessions

[Helen Blanchett](#), *Scholarly Communications, Subject Specialist, JISC*

Librarian focused - issues with outcomes - policy/funders, REF, manual process, standards, PIDs, metadata, communications with publishers and libraries - what published and when - publications JISC - manuscripts end up in repository, publication checklist for researchers about what to do next, most of focus been on UK mandates, funding - how are APC funds managed, libraries and publishers trying to do the same training - can they work together? Maybe researchers more attracted to publisher session than library session, collection action - university presses, UCL.

[Alastair Horne](#), *Doctoral Researcher, Bath Spa University and the British Library*

Researchers - measurement of research - imperfections of impact factor, abandoning journals entirely. Researchers need to know more about what publishers do and what they contribute to the process.

[Tasha Mellins-Cohen](#), *Director of Publishing, Microbiology Society*

Publishers - we all generalize too much, Publishers need to be more transparent and Publishers need to do more – e.g. send the papers to preprint repository services.

Wrap Up

It seems the day was a success for most and some interesting points made – however we can discuss things as much as we like – it depends if there is going to be any action – I'd like to see some people taking ownership helping to drive some actions forward – there are often key players in the room who have the 'authority' to do this.

One point I commented towards the end is that as a consultancy we have a number of commissioned research projects we're involved with and I know many other industry colleagues do these too. There must be some really great commissioned research out there held on servers that can be made open access through figshare for example so it gets a DOI for all the industry to benefit from – we can only improve and get better together. Of course, some is competitively sensitive so could have an embargo, and some of course commercially sensitive so it won't see the outside the boardroom but it would be great if publishers and intermediaries collaborated more and shared their insights, beyond the meet ups and discussions usually held at a more senior level – which on some occasions isn't filtered down the team structure.

If we want scientists to collaborate with open data/open science, why don't we lead the way?