



## WHY DOES OPEN ACCESS MATTER?

### **Associate Professor Helen Slater**

Open Access is really important for us and one of the reasons is that we work in an area in health where shared solutions are really critical. So what open access does is give you a widely accessible piece of research that can be then seen by different sectors and used in a way that removes barriers that would otherwise be constructed by paywalls. So it makes it accessible, it's rapidly accessible, it can be widely shared and importantly that means the impact of that bit of work can be broader than it might otherwise be.

### **Professor Erik Champion**

But I found when I did my PhD about 15 years ago that I actually couldn't find other people's projects and do evaluations on them because of copyright issues, and this became quite a paradox to me that World Heritage Sites are given World Heritage status because they are of universal significance and yet you can't actually access other 3d models. So that practical issue is why I'm applying for a grant and through UNESCO to help me create a directory of World Heritage site models so that people can use it and interrogate them and look at them critically in classrooms and on their own etc. The more ethical problem is that almost all that we do here is paid for by the taxpayer, and yet some of the commercial publishers of the academic journals get a huge amount of money. So the public pay for us to do research and then they can't access without a large fee the research that they've paid for. So I have an ethical issue with publication. There's some very commercial publishers. I'm on the journal board of several which are commercial and there are several bad and dodgy open access publishers but generally I have found it much easier to publish through open access and much easier to form collaborations and actually I've had more critical feedback from open access.

### **Professor Andrew Rohl**

I'm very keen on the whole open access movement. I believe it's vitally important across all research. In my particular area of computational chemistry I also believe that it's vital that people make the data from which they base their conclusions completely publicly available as well. Often when you get into a new area you'll try and reproduce some of the results that are in the literature and in the past that's taken me 3 to 6 months whereas if those researchers had made their initial data completely publicly available that would have been cut down to a week or two. The other thing is in that process I have found errors in other people's work so again it would be good if that's something you find early on, not after having worked for 3 or 4 months.

### **Dr Tama Leaver**

Open access is also quite important in ensuring that other avenues of publication are opened and are used to their best ability especially for emerging researchers. So as an example "The Conversation" is a website that allows academics to write as if they're writing journalism and a series of editors work with academics to help them shape their work into something that can be consumed in a thousand words. That's a quite a difficult thing to do but when you publish it you want to find an audience. What "The Conversation" does quite cleverly is use creative commons licences to explicitly say this material can be republished. So for example if I've written an article in "The Conversation" it might get republished in a New Zealand national paper, it might be republished on the SBS website and a number of other places because not only is it open access but it's using an open access licence that explicitly gives permission to be republished without having to ask.

"Why does open access matter?" video transcript: <http://youtu.be/jcm76yqvGBI>