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ATG Interviews Alicia Wise, Director of Access and Policy, Elsevier

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Director of Access and Policy, Elsevier

by **Matthew Ismail** (Director of Collection Development, Central Michigan University) <matthew.ismail@icloud.com>

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ATG: When you look around at the world of scholarly publishing do you see anything challenging the journal article and the monograph as the primary vehicles of expression for researchers? We've heard about hybrid formats and liquid books and whatnot, but it seems that, though the technology allows it, there has not been much real change and that both readers and publishers still prefer PDF and paper. What's your impression?

AW: PDFs still remain important to many researchers — a colleague of mine refers to them as “chicken soup for the academic soul” — but they are not exclusively important, and we see a widening range of formats and communication modes. Elsevier articles are available in XML and HTML as well as PDF, have rich links with datasets, and can be shared across an array of platforms and services. Our authors are interested in metrics about how their articles are used — not only citations, but also the numbers of social media connections made, the number of shares on Mendeley and similar platforms, etc.

ATG: Here's a scenario: Half-a-dozen consortia of large research universities in the U.S. and EU create non-profit, OA mega-journals that quickly gain in stature and competitiveness in STEM areas and in the humanities and social sciences. These mega-journals are accepted by ATP panels around the world, and they publish thousands of articles a year. How would Elsevier maintain its competitive edge in such an environment?

AW: If only publishing journals that “quickly gain in stature and competitiveness” were so simple and easy! The world would be a much different place for us all. In practice, it takes time and skill and patience to grow successful journals; think of the many OA mega-journals out there, and the time it has taken them all (even *PLOS One*) to grow in volume and stature. In short, the market is large and growing enough to make room for a variety of competitors, but no one will find it quick and easy. The challenge of maintaining quality and scale over time isn't simple either: the world of research continues to grow, and the needs of researchers continue to change. This will keep us all on our toes, which is a good thing!

ATG: How much of what you publish do you estimate is affected by U.S. government open access mandates?

AW: About 10%.

ATG: Library budgets are declining as a proportion of university budgets. Presumably, this budgetary deficit will have an increasing impact on libraries' buying power. Does Elsevier have plans to expand into other markets



to make up for this shortfall in the future? How about in places like China and India? Or directly to specific professional groups like physicians?

AW: Librarians are at the heart of their universities. They manage the information process in organizations that are all about just that — sharing information. They bring a growing, and increasingly global, world of research outputs to their university, thereby speeding up research and innovation. Some are able to grow their budgets and services. Unfortunately, the intangible but very high value of library services can sometimes also be underappreciated, resulting in budgets that do not grow at the same pace as the rest of the organization even if they continue to rise in absolute terms. We know that many librarians have found ways to deal with this challenge by reshaping their organizations and thereby becoming much more efficient and able to deliver the same level of services at a lower cost.

In this environment, we might predict more consolidation of publishers, content aggregators, and other service providers. Springer Nature is a recent example that comes to mind.

Apart from all this, yes, Elsevier is a global company and we work in the full spectrum of markets. We also offer an array of innovative products for a variety of information professionals (clinicians, educators, etc.). We do this because research is an interconnected global endeavor, and because we are able to help researchers and research institutions worldwide enhance their productivity — not because we feel we have to meet a shortfall somewhere else in our business.

ATG: What are the greatest challenges for publishing open access monographs? And in a broader context are scholarly monographs

as we know them still viable? If so, why?

AW: We don't publish monographs, but from where we sit these models look to be in their infancy. It seems unlikely that the OA models that work for journals will work for monographs. Where the gold model is used, Article Publishing Charges (APCs) of more than \$10,000 are not uncommon. Where the green model is used, book chapters are expected to be made available within 12 months when it is highly unlikely they will have recovered much of their costs so quickly. It all seems rather unsustainable — for all stakeholders. This does not mean that monographs are not suited to different publishing models, but rather that it is important to really get the models right. Many authors still see the monograph as the pinnacle of their career in research, and a summary of their life's work.

ATG: Speaking of monographs, one of the things that electronic formats allow is freedom from print era restrictions on the length. In fact, we at ATG are planning to publish a series of 12,000 to 20,000 word monographs — 25 to 50 pages, basically — called *Against the Grain Executive Summaries*. Do you see Elsevier getting into this business of short monographs at all?

AW: Again, we don't publish monographs. Instead, our focus is on reference works and book series.

ATG: We see an increasing number of university presses and libraries combining forces because, it seems to us, both libraries and presses are looking for new roles and support within the university. Can you see any role for Elsevier in creating public/private sector partnerships with libraries and university presses in the future?

AW: We usually have an array of exciting projects and initiatives on the go. Some of these have been longstanding — for example, Research4Life and CLOCKSS are two partnership initiatives in which we work closely and well with libraries. We have projects underway now with institutional repositories — perhaps best known is our pilot with the University of Florida — and with research groups interested in data and text mining, for example. I love the University of Purdue's Human and Animal Bond Research Initiative, and we provide some content for it. We are always up for creative collaboration — happy to talk!

ATG: A number of organizations recently signed a statement claiming that Elsevier's new sharing and hosting policy for journal articles creates unnecessary barriers and impedes open access and sharing. How do you respond?

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AW: Yes, it is all a bit confusing, but there are some basic elements of the criticism that are incorrect. Here is precisely how our policy has changed:

	Old policy	New policy
Immediate sharing of preprint	✓	✓
Self-archiving accepted manuscripts on a personal website or blog	✓	✓
Institutional repositories can immediately ingest accepted manuscripts	★	✓
Institutional repositories can immediately make manuscripts publicly available	★ ✗	✗
Institutions can use accepted manuscripts for internal purposes and private sharing	✓	✓
Self-archiving accepted manuscripts in a subject repository after embargo	✗	✓
Self-archiving accepted manuscripts on a commercial social sharing platform	✗	✓

Key
 ✓ Yes
 ★ Yes, but only if posted voluntarily
 ✓ Where we have an agreement in place
 ✗ No

We are also developing a range of services to make it easier for authors to access their accepted manuscripts, and for repositories to ingest metadata, smart links, and entitlement info for content

What's changed in our sharing and hosting policy can be accessed and downloaded online by visiting <http://www.slideshare.net/aliciawise/whats-changed-in-sharing-policy>.

To highlight a change that is of benefit to institutional repositories: all institutional repositories can now host manuscripts and use these on campus during the embargo period and publicly afterwards.

This is also a good opportunity to reiterate a message that hasn't been broadcast widely enough: we don't expect non-commercial platforms like institutional repositories to retrospectively implement these policies.

We've heard that the length of our embargo periods is a concern. Journal embargoes are neither new, nor unique, to Elsevier. Confusion has arisen because we didn't always enforce our embargos, preferring to work with Institutional Repositories directly to develop institution-specific agreements. Those agreements are no longer necessary; instead we are now communicating our embargoes more clearly. What is important to note is that authors may still post their manuscripts on their personal Websites, so there remains a method for immediate posting.

Our embargo periods are typically between 12 and 24 months, with some longer or shorter exceptions. We are hearing that it is the length of our embargo periods that is of concern rather than the fact of their existence. Generally embargos should be set on a title-by-title basis by publishers; however we recognize that other stakeholders seek influence over embargo lengths too, and this is reasonable. We had already been planning a review of our embargo periods in 2015. While I cannot pre-judge the outcome of this review, we are very conscious of the many new funding body policies that have emerged in the last year with 12-month embargo periods, all of which we will factor in.

More recently, we've begun to hear (from some, certainly not all) librarians that their concerns stem from a belief that scholars should be

free to share their articles in any way that they would like to and that it is no business at all of publishers. The way full-text articles are shared impacts, however, on the ability of publishers to sell subscriptions to articles the authors have chosen to publish under this business model. This is of course a deep and important strategic topic for all stakeholders to discuss, particularly with reference to subscription content, and perhaps this discussion is not most constructively done in the context of one publisher's policies.

ATG: In a recent interview in *Research Information*, you said that *Green OA depended on the subscription model continuing to operate. How so? What is the relationship between the two?*

AW: Right now there are two times in the lifecycle that payment for publishing services occurs: on the author-side OR on the reader-side. When publishers are paid on the author-side — for example through an APC for gold open access publishing, or because the publishing costs of an issue or journal are subsidized by a sponsor of some kind — then open access is easy: the final version of the article can be made freely available right away. When publishers are paid on the reader-side — for example, when an article is published under the subscription model — then open access is more challenging, and this is the case with the green model. In green open access, a version of the peer-review full-text article is made freely available, and so this needs to be done in a way that enables the subscription model to continue to operate or else the whole system just tumbles down. (I understand that some OA advocates relish the idea of the entire scholarly communication system tumbling down, but most stakeholders instead want an orderly transition to an open access world.)

ATG: In that same interview you said that Elsevier not only has more than 100 fully OA journals and more than 1,600 hybrid titles, you also have more than 100 OA partnerships with development partners. Can you tell us more about those partnerships? Who are these partners? What is the nature of your relationship with them?

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people profile

Alicia Wise

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BORN AND LIVED: Born in Florida, have lived all over the U.S. and now in the UK.
EARLY LIFE: Yes, I had one.
PROFESSIONAL CAREER AND ACTIVITIES: Ph.D. in Anthropology/Archaeology from UNC-Chapel Hill. After leaving archaeology, I worked at the **JISC, Publishers Licensing Society**, the **Publishers Association**, and now **Elsevier**.
FAMILY: Husband and two sons and two cats, plus a ginormous extended family in Florida and Ohio.
IN MY SPARE TIME I LIKE: Gardening, reading, walking.
FAVORITE BOOKS: Right now I am binging on the *Deed of Paksenarion* trilogy by **Elizabeth Moon**.
PET PEEVES: Anti-publisher sentiment from librarians, or anti-librarian sentiment from publishers. Grrrrrrrr!
PHILOSOPHY: I'm not so fancy as to have a philosophy, but try very hard to listen well, be pragmatic, and work hard and in collaboration with others.
MOST MEMORABLE CAREER ACHIEVEMENT: Hopefully still to come in information provision. In archaeology it was perhaps discovering the northernmost amphitheatre in the Roman Empire.
GOAL I HOPE TO ACHIEVE FIVE YEARS FROM NOW: It would be terrific to help create a world in which any blind or dyslexic person could confidently walk into any bookshop or library (or access those services online), in confidence that they will find any book they want in a format entirely accessible to them.
HOW/WHERE DO I SEE THE INDUSTRY IN FIVE YEARS: Still changing very rapidly, driven by technological changes, and much more collaborative and social and open. 🐼

AW: Oh, I love this program — thanks for asking about it! There are now over 130 titles in our Production & Hosting publishing program (http://www.elsevierpublishingsolutions.com/production_hosting.asp), and more information is available on the Website. In a nutshell, we partner with universities, societies, and governments who publish impactful journals in their regions with the aim of helping them grow their quality and readership to wield greater international influence. It's a great way to leverage our digital publishing expertise and resources. Publishing costs are typically covered by a sponsoring government agency or the journal owner, so the articles can be made available open access immediately upon publication. This model holds appeal worldwide but is currently most actively used in Brazil, China, and in the Middle East.

ATG: You also mentioned that it was very clear to you how CHORUS and SHARE (the publisher and library led approaches to addressing U.S. funder mandates) can work together. Can you elaborate? How do you see CHORUS/SHARE cooperation evolving?

AW: While both CHORUS and SHARE were stimulated by the policy environment that led to the creation of public access policies by U.S. federal funding agencies, both have continued to develop and evolve. CHORUS leverages existing infrastructure and investments to identify and facilitate public access to articles, ensure digital preservation, enhance discovery, and report on compliance. SHARE has developed its Notify service to inform interested stakeholders when research release events occur, including the publication

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publisher profile

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KEY PRODUCTS AND SERVICES: Sales, marketing, and customers services.
CORE MARKETS/CLIENTELE: STM Publishers in Europe, North America, Latin America, Middle East and North Africa, Turkey, India, South East Asia, South Korea.
NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES: 60
HISTORY AND BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF YOUR COMPANY: Incorporated in June 2004 offering telemarketing services for STM publishers. Quickly grown to offer dedicated/outsourced field sales and marketing services helping publishers maintain and grow their businesses in different markets around the world. Owned by Swets Information Services between August 2011 and September 2014. Fully independent and owned by its management since November 2014. 🐾

of articles and the dissemination of research data. And indeed they are working together and with shared partners — for example CHORUS metadata will be helpful in the SHARE notification service and will complement SHARE by providing public access to full-text. It might be quite fun to interview the Executive Directors of both initiatives about this synergy. From where I sit, it is terrific that they are using similar standards – e.g., DOI, FundRef, Orcid.

ATG: Alicia, we know how busy you are and want to thank you for taking this time to talk to us. We're also looking forward to seeing you at the Charleston Conference where we hope to get another opportunity to get together and chat, perhaps for one of our Penthouse Suite Interviews.

AW: Looking forward to it. Thanks for the chat! 🐾

A Website Review — Cabell's International: A Welcome Tool in a World of Predatory Journals

by **Burton Callicott** (College of Charleston) <CallicottB@cofc.edu>

Despite a wordy alert about the use of cookies that distracts the eye, the new **Cabell's International** database interface is spacious and bright — you can easily click the cookie message away. Website designers at **Cabell's** have done their homework and utilize color, shades, intuitive tabs, and dropdowns to save space and keep things clean. At my institution, the site defaults to a basic "Journal" search. Words keyed in here result in a keyword search. Because there is little description beyond the journal supplied "Aims and Scope" or any meta-data other than the assigned discipline and topic categories, users not looking for a specific journal need to search using broad terms in order to get results. Clicking on the advanced search option greatly expands your options and allows for customized filtering: by discipline (and then by topic within discipline), difficulty of acceptance, peer review type, acceptance rate, time to review, and more.

The database is geared for three main user groups: scholars looking to identify a suitable journal for their work, librarians involved in collection development, and tenure committees looking for additional measures upon which to judge the value of a candidate's work. Scholars may initially be excited to see a special search tab entitled "Calls for Papers," but after getting little or no results here, they may abandon this tab. Searches for "algebra," "sustainability," and "ocean" resulted in zero hits. Or rather, the searches resulted in an ominous field of white where presumably there would be a list of results — it would be nice to at least get an indication that there were zero results and, even better, to get a suggestion for a different but related term that might bring up some hits. A search for "marketing" did bring up two journal titles.

A third search tab, Institutional Publishing, or IPA (Institutional Publishing Activity), is

geared to appeal to administrators — Deans, Department Heads, and even Provosts and Presidents — or scholars contemplating a move to another institution. Although I am not in a position where institutional level information would be useful, this search tab too has limited use in my opinion. If one is able to filter for a discipline and topic area that is relevant, you only get a list of institutions broken down into three somewhat elusive categories reminiscent of cup sizes at Starbucks: Premier, Significant, and High Influence. There is also another category "Accredited" where "those institutions whose faculty members publish in journals without citation counts but are accredited by national accreditation associations." Although it is possible to filter here for Humanities, you get no results. It is unclear why this is even an option since there are no humanities journals in the database. The list

