

International collaboration to help build capacity for open access in Africa

Open Access – the immediate, online, free and unrestricted availability of research publications – is a powerful solution to the barriers that West African researchers face trying to access and contribute research results. Open Access is an international trend being promoted and adopted to varying degrees across most countries in the world. Critical to creating a more fair and equitable system of scholarly communication is that we build distributed, global infrastructure and services to support open science, services that reflect the needs of a given region and support local infrastructure and sustainable development.

COAR, an international association which promotes the adoption of repositories and repository networks around the world, aims to support regions where services are less developed, through connecting those regions with more developed one, and supporting the transfer of knowledge across communities. As part of these efforts, WACREN will participate in a European Project, OpenAIRE Advance in 2018-2020. OpenAIRE is a pan-European socio-technical network that supports Open Science implementation and monitoring. OpenAIRE aggregates content from data providers and repositories across the Europe and the world, enabling European policy makers to monitor and discover Europe's openly available research outputs.

This paper will describe the OpenAIRE services in more detail, outline the proposed collaboration between OpenAIRE and WACREN, and also discuss the importance of the library community in the success of such networks, through creating a community of practice that will help build local technical and human capacity through their involvement.

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