The transforming role of research libraries in knowledge management

Marta Viragos (1), Edit Gorogh (2)

(1) Life Sciences Library, University of Debrecen, Debrecen, Hungary
marta@lib.unideb.hu

(2) Kenezy Life Sciences Library, University of Debrecen, Debrecen, Hungary
editg@lib.unideb.hu

The concept of scholarly communication has been recently redefined and broadened to include the creation, transformation, dissemination and preservation of knowledge. It represents an entire process by which academics and researchers not only publish their findings, but also disseminate them within and beyond their academic communities. However, due to the strengthening impact of the serial crisis, the methods and tools of scholarly communication have been changing. Libraries are getting more involved in the transforming discourse of scholarly communication. As open access publishing strengthens within the scholarly publishing scene, libraries have to dedicate more resources to develop repository infrastructures. In an effort to increase visibility and to provide open access to digital intellectual assets, many disciplines and institutions are building repositories for authors to deposit their works. Due to the libraries’ expanding responsibilities, they must assume the roles of the educator, advocate, infrastructure designer, project partner, publisher. The University Library of Debrecen, operating as an active open access point both on national and international levels, plays a significant role in open access advocacy and in adapting new directions of scholarly communication. As part of the dissemination process, the University Library of Debrecen has developed a portal system (iDEa). As an essential part of the IDEa portal, the Research Profiles present the academic activities and the professional profiles of the institution’s researchers. The primary goals of the Profiles are: (1) creating an electronic calling card for our researchers, which provides a comprehensive picture about the researchers’ scholarly and teaching activities and their off-campus lives, (2) developing a social forum for researchers enhancing the cooperations among various disciplines, and (3) bringing the professionals close to us. Open access publishing has special significance in medicine, since the easy and fast availability of research results can contribute to the emergence of new medical projects and to the cooperation of researchers. Medical libraries has a primary role in facilitating easy access to research literature by developing and maintaining the infrastructure needed for personal and institutional archiving. In order to meet the demands of contemporary scholarly communication and to support effectively medical research, it is quintessential for medical libraries to follow international developments and to share experiences with other higher institutions in the field.