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EUROSCIENCE OPEN FORUM
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EuroDIG
European Dialogue on Internet Governance

Towards a Global Consensus on Open Science

Online Regional Consultation for Western Europe and North America to the UNESCO Recommendation on Open Science

Thursday 23 July 2020, 15:00 -18:00 CEST (Paris time)

Background

Open Science is a global movement aiming to make science more accessible, democratic, transparent and beneficial for all. Driven by unprecedented advances in our digital world, the transition to Open Science allows scientific information, data and outputs to be more widely accessible and more readily shared with the active engagement of all relevant stakeholders.

By encouraging science to be more connected to societal needs and by promoting equal opportunities for all, Open Science can be a true game-changer in pressing planetary and socio-economic challenges and bridging the science, technology and innovation (STI) gaps between and within countries.

The recent response of the scientific community to the COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated how open science can accelerate scientific solutions for a global challenge. The genetic sequence of the SARS-CoV-2 virus was posted in an open access repository and made freely available for all researchers. To accelerate our common understanding of the global threat and finding the treatment, scientists are sharing their protocols and results of their research in open access journals and open data repositories. Many international publishers have made COVID-19 research content freely accessible and technology leaders have joined in creating the needed infrastructure for open access databases, containing valuable information on scientific and technological advancements.

In spite of the encouraging open science actions in response to COVID-19, and the growing number of national and regional initiatives, there is currently no international framework nor common policy guidance for Open Science globally. UNESCO, as the United Nations Agency with a mandate for Science, is the legitimate global organization enabled to build a coherent vision of Open Science and a shared set of overarching principles and shared values. That is



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why, at the 40th session of UNESCO's General Conference, 193 Member States tasked the Organization with the development of an international standard-setting instrument on Open Science in the form of a UNESCO Recommendation on Open Science.

UNESCO Recommendations are legal instruments in which “the General Conference formulates principles and norms for the international regulation of any particular question and invites Member States to take whatever legislative or other steps may be required in conformity with the constitutional practice of each State and the nature of the question under consideration to apply the principles and norms aforesaid within their respective territories”. Emanating from the Organization's supreme governing body, recommendations are intended to influence the development of national laws and practices.

The Recommendation on Open Science is expected to define shared values and principles for Open Science, and identify concrete measures on Open Access and Open Data, with proposals to bring citizens closer to science and commitments facilitating the production and dissemination of scientific knowledge around the world.

Europe has been at the forefront of Open Science for over a decade. The Budapest Open Access Initiative and the Berlin Declaration on Open Access have been the first open science initiatives in the region galvanizing the Open Science movement. A great example is the open access focus of Horizon 2020 projects and the high capacity infrastructures for open access such as the European Open Science Cloud (EOSC) that enable storage, management, analysis and re-use of research data, across borders and scientific disciplines are successful examples of international cooperation for promoting Open Science. Lessons learned and opportunities created during the development and implementation of Open Science initiatives in Europe as well as from North America, are valuable experiences, which will assist UNESCO in developing a comprehensive Recommendation on Open Science.

Objectives of the Online Regional Consultation for Western Europe and North America

To advance the Open Science discussion in the global context, it is important to take stock of the different regional perspectives. The online regional consultation for Western Europe and North America is part of a series of regional consultations aimed at building a global consensus on open science. It will provide a platform to provide inputs from scientists, science funders, policy makers, innovators, publishers and other concerned stakeholders to the UNESCO Recommendation on Open Science.

The specific objectives of this online regional consultation are to:

- Bring together the scientists, policy makers and the main stakeholders of Open Science from Western Europe and North America
- Advance the discussion from the perspective on the meaning, scope and opportunities of Open Science between policy makers, experts from academia, private sector and citizens
- Identify the key aspects of Open Science that are most relevant in the global context and should be addressed by the UNESCO Recommendation
- Share lessons learned from development and implementation of the Open Science strategies, policies and other initiatives.

- Identify the key challenges and necessary infrastructures for Open Science with suggestions on how to overcome them.
- Identify areas for international collaboration and networking to advance Open Science globally

This online meeting is envisaged to bring together some hundred multistakeholder participants and will be held in English and in French on the Zoom online platform.

Participants are encouraged to reflect on the objectives above and present their view in written or oral format before during and in the week following the meeting.

The meeting will be preceded by an introductory discussion on 11 June 2020 on the occasion of the [European Dialogue on the Internet Governance](#) (EuroDIG), organized as a satellite event of ESOF and focusing on sustainable governance of the Internet.

Expected Outcome

Lessons learnt and experiences of European and North American stakeholders on the development and implementation of Open Science strategies, policies and other initiatives will be shared taking cognizance of the key challenges and required infrastructures for Open Science with suggestions on how to overcome them, as well as areas for international collaboration and networking to advance Open Science globally. Key inputs derived from this regional consultation will inform the overall UNESCO Recommendation on Open Science. They will also be presented at the ESOF event currently planned for 2-6 in September 2020.