Research Data Management Support at Kaunas University of Technology

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Kaunas University of Technology is one of the largest technical universities in the Baltic region. The university staff has been involved in different Open Access- and Open Science-related activities for more than a decade. Different initiatives have been implemented: stand-alone and series of training and awareness-raising events, promotion of Open Access and Open Science ideas so that institutions develop their Open Access policies and make their repositories compliant with larger research infrastructures. Within the institution, the initiatives of Open Science are implemented as a result of joint effort of the library, the departments of research, studies, and doctoral school. The current tasks involve revising the institutional Open Access guidelines and facilitating the implementation of data management plans in doctoral studies. In this chapter, the aim is to provide an overview of the efforts highlighting the successes and failures on the way to best practice in research data management support both institutionally and on the national level.

INTRODUCTION

The current debate in redefining the roles of academic libraries in the light of the changing scholarly communication practices has affected the daily routines of university libraries worldwide. According to Revez (2018, p.10), "research libraries are trying to find a place that is not necessarily new, but which is now in an environment with new features". In the recent decade digital technologies, globalization

and the importance of networks have been shaping the conventional roles of librarians as a result of the changing user needs. The Library at Kaunas University of Technology (KTU) is among numerous libraries in the world that have been affected by these processes. However, even though the Library has always served the needs of the university community, the explicit reference to research support services emerged in the local discourse on library practices relatively recently, in 2014, when a new library strategy was developed. The Library aims to adopt the best practices of advanced research libraries in Europe and the world, to be dynamic and ready to adapt to the constantly changing environment and users' needs.

The objective of the chapter is to provide an overview of the efforts highlighting the major successes and failures in providing research support services in the context of institutional changes and as a result of Open Access and Open Science initiatives. The chapter reflects both on the practices that the KTU Library has adopted in the course of the recent years, not only to respond to the needs of the university community, but also global developments in the landscape of scholarly communication; and their value for the research activity of the university.

BACKGROUND

The way research support services currently work in practice at Kaunas University of Technology was determined by two factors: institutional demand of users (researchers, PhD students and research administration) and proactive attempts of the Library in promoting practices of academic libraries of leading universities in Europe and beyond (first of all, related to Open Access, Open Science and Research Data Management).

Kennan, Corrall, and Afzal (2014) highlight bibliometrics and Research Data Management as prevailing trends in research support services. At the time of developing the KTU Library strategy, they were incorporated as reflecting the best global practices of librarianship rather than resulting from the real needs of the users at that time. As the Library strategy that attempted to build on the features of state-of-the-art library services was developed, a gap in the organizational structure of the Library became visible. Thus a new unit of Research Information Services was established. Its aim and responsibilities were to develop and maintain institutional repository, to create metadata and upload research publications and unpublished research works to the repository, to perform bibliometric analyses and write reports for the Research Office of the University, also provide training and support for researchers, promote and disseminate information about Open Access and Open Science. This set of activities was a result of strategic planning both in response and in anticipation of the users' needs. The users' expectations for research support services at that time were focused on traditional services (e.g., managing research publications), whereas other activities (e.g., bibliometrics and research data management) became important later on, because of different reasons, most importantly due to outside incentives, such as research evaluation practices based on bibliometric indicators and funder requirements that mandate research data management of funded projects.

Tenopir et al. (2017) have summarized that "Research data services (RDS) provided by libraries vary and may include: creation and management of institutional data repositories, providing tools for data mining and visualization, training for researchers on data management activities, guidance on institutional policies, help with creating data management plans and metadata for data sets, and assistance with intellectual property and privacy issues surrounding research data, and other services." In the case of the KTU Library, the list of services that are conceptualized as research data management services is less

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