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INSTITUTIONAL REPOSITORY

Repository increases visibility

The Spanish National Research Council has just launched an institutional repository. **Agnes Ponsati and Pablo de Castro** explain why and how they went about it

[Research Information: August / September 2008](#)

In January 2006 the Spanish National Research Council (CSIC) became one of the first Spanish signatories of the Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge in the Sciences and Humanities. This was the consequence of the strong commitment towards open access (OA) from the CSIC president through its Vice Presidency of Science and Technology (VICYT).



CSIC's OA strategy aims mainly to increase the visibility of its research output and has several different strands. These include establishing an online platform for offering OA to the full-text contents of all journals edited by the institution and starting up a new subscription model via partnerships with OA editors for significantly reducing publication fees for CSIC researchers.

Another major OA initiative of CSIC was the launch earlier this year of its institutional repository (IR). The IR, known as Digital.CSIC, is intended to organise, disseminate and preserve the institution's research output. The increase in visibility associated with OA should also enhance citations to CSIC publications. In addition, Digital.CSIC is the cornerstone of the institution's strategy to improve communication with society as a whole by divulging of research results and activities.

Finally, the development of Digital.CSIC is also intended to become a model process for other public research centres in Spain when they build up their own IRs in the near future.

Setting up the repository

Development of the IR began soon after the Berlin declaration was signed, when the CSIC Libraries Coordination Unit set up a working group to define the needs for the project. DSpace, developed by MIT Libraries and HP Labs, was chosen as the repository platform. The working group also designed the draft structure of CSIC's IR, including what content it would hold, how it would be organised, archiving rights and policies and formats.

At that time, some projects for building IRs were already running at several Spanish universities. From the start, CSIC teamed up with the public universities in Madrid and became a member of the e-Science Open Access platform, funded by the Autonomous Region of Madrid.

Once the preliminary study was done and the main goals of the CSIC IR working group were fulfilled, the Digital. CSIC Technical Office was established in October 2007. This had the task of making the working group guidelines into a reality and building up an initial body on content.

Although fairly small at the beginning, the office staff has been steadily growing since then, and its numbers will continue to increase as the service demands spread over the whole CSIC organisation. An external multimedia firm, 2mdc.com, was hired to provide an advanced interface design and supply the whole corporate image for the new resource. The CSIC Technical Computer Centre (CTI) and the external partners teamed up to carry out the extensive design work required to adapt the default DSpace interface to the CSIC institutional design guidelines and to the IR requirements.



The team behind Digital.CSIC

Populating Digital.CSIC

In January Digital.CSIC was publicly presented by CSIC's president in a press conference at the CSIC HQs in Madrid. Since then, a great effort has been made to get the scientists and research institutes familiar with the IR and the whole CSIC OA initiative. Their participation in Digital.CSIC via self-archiving of their research output is seen as the key for the project success.

Given the institution's size and particularly its distributed nature, the first dissemination stage and technical support are being coordinated by the CSIC Library Network. This team is visiting and holding Digital.CSIC seminars at every single CSIC research institute.

Several strategies are being established by the Digital.CSIC Technical Office in order to quickly populate the CSIC repository with help from the researchers. One of the most fruitful activities, especially at the CSIC research institutes in physics, is to synchronise Digital.CSIC with local publications databases at CSIC research institutes. References are thus brought into the repository database and completed by the Digital.CSIC team, so that all that is left for the researchers to do is to attach their fulltext files when they are permitted to do so by publishers. Recently a complete module of statistics has also been incorporated to the IR in order to let the authors measure the effects of depositing their work in Digital.CSIC on its visibility.

One of the main challenges for the near future in the development of the CSIC IR is the design and setting up of a series of application programming interfaces (APIs) which will integrate the IR contents into the scientist's desktop, allowing for the transfer of lists of publications between Digital.CSIC and a series of corporate tools, such as annual-report-building-applications, author or departmental web pages or standardised CV formats. The subsequent reduction in administrative tasks seems a very sensitive point to appeal to when trying to persuade researchers to self-archive their publications.

And there are other ways to progress, such as coupling the institutional repository with the respective thematic repositories in the different disciplines. This would mean, for example, that physicists used to depositing their pre-prints at arXiv would not need to duplicate their work in order to file them in Digital.CSIC.

Consolidating content

The objective of the project is to consolidate Digital.CSIC so it may become the ongoing, permanent CSIC digital institutional research archive. Accordingly, Digital. CSIC hosts all kind of research resources in plenty of formats, from text post-print papers to audiovisual materials.

Content searching and browsing in Digital.CSIC is performed via the Lucene Search Engine. A powerful free-text searching utility is available, as well as standard author- and subject-searching options. An eventual extra option for searching by affiliation criteria is under consideration, as the process requires serious standardisation work – on our own institution names to start with – which ought to be developed within a common inter-institutional effort. The availability of Digital.CSIC records to external queries is also guaranteed by their harvesting via national and international aggregators, which the repository was registered with at the early stages of its development.

Looking to the future, members of the IR-development community in Spain are keen to see institutional mandates from the European Union environment and from the Spanish Scientific Agencies. There is presently no explicit CSIC institutional mandate that requires the researchers to deposit their work in Digital.CSIC either.

Despite this, the other efforts to populate the IR seem to be paying off. During the first four months of online project development there was a slowly-increasing involvement of the authors in the initiative and we hope this will continue.

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Further information:

Digital.CSIC: digital.csic.es

Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge in the Sciences and Humanities:
www.zim.mpg.de/openaccess-berlin/berlin_declaration.pdf

DSpace: www.dspace.org

ArXiv: arxiv.org

The Spanish National Research Council (CSIC)

With 128 research institutes covering all fields of knowledge, from basic research to the most advanced technological developments, CSIC is the biggest public research institution in Spain.

Strongly multidisciplinary since its origins in 1939, CSIC is attached to the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation with its HQ in Madrid. CSIC is organised into eight main scientific areas: Humanities and Social Sciences, Biology and Biomedicine, Natural Resources, Agricultural Sciences, Physical Science and Technologies, Chemical Science and Technologies, Material Science and Technologies and Food Research. It employs 2,500 staff researchers in all these disciplines and their collective research output amounts to around 20 per cent of all Spanish research publications.

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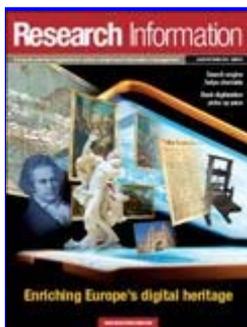
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August / September 2008



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