



**PEER End of Project Results  
Conference, Brussels, 29 May 2012**

# **PEER Executive Partners Achievements & Reflections**

 **Supported by the EC eContent*plus* programme**

# STM Reflections: Point of View

- STM and its members support sustainable open access ( see <http://www.stm-assoc.org/publishers-support-sustainable-open-access> )
- Individual publishers have a variety of opinions on Green Open Access
  - but mandatory deposit regimes with one-size-fits all embargos are not supported, may be harmful and have no business model to support them
- There is little hard evidence in this area: STM proposed PEER to find out

# STM Reflections: Achievements

- PEER Project Achievements
  - All original aims achieved
    - collaborative infrastructure, tens of thousands of manuscripts, research outcomes
  - Results more robust and reliable than any work hitherto conducted
  - Delivery of a working Green Open Access environment, even for an experiment, is highly complex and challenging
    - requires novel infrastructure and high levels of co-operation between stakeholders
  - Collaboration essential for success

# STM Reflections: Infrastructure

- Building the PEER Infrastructure
  - Cumbersome but essential
    - Publishers and repositories all configured differently
  - Basic processes more complex
    - Capturing mss, transfer to repositories
    - Managing embargos (no mechanisms in any PEER repository)
    - Ensuring the visibility of the content
  - Partner collaboration essential
    - But may not be realistic outside of experiment
  - Peer-reviewed author mss (stage 2) poorly characterised
    - Not part of usual workflows for authors or publishers
    - Time-consuming (=expensive) manual vetting required (esp. to remove reviewers' comments...)

# STM Reflections: Research Results

- Usage: ~8% of usage in PEER repositories
  - appears to be complementary but usage researchers say more years of operation of the Observatory needed to reach a steady state
    - How might this % grow after several years?
    - If no or declining growth, can low use justify cost of parallel infrastructure?
- Behaviour: Authors reluctant to self-archive despite repeated requests from the publisher (170 of 11,800 did so)
  - Researchers prefer the final version NOT stage 2
- Economics: peer review admin is USD 250 per submission with no economies of scale
  - Cost of publishing and platform maintenance varies, but it is a real and necessary investment for visibility and access
  - Considerable sunk costs in institutions for repositories

# STM Reflections: Outlook for Green OA

- Based on the PEER experience, Green OA seems much less attractive than a Gold pay-to publish one
- Gold is preferred because it
  - ...creates no risks for the journal model
  - ... allows scholars and the general public to have the **final versions** they really want (rather than messy earlier versions) **immediately** upon publication rather than months later
  - ... involves no additional infrastructure developments (such as PEER had to create with its Depot)
  - ... assumes no (unlikely) publisher and repository collaboration
  - ... would allow the repositories to concentrate on research data archiving and curation which is essential

# ESF Partner statement

- The **European Science Foundation** (ESF) has supported the PEER Project and is satisfied with the results presented
- Due to considerable changes within the ESF, we are unfortunately not able to provide an end of project statement. We are in line with the common areas of agreement that the partners have established in terms of the results of the PEER project
- ESF is pleased that the project has made a valuable, evidence-based contribution to the Open Access debate, as this is an issue that is of great concern to our 72 members from 30 countries, which are made up of research funding bodies and councils

## Conclusion #1

Publishers, research libraries, and research organisations can successfully collaborate in the area of Open Access

*(Pragmatism over ideology)*



## Conclusion #2: Behavioral Research

Researchers sympathise with Open Access but  
don't see self-archiving as their task

=> Funders, Research Institutions and Research Libraries  
need to provide the necessary infrastructure

- Repositories, policies, workflows, resources
- With publishers: Facilitate transition of subscription > gold OA journals
- With publishers: negotiate agreements to enable direct article transfer  
publisher > repositories

## Conclusion #3: Usage Research

Large-scale deposit of stage-two research outputs  
in repositories increases access

## Conclusion #4: Economics Research

There is no evidence that self-archiving has  
harmful effects on journal viability

## Conclusion #5: PEER infrastructure ready for production

The PEER project has successfully created an infrastructure (technical, workflows, guidelines) for large-scale publisher deposit into repositories which can be deployed (in the existing or modified formats) beyond the project

# Conclusion #6 & Outlook: OA repositories support Access & (Re)Use

The Discourse is evolving

From **Open Access** to **Open Access & (Re)Use**

Development of institutional and disciplinary repositories as  
integral content nodes in the



**European and global infrastructure**



Green AND gold converge



Subject: G8+O5 on Global Research Infrastructures

## PEER in the Change of Times

- At the start of the project, the topics of PEER were at the center of the general Open Access debate
- At the end of the project, the Open Access discourse has advanced and is now more on gold rather than green OA
  - Realities complex and not in binary terms

## The PEER Learning Curve: From Challenge to Respect

- Painful experience: lack of infrastructure and workflows
- Steep learning curve within project
  - very time-consuming process analyses & implementations
- PEER infrastructure as key success
- Achievements won with hard work and respect for complexities & for each other

## The Heart of the Project: The PEER Depot

- Part of the overall infrastructure („PEER Observatory“)
- Central „dark“ archive and distribution hub
- Publisher → PEER deposit routines with unified metadata format
- Embargo handling & many important validation routines
- PEER → repository deposit via SWORD Deposit protocol
- Important achievements to build on for further repository activities and scholarly communication infrastructures



## Related and Independent: The PEER Research Studies

- Substantiation and analysis in areas with little evidence so far
- Results in the range of what could have been expected
- OA repositories not really a threat to publishers...
- ...but also not key road to optimal scholarly info systems
- **Conclusion:**  
PEER Observatory experience (collaboration with publishers) & PEER Depot infrastructure could perhaps be used for advancing OA services (OA gold context)

# Achievements & reflections



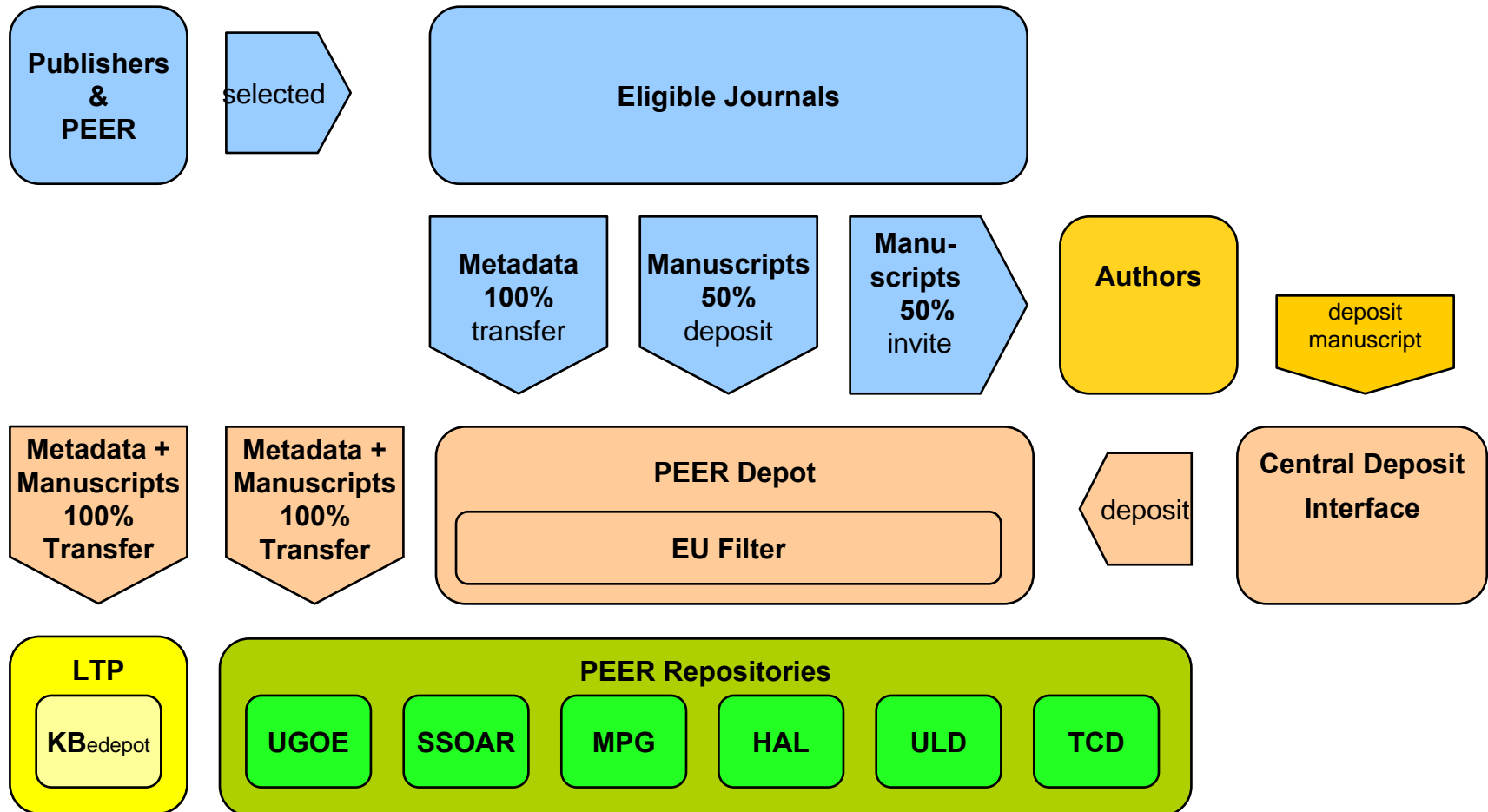
- Designing the PEER Infrastructure in an collaborative environment with participating publishers and repositories
- Determinative technical input by PEER Technical partners – SURF & Universität Bielefeld
- Structuring technical options by the CNRS / CCSD – with the French national Archive – and the MPDL staff



- Adopting the TEI format as an unique metadata interchange standard
- Adopting the Sword transfer protocol with all participating repositories
- Building the PEER Depot – as a dark Archive / Hub for metadata and Article processing and distribution

# The PEER Observatory

## General workflow



# The PEER Depot

## *Main addressed functionalities*



- Filtering mechanisms on submitted content  
*Journal, article type, EU corresponding author...*
- Metadata consolidation and curation  
*Combining controls for publisher and author feeds, GroBID MD Inputs, CrossRef Completions...*
- Management of the publisher embargo periods
- Implementation of a withdrawal procedure for articles
- Possibility to disable / enable repositories and resubmission triggers

## *Reusability of PEER standardized workflows & developments*

- The capacity of processing generations of metadata from varied source files
- Workflow and dissemination tools that link editorial contents to repositories
- The capability of using the PEER Depot as a data integration platform adapted to both Green and Gold OA scenarios

# ALL Partners: Points of Agreement

- **Building a large-scale infrastructure is organizationally and technically challenging — even at a project level**
  - A clearing-house with automated workflows was helpful
- **Author self-archiving is unlikely to generate a critical mass of Green OA content**
  - Author deposit rate in PEER was very low: 170 out of 11,800
- **Version II archiving requires considerable manual oversight and intervention**
  - Authors' peer reviewed mss are difficult to handle for publishers, repositories, authors and readers

# ALL Partners: Points of Agreement

- **Scholars prefer the Version of Record**
  - The behavioural research as well as usage log analysis indicates that scholars prefer accessing the version of record
- **Usage scenarios for Green Open Access are more complex than generally acknowledged**
  - While usage at repositories may be described as a percentage of total usage there and at publishers' platforms, and,
  - conversely, repositories have a function for users in developing countries,
  - usage patterns on the Internet are more complex, with the PEER repositories appearing to drive usage to publisher platforms

# ALL Partners: Points of Agreement

- **The acceptance and utility of open access publishing (“Gold”) has increased rapidly**
  - Any discussion of future Green OA scenarios must take account of this development.
- **A successful collaboration for experimental results**
  - PEER Project partners started from conflicting positions but were able to deliver the experimental infrastructure and observatory research in harmony
- **Mutual understanding and trust**
  - Working together to manage and deliver the project
  - Building the infrastructure together
  - Getting the deposit process to work
  - Commissioning the research

**encouraged professional respect on all sides**

  - particularly in challenging or difficult moments