TRAINING RESEARCHERS FOR THE FUTURE

EIFL ADVANCES OPENNESS IN SCIENCE AND RESEARCH

Early career researchers at Kaunas University of Technology in Lithuania. Photo by Jonas Klemonas.
We have adopted open access policies and established open access repositories at universities and research institutes across Europe. In 2014, we were invited to become a partner in the EC-funded FOSTER (Facilitating Open Science Training for European Research) project which trains early career researchers – mainly doctoral (PhD) students – in open science skills. The FOSTER project also trains researchers and librarians to become open science trainers so that they can train others at their institutions, and develops training resources for both learners and trainers.

Recently, the European Commission (EC) and other international research funders have introduced policies integrating open science principles and practices in research proposals and plans.

Opening up research means a fundamental change to the way research is done. This has generated a huge need for training to enable researchers to practise open science.
researchers, PhD and Master’s students. One of the projects is funded by the EC. “To comply with the donor policies, everyone had to be prepared for open science,” said Dr Zeleniakienė.

“For my own learning, I attended workshops at my university organized by the library. To ensure that my team and the project partners are fully aware of open science and how it works, I have prepared a document, ‘Guidelines on Open Access’. These guidelines cover not only EC requirements on open access to research publications and data, but also give examples, links, recommendations and other practical information, for example, about how and when to place data and other material in repositories. When we meet with project partners we organize seminars on open access.

“So, theoretically, we are prepared for open science. As soon as we have data and research results we will make our research open,” said Dr Zeleniakienė.

OPEN SCIENCE TRAINING IN AFRICA

The first EIFL open access event in Africa took place in July 2004 at a workshop in South Africa when we introduced the open access model. Since then, EIFL has been involved in over 240 open science, open data and open access training events in 20 African countries. In response to requests from African universities for training in open science, EIFL organized an open science train-the-trainer workshop in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, last year. During the workshop open science trainers worked with facilitators to design open science training programmes for their institutions, using resources developed for the FOSTER project.

The trainers are now offering open science training at their universities.

Gloria Kadyamatimba leads open science training at Chinhoyi University of Technology (CUT).

“We mainly train PhD and MPhil students. From 2018 we started offering open science training during our residence week for new students, using the course materials we developed at the EIFL workshop. We had training on open access, open data and open science. I also alert students to online courses on open science, for example, the FOSTER project training,” she said. The training attracted over 140 MPhil and PhD students in 2018, and has become a regular feature of the annual CUT residence weeks.

Ghana’s Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR/Ghana), the body mandated by the government to carry out scientific and technological research for national development, began offering open science training late in 2017, and is now conducting open science training for research scientists, technologists, lecturers and graduate students twice a year.

At University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania, the Tanzania Data Lab (dLab) extends open science training to young people outside the university, empowering them to use data in their advocacy activities.

“With open science we are saying even ordinary citizens can participate in the research process. Open science democratizes research,” says Mrs Kadyamatimba.

FACTS ABOUT EIFL OPEN SCIENCE TRAINING

FROM 2004 TO 2018

- 250,000+ people trained in open access, open data and open science
- 1,100+ training events organized and led
- 69 countries in Africa, Asia and Europe reached

FROM 2014 TO 2018

- Led training in two major European open science initiatives, the FOSTER project and OpenAIRE
- Co-created useful resources
  - The FOSTER Open Science Training Handbook, for trainers
  - Recommendations on Open Science Training, for research support staff and librarians
  - 10 online self-learning courses for early career researchers
- Built a strong network of over 100 open science trainers in Africa, Asia and Europe

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