

Open Science Talk No. 40 (2022) An Institutional Rights Retention Strategy: a computer-generated transcript ¹

00:00:05 Per Pippin Aspaas

Open Science Talk, the podcast about open science. My name is Per Pippin Aspaas and I'm joined today by Camilla Brekke, prorektor of research and development at UiT the Arctic University of Norway. So welcome to the podcast, Camilla.

00:00:21 Camilla Brekke

Thank you very much.

00:00:23 PPA

We're here to talk about "rights retention". UiT has adopted a new Open Access Policy in which Rights Retention takes a prominent place. But what is it?

00:00:37 CB

Rights Retention means that the author of the manuscripts – and/or the employer – keeps the copyright of the paper, and if you add "strategy" to this, you get Right Retention Strategy. This means that we are aiming to comply with Plan S. And UiT the Arctic University of Norway, we are actually going further because we want all our publications to be Open Access: not only research that has been funded by the Research Council of Norway or EU, but all publications that our researchers produce.

00:01:27 PPA

Well, that's quite an ambitious goal, I guess. But I've heard of something called "prior notice" and are UiT and Plan S identical in this respect? It is something about the commercial publishers right to be notified that this is going to take place, isn't it?

00:01:48 CB

Yeah, we are not identical on this. So with Plan S the author is supposed to tell the publisher a up front when they submit their paper that their institution is applying a Right Retention Strategy, while in our case unit the university will publish this information on the website.

00:02:20 PPA

So the Prior Notice is taken care of by the institution, then on the website of UiT.

00:02:27 CB

Yes, exactly. Yeah. So, it's very easy the author actually. They don't have to do much.

00:02:33 PPA

It seems almost deceptively easy, doesn't it? I mean, what exactly is a researcher expected to do, then?

00:02:40 CB

Well, to publish their papers of course. We really want them to publish the papers in good journals where they want to publish their paper, and the only thing we asked them to do, in terms of the right

¹ This is a computer-generated transcript of the podcast episode Open Science Talk No. 40 (2022): <https://doi.org/10.7557/19.6436>. The automated transcript has been proofread by Niklas Peinemann and Per Pippin Aspaas. It is included here for the sake of Universal Design and improved discoverability by full-text search engines.

retention strategy, is actually to upload the manuscript through Cristin. And by doing that, our administrators will check the manuscript and then archive it in the Munin Archive. So it will become Open Access – like Green Open Access – in that way.

00:03:18 PPA

Yeah, you said the manuscript will become Green Open Access. Is it any kind of manuscript or – at what stage in the process should the author, then, retain the rights? Is it before or after peer review?

00:03:33 CB

Well, it's after peer review, the manuscript that was accepted by the publisher. But it's not absolutely final manuscript in terms of the manuscript that that the publisher will publish in their journal, because there would be some formatting that would happen after their paper is accepted. Maybe a logo would be added, or something like that. But it's the final version in terms of the content – the peer-reviewed manuscript, corrected and all the content is kind of set. That's the version that will be uploaded and that's the version that the author will keep the copyright of.

00:04:16 PPA

Yeah. So that means that the commercial publisher – or the journal publisher – will then retain the rights for the Version of Record: the PDF on the website, typically. That belongs to the publisher, doesn't it? Whereas this manuscript that has the same content but different pagination, for instance, will belong to the author.

00:04:39 CB

That's right, the Version of Record, that's the version that the publisher gets the copyright of yeah. So there is a distinction there.

00:04:49 PPA

What then, for the readers, or the users, of such research papers? If they find the Green Open Access version with the different layout, the different pagination, but principally exactly the same content, can I, as a researcher quote search papers, or do I always need to go to the Version or Record in any case?

00:05:09 CB

So, you can definitely quote the Green Open Access version the version that was accepted and uploaded in the in the archive, yes. But of course, you have to be aware of which manuscript you are quoting.

00:05:25 PPA

Yeah. So, you need to be transparent in that respect, I guess. It seems that everybody is for Open Access these days. I mean, the Norwegian Government, a few years back, they announced that by 2024, every research paper in this country should be available Open Access, whether it be Green Open Access, or Open Access at the publisher, so-called Gold or Diamond Open Access – whatever color you attached to it. And Plan S is in effect now – we've already spoken about it, which has the same kind of requirement that everything should be Open Access, whether it be at the publishers place or in Green Open Access. And also now, quite recently, UNESCO has a strong statements for Open Access and Open Science in general. So couldn't you at just wait to see the effects of this massive landslide movement and then ... Why should we test it out ourselves?

00:06:26 CB

It's definitely a movement, but it's not growing as fast as we want and we are also negotiating with these large publishing houses on agreements and we see that the transition to Open Access – Golden

Open Access – is not going as fast as we want. And, as you said, we're supposed to be open by 2024 and by doing what we're doing now, introducing the Right Retention Strategy we are pushing this faster and we're basically saying: "Hey, we are ready to go open – we are doing this now – look at this!" and we hope that other universities, for instance, would come after.

00:07:15 PPA

With this Rights Retention Strategy, that UiT is adopting at an institutional level, then everything that our researchers publish can be Green Open Access. But what if an individual researcher refuses? I mean, there is something called academic freedom. Will there be consequences for such researchers who refuse to upload their final manuscript?

00:07:39 CB

Absolutely not. You can always, you know, push a button saying "opt out". It means that you don't have to follow this and then you will get an answer almost right away from the university: "fine, you don't have to follow the rights retention strategy". So that is no problem at all. It's definitely up to the author, the researcher. But we hope and think that most people will go with this and don't feel the need to hit that button.

00:08:14 PPA

So, as an employer, UiT respects the academic freedom of each researcher. But what about the publishers? They seem to have these kinds of stages in the process of submitting manuscripts where you need to tick certain boxes, that you say that all rights are now pushed over to the publisher. So what are the rights of the publishers? And will the publishers accept this?

00:08:38 CB

You're hitting something that is quite confusing, actually, for researchers when they are publishing. They are faced with all these forms where you have to, kind of, tick off these boxes and sometimes you get a bit uncertain or confused about the situation. That is one side of this. I think this Rights Retention Strategy with the help, it's becoming easier for the researcher – when he or she is going to publish, you don't have to really think about all these forms. But what you are asking me now is about the right, so that the publishing house. And of course there is a little bit of a risk here on us doing this. But we think that risk is fairly low. Also, the months that have just just passed now, where we have been assessing this and thinking about this, should we do this? We have also been in touch with the other international universities, for example, Harvard University in the US and they have been practicing this for quite a bit of time and their experience is that this is not giving them any trouble and most of their researchers are actually uploading the manuscript through their archive, in the same way as we want and practice the Rights Retention and they don't get any problems with their publishing houses. So anyway, if there should be an issue then the author is contacted by the publishing house, the responsibility is not on the researcher. It's very important to emphasize that it is on the university, so there should be no worry basically on the researchers, or authors side when it comes to this practice.

00:10:38 PPA

So that means that, an author that says that I can't do this because the publisher won't allow me. Then you as an institution or institution leader can say, no worries, we'll take the responsibility for what you do here.

00:10:53 CB

Yes, absolutely.

00:10:57 PPA

Well, Harvard University and several other universities in the US have practiced a similar policy, but they are in a US setting and they have perhaps a different legislation. Are you sure that you will be on the safe side, legally speaking, here in Norway?

00:11:14 CB

Can't be 100% sure before we have tried this out. It's impossible for us to be 100% sure, but we are pretty sure, I would say, and I feel confident about it and we would really like to try this out. We'll see how it goes.

00:11:38 PPA

As a professor at the Department of Physics and Technology, you are also an active researcher and have you come across this kind of problems that you mentioned when you were submitting manuscripts in the past?

00:11:51 CB

Yes, I was talking about this uncertainty. You know, when you're seeing all these forms and you get a bit worried. Like, am I giving off, you know, all the rights to my own work and my own manuscript now? And you're not really sure. It can be difficult to really understand what's going on there, but you really want your paper to be published, right? So, you go along with it. I'm thinking that this policy would help in that respect. Now the researchers at UiT can be sure they keep the copyright of their own work and they don't have to think much about all the legal aspects of this and all these forms that have to be filled out, etcetera. So just go ahead and publish your paper, and be happy.

00:12:44 PPA

Well, I wish you the best of luck with this policy and it will be really interesting to see how it works out in the future. So, Camilla Brekke, thank you very much for coming to the podcast.

00:12:57 CB

Thank you.

00:13:04 PPA

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