

Six months in, and 80% of UK library services sign up to Access to Research

- 10 million academic articles now included in the initiative -

Since launching earlier this year, the [Access to Research](#) initiative has grown quickly to include the majority of local authorities across England, Scotland and Wales. This means that researchers, students and members of the public across the UK can now access more than 10 million of the world's leading online academic papers covering a wide range of disciplines, including health and biological sciences, technology, history, medicine and social sciences, just by walking through the door of their local library. So far, over 14,500 individual users have utilized the service.

The service, launched in February 2014, now has 163 local authorities committed to providing Access to Research to their users, amounting to 80% of UK local authorities. The Access to Research service is available from Torbay to the Shetlands and from Powys to Brent, with more local authorities expected to join over the coming months. These local authorities are now taking the lead in promoting the service via their libraries, so usage is expected to increase even further during the remainder of the two year pilot.

Users have been searching for terms as diverse as WW1, zombie ants, Hello Kitty, Geomorphology and applied economics, showing the breadth of information available. Initial user feedback has been positive: "Fantastic resource – I wish I had known about it sooner!" (Information Advisor, Sketty), and "Such a generous resource," (Library user, West Sussex).

Access to Research has been launched in response to a key recommendation of the Finch Group, a committee convened by the Government to explore how access to publicly funded research could be expanded. The Finch Group recommended that the major journal publishers should grant public libraries a licence to provide free access to their academic articles. Access to Research is the result of a unique collaboration between librarians and publishers, who have made their journal content available for free to UK libraries. The content is searchable through the Summon® discovery service, provided free of charge by ProQuest. The implementation group, led by the Publishers Licensing Society, is gathering both quantitative and qualitative data during the two year pilot. These findings will be used to assess effectiveness of the service and to inform future delivery.

Notes to Editors

Media contact:

Joanna Waters, Communications Manager, PLS

j.waters@pls.org.uk 0207 079 5951

Calls to action:

- To find a participating public library, visit: www.accesstoresearch.org.uk/libraries
- Are you a local authority and want to sign up your libraries? Email us here – accesstoresearch@pls.org.uk
- Are you a publisher and want to join? Email us here – register@pls.org.uk
- Follow @A2R_4libraries Tweet #AccessToResearch

Publishers

Publishers are making their journal content available free of charge, and those participating so far are: [ALPSP](#), [Bloomsbury Publishing](#), [Cambridge University Press](#), [De Gruyter Open](#), [Dove Press](#), [eCancer](#), [Edinburgh University Press](#), [Elsevier](#), [Emerald](#), [IOP Publishing](#), [Manchester University Press](#), [Medical Media Ltd.](#), [Nature Publishing Group](#), [Oxford University Press](#), [Portland Press](#), [Royal Society Journals](#), [SAGE Publications](#), [Science Reviews 2000 Ltd.](#), [Society for General Microbiology](#), [Springer](#), [Taylor & Francis](#), [Wiley](#), [Wolters Kluwer Health](#).

About the implementation group:

The Publishers Licensing Society

The Publishers Licensing Society (PLS) offers rights management services to the publishing industry. We are not-for-profit, set up by the industry, for the industry; with our primary remit being to oversee collective licensing in the UK for book, journal, magazine and website copying. www.pls.org.uk

The Publishers Association

The Publishers Association is the leading trade organisation serving book, journal, audio and electronic publishers in the UK. Membership comprises 113 companies from across the trade, academic and education sectors. Its core service is representation and lobbying, around copyright, rights and other matters relevant to members, who represent roughly 80% of the industry by turnover. www.publishers.org.uk

The Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers (ALPSP)

ALPSP is the international membership body for not-for-profit organizations that publish scholarly and professional content and those who work with them. ALPSP connects, informs, develops and represents its members and has a membership of 330 companies in 40 countries. Over 10,000 journals are published by ALPSP members as well as numerous books, databases and other products and services. www.alpsp.org

Society of Chief Librarians

The Society of Chief Librarians (SCL) leads and manages public libraries in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. SCL is made up of the head of service of every library authority, and advocates for continuous improvement of the public library service on behalf of local people. www.goscl.com

ProQuest

ProQuest connects people with vetted, reliable information. Key to serious research, the company's products are a gateway to the world's knowledge including dissertations, governmental and cultural archives, news, historical collections and ebooks. ProQuest technologies serve users across the critical points in research, helping them discover, access, share, create and manage information.

www.proquest.co.uk

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