

Digitising Journals: Conference on Future Strategies for European Libraries

by ALEX C. KLUGKIST

The growing use of electronic journals leads to an ever increasing and widespread wish to retrospectively digitise journals. The process, however, is both costly and complicated and furthermore - basic standards are missing. With a view to working out a better basis for decision-making and examining the possibilities for European co-operation we are pleased to announce that a conference will be organized about: Digitising Journals: Conference on future strategies for European libraries. The Conference is organised by LIBER and Denmark's Electronic Research Library Programme in co-operation with the European project DIEPER, the North American JSTOR project and NORD-INFO, the Nordic Council for Scientific Information.

To the Conference will be invited directors of European national libraries and other central institutions and organisations that are responsible for - or may be given the responsibility for - digitisation projects.

The Conference cannot accept more than 120 participants, and there is a limited number of places open for registration.

There is no conference fee as such, but the participants are expected to pay for travelling costs and hotel accommodation.

Digitisation of journals is a major issue today and the time has come for developing national policies and organisational solutions at national level. The next step will be to identify practical goals for international co-operation - between European countries on the one hand and between European and North American initiatives on the other.

The Conference aims to prepare the ground for this process, providing a forum for important and relevant discussions which can lead to establishing a common basis for decision-making.

Scholarly journals should be made available on the Internet as extensively as is thought economically viable - that is the policy to aim for. And in order to guarantee the best possible availability and permanent access the Conference will be paying special attention to the quality of the digitised materials and to the standards which will be required to achieve it.

Digitisation is costly and the Conference will therefore also concentrate on the economic and practical aspects involved in the work at national level - such as prices and costing, best practices, out-sourcing, level of ambition etc.

In order to achieve our goals we must pool and analyse our individual experiences. We must identify critical standards and corresponding conventions. We should formulate recommendations for quality requirements and draft principles for measures needed for permanent archiving and use of digitised journals across the borders. Legal issues - in particular copyright problems - must be addressed.

The Conference will provide an excellent opportunity for coming to grips with the problems involved in digitisation, and we very much hope that you will be able to take part.

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