

RESEARCH LIBRARIES - SUPPORTING OPEN SCIENCE ACROSS EUROPE



Valentino Cavalli is well known throughout the research and education community through his work and leadership of TERENA. CONNECT spoke with him to find out how to find out how LIBER is supporting research across Europe.



What is LIBER?

LIBER is Europe's largest association of research libraries. The organisation was established in 1971 and is currently based in The Hague. Our work supports the interests of LIBER's wide community of more than 400 national, university and special libraries across Europe.

What is your role?

I've been working since July 2017 as LIBER's Open Science Officer. Open Science is currently high on the agenda of the European Commission but has been around as a movement for several years. Research libraries are at the forefront of Open Science as it makes science more collaborative, reproducible, transparent and impactful. However, research is still far from being fully open and significant changes are required to open-up processes and change mindsets in favour of a world where policies, tools and infrastructures universally support the growth and sharing of knowledge. Research libraries are well placed to make and support such changes.

At LIBER, I've been involved in policy and stakeholder engagement activities and am heavily involved with the EU-funded project EOSCpilot¹. The European Open Science Cloud, with its ambition to establish a trusted environment for cross-disciplinary

research collaboration in Europe, is a very natural and stimulating development from my previous job and my involvement in research infrastructures has now got a step closer to the researchers and their work. Recently, I also contributed to LIBER's Open Science Roadmap².

Libraries are often considered to be stuffy and irrelevant in the age of the Internet, how do you see libraries moving into the 21st Century and how they have an enduring role in research (things like expertise, trust, access being key to quality research, the move to open science)?

Libraries are already transforming their services for the modern age, and they're definitely not 'stuffy and irrelevant'. The Fake News era has shown very well that it's one thing to find information on the internet, and quite another to decide if that information is credible. Libraries have a key role to play here, becoming – as you put it – an access point for quality research. Of course, libraries have many other roles. The libraries we represent don't simply offer access to information. They also offer training to researchers, they provide access to tools and technology through various innovative programs, and they run the repositories that safely store today's research data for the scientists of tomorrow.

At LIBER, we're supporting our libraries in this process via our 2018-2022 strategy, which was launched shortly after I joined the organisation. It sets out a vision for 2022 in which:

- Open Access is the predominant form of publishing;
- Research Data is Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable (FAIR);
- Digital Skills underpin a more open and transparent research life cycle;
- Research Infrastructure is participatory, tailored and scaled to the needs of the diverse disciplines;
- The cultural heritage of tomorrow is built on today's digital information.

What Digital Initiatives is LIBER undertaking?

LIBER is a community-based organisation and its work is undertaken in two ways, via working groups and international projects, which all map the three directions defined in our strategy: Innovative Scholarly Communication, Digital Skills & Services and Research Infrastructure. At the moment, we have around 200 volunteers serving on our working groups. They're focusing on a wide range of topics, from technical issues such as Linked Open Data to "softer" topics such as leadership and skills, policy developments, advocacy and communication, which are particularly important to strengthen engagement with our stakeholders.

How do you see initiatives like the EOSC helping LIBER's work?

Whilst research libraries have a clear role in enabling the EOSC, the EOSC promises to facilitate integration and harmonisation of access to shared data, services and resources, which are crucial for research libraries. Collaboration with research infrastructures is one of LIBER's strategic priorities with the following aspects playing a very important role for research libraries:

- Moving to shared services and Cloud services and contributing to building them on a solid foundation in terms of funding, governance, trust and an evolving technical and social infrastructure;
- Build on their expertise in metadata and ontologies, take a leadership role and engage with other stakeholders to ensure interoperability and accessibility of content;
- Help developing criteria and guidelines for data stewardship and data curation.
- Help translating requirements of diverse scientific disciplines into scalable infrastructure to enable cross-disciplinary collaboration.

Thank you Valentino – looks like LIBER has an exciting future ahead.

For more information on LIBER's work visit: <https://libereurope.eu>



Many people will know Valentino from his leadership of TERENA and his work with Karel Vietsch, and this legacy is continuing within the Vietsch Foundation where Valentino is chairman of the board of trustees.

The mission of the Vietsch Foundation is to promote research and development of advanced Internet technology for scientific research and higher education.

The Vietsch Foundation fulfills its goals in two ways.

- Awarding an annual medal of honour to people who contributed to the development of a service, technology or approach that will be of lasting value to the research and education networking community and its users. This year the medal was awarded to Ingrid Melve, of Unit (the Norwegian Directorate for ICT and Joint Services in Higher Education and Research) and Licia Florio of GÉANT.
- Contributing funding to specific research and development projects that demonstrate potential value to progress European and global research and education networking. Recently the foundation has funded projects to support the Research and Education community including the Referoo³ Project which aims to create a set of tools to address some of the most critical inefficiencies of the traditional peer-reviewing process of scientific publications and the eduVPN⁴ an initiative to make VPN technology commonly available, by building better and more user-friendly tools.

To find out more about the work of the Vietsch Foundation visit <http://www.vietsch-foundation.org>

[1] <https://eoscpilot.eu/>
[2] <https://libereurope.eu/blog/2018/07/03/liber-launches-open-science-roadmap>
[3] <http://www.referoo.org/>
[4] <https://eduvpn.org/>