

## **Statement from the EUA Working Group on Open Access**

The European University Association (EUA) has established a "Working Group on Open Access" as a European platform of expert opinion to provide both a voice for, and visibility to European universities as major stakeholders in the policy debate. Its mission is dual-fold: (i) to raise awareness of the importance of the open access issue to the wider university community, both in terms of its impact upon the research process and its financial implications for university libraries; and (ii) to develop a common strategy for the university sector on key selected issues to be presented to policy-makers.

The EUA Working Group seeks to build upon the important momentum given to the Open Access debate by the findings and recommendations of the "Study on the Economic and Technical Evolution of the Scientific Publications Markets in Europe" (European Commission, January 2006) and to support strongly the recent "ERC Scientific Council Statement on Open Access" and the EURAB Report on "Scientific Publication: Policy on Open Access" (both published December 2006).

Five groups of "priority issues" have been identified by the EUA Working Group on Open Access as the foci of its work. In forwarding these issues, the EUA Working Group will work with and build upon the basis of available expert opinion and good practices (rather than develop new home grown products).

- 1) Universities' public role and responsibility as "guardians" of research knowledge/results as "public goods" – the preparation of statements and positions addressed to academic authors, and to public funding bodies.
- 2) The need for well-functioning open access repositories and networking between them (on the basis of common standards) for archiving purposes as a viable alternative to other modes of publication in the digital world.
- 3) Strengthening of legal rights position (non-exclusive copyright) and related legal requirements through the promotion, advancement or encouragement of model copyright agreements at university/ institutional as well as individual researcher level.
- 4) The promotion, advancement or encouragement of business models for publishing based upon open access principles.
- 5) The promotion, advancement or encouragement of peer review and quality control mechanisms by academic researchers for open access journals.

The EUA Working Group on Open Access aims to rally expert opinion to develop "University Stakeholder Perspective" on these issues in European policy forums in 2007.