
Imperial College London ORCID project

Part of the Jisc-ARMA-ORCID pilot programme

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Executive summary

In 2014 Imperial College London became a member of ORCID. A cross-College project was set up to issue all academic and research staff with ORCID iDs, under the framework of the College's Open Access Project. The ORCID project identified 764 existing iDs linked to College staff and created 3,226 new ones. Within seven weeks from ORCID creation, 1,155 academics had logged into their ORCID accounts and linked them to Symplectic Elements, the College's publication management system. Now that the Jisc project has been completed, Imperial's Open Access Project will continue engagement with the academic community to encourage further uptake.

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The Imperial College ORCID Project

Introduction

In early 2014 the Provost's Board at Imperial College London approved a proposal for the College to become a member of ORCID and to issue all research and academic staff with an ORCID identifier. A project group, consisting of members of the College Library, ICT and the Research Office was set up to investigate the options for increasing ORCID uptake amongst College staff. When the Jisc-ARMA-ORCID pilot was announced Imperial joined the programme to share experiences with other universities and to help build a UK ORCID community. This report summarises the work of the Imperial College ORCID project, describes the outcomes and discusses lessons learned and future opportunities.

Project Structure

The ORCID project was taken forward as part of the wider Open Access project at Imperial College, with support from Maggie Dallman (Associate Provost) who chairs the Open Access Publishing (OAP) working group. An ORCID project board was set up with representatives from the College Library (Ruth Harrison), ICT (David Ebert and Sue Flockhart), the Research Office (Ian McArdle) and the academic community (Henry Rzepa, Chemistry); it was chaired by Steve Rose (Vice Dean of the Faculty of Natural Sciences) and supported by the Open Access Project Manager (Torsten Reimer). Both the chair and the project manager are members of the College's Open Access Publishing (OAP) working group, through which senior colleagues from the faculties and the College centre were kept involved in the ORCID project. Chris Banks (Director of Library Services) was also directly involved in the project.

The project consulted with Legal Services and HR on legal and ethical aspects of the proposed work. The College's Communications and Public Affairs team gave advice on communications planning, in particular regarding the initial communication to staff. The office of the Provost was also involved and James Stirling, Imperial's Provost, sent the initial ORCID email to all staff. Lucy Lambe from the College Library helped with communications and is part of the team that keeps monitoring the Imperial College ORCID mailbox.

General Approach

"Encourage" versus "Create"

As far as institutional engagement with ORCID is concerned there seem to be two distinct approaches:

- 1) Focus on communication and encourage staff and students to register themselves
- 2) Automatically create identifiers, via the membership API

During the first meeting of the Jisc-ARMA-ORCID pilot (henceforth "the pilot") community it became clear that the majority of participating universities had decided to focus on encouraging staff to join ORCID. At Imperial,

the Provost’s Board had already approved issuing all academic and research staff with identifiers before the Jisc call had even been announced, so we started the project with the plan to bulk-create identifiers.

Both approaches have their specific benefits and issues:

Encourage: pros	Encourage: cons	Create: pros	Create: cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » No risk of creating duplicates (where an researcher already has an iD) » No legal or privacy issues (as researchers create their accounts) » No unclaimed identifiers generated » Researchers choose to actively engage with ORCID – iDs are only useful if they are used 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Researchers have to actively start the process » Researchers have to manually populate the profile with information » Risk of typos and issues with identification of institutional affiliation (dozens of ways to spell the name of an institution) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Researchers only need to respond and not actively start the process » Institutional affiliation can be set correctly » Institution can pre-populate the profile with publication data » Profile with publication data is available when researchers decide to engage with it, even if this happens a few months after iD generation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Potential legal or ethical concerns about researcher consent » Where researchers do not claim ORCID profiles they still become public within 10 days » Risk to prioritise number of generated accounts over number of actively used accounts

After extensive discussion within the project and members of the Open Access Publishing working group, HR and Legal Services it was decided to stick with the original approach (bulk creation). Reasons for the decision were:

- » Accuracy: the College pre-populating the profile with information such as institutional affiliation would ensure that the College can reliably be identified as employer
- » Convenience: having name, affiliation and publications pre-populated means there is less work for the researcher; auto-generation also does not require the author to get active on their own account
- » Completion: generating iDs will not ensure that all academics use their iD, but it means pre-populated iDs are available when researchers want to engage
- » Privacy: it was seen as acceptable for the College to create iDs on behalf of staff provided privacy concerns would be recognised (see below)

Privacy and Consent

To address potential privacy concerns, the College decided to offer an opt-out option. This approach was chosen over opt-in as the project board and the academics on the OAP group in particular felt this was the best way to ensure wider uptake. Furthermore, it was agreed to only share information with ORCID that was public already and that academics would normally want to be widely known:

- » Name
- » Institutional affiliation
- » Publications

An issue with the bulk creation process is that profiles will automatically be made public after ten days, even when researchers do not interact with them. To address this, the project made the decision that all profile information would by default be set to private, apart from ORCID number and name as these fields are always

public. On record creation researchers were encouraged to make more information public but the decision was left with them. The College recognises that not all academic and research staff want to have a public profile. Therefore staff who had not opted to be on the public College directory were excluded from the bulk creation.

College Systems Integration

Early on in the project we identified Symplectic Elements, the College's publication management system, as the best place to store the iDs. The main reason for this was that currently this is the only College system that would deliver a direct benefit to academics – Elements can automatically add publications from the ORCID registry to a researcher's institutional profile. Academics can link ORCID and Symplectic with just a few clicks, so there is no need for administrators to be involved. This made Elements the ideal system to collect information from those academics who had set up their own iD before the College project started (to avoid creating duplicate iDs for them). In preparation for the roll-out, all staff would be contacted and given the option to either opt out or, if they already had an iD, to add it to Elements to prevent a new iD being generated.

ORCID Roll-out

Technical Preparations

Colleagues from ICT have been involved in the project from the start and provided substantial input into the overall project design. They developed a technical project plan, the script to create the iDs and they identified the staff involved in the roll-out and extracted all relevant information from College systems. It is estimated that over 90% of scholarly publications of Imperial staff are registered in Symplectic Elements. As a result the XML sent to ORCID included information on over 240,000 academic works by College authors and ICT had to map this information to the publication fields in ORCID. ICT also tested the process of iD generation via the ORCID sandbox.

Communications

A communications plan was put together in consultation with ORCID and the College's Communications and Public Affairs team. It involved the following elements:

- » Web pages to provide information on ORCID, the project and an opt-out facility
- » Mention of the ORCID initiative in the online staff briefing and on the news sections of the Library website
- » Discussion of ORCID as part of ongoing presentations given by the College's Open Access project
- » Highlighting ORCID on info screens across the College
- » An email campaign to make staff aware of ORCID

To communicate with staff a College ORCID email account and a distribution list were set up. All staff involved in the roll out were added to the list, with consent from the College Secretary (who, as a member of the Open Access working group had been involved in the project from early on). The project drafted an initial email to all

staff, to be sent by the Provost, and a follow-on email from the project. Both emails highlighted ORCID benefits, explained how to opt out and included links to further information.

Timeline

Date	Activity
06/11/14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » ORCID web pages go live » ORCID support in Symplectic Elements goes live » Email from the Provost to all staff
14/11/14	Follow-on email from ORCID project to all staff
20/11/14	Reminder about ORCID distributed via Heads of Departments
27/11/14	Final day to opt-out or add an existing iD to Elements
03/12/14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Email to all staff who had not opted out informing them that ORCID creation is imminent » ORCID iD creation process » ORCID claim email sent from ORCID
11/12/14	ORCID identified 325 staff who already had an iD but did not link it to Elements before 03/12; as a result no iDs were created for them. The project emailed these colleagues, encouraging them to add their iD to Elements.
08/01/15	Reminder email to staff who had not linked their ORCID to their Symplectic Elements' account

Academic Feedback

Overall the academic feedback has been very positive. During the first stage of the project only 25 colleagues decided to opt out; those who gave reasons stated that they were close to retirement or were about to leave the College. It appears that several colleagues who opted out already had an iD and wanted to avoid the creation of a duplicate (simply linking it to their Symplectic profile would have been sufficient to avoid this). When members of the project presented ORCID to academic audiences before the roll-out the feedback was very positive. One Head of Department forwarded information about ORCID to colleagues and, referring to the opt-out option, commented:

"I can't conceive why anyone would want to opt out of something that sounds so useful."

Head of an academic department at Imperial College London

After the identifiers were created only two academics raised queries regarding privacy but were satisfied with the response from the project. Seven colleagues asked to have their newly created iD deleted; five of them already had an iD (but had not shared it with us previously and were not picked up by ORCID de-duplication), one colleague was about to retire and another academic had missed the previous communication and did not want to engage with ORCID. Some academics had difficulties finding the ORCID feature in Symplectic Elements and in

several cases Internet Explorer crashed when trying to access the ORCID website (an add-on seems to cause this; ORCID are investigating this issue).

Considering the large number of researchers involved the feedback and uptake of ORCID at Imperial has to be seen as a success and a sign that academics understand the benefits. In fact, several colleagues wrote to us asking when more features could be expected (such as two-way synchronisation between ORCID and Symplectic) and when funders' systems such as ResearchFish would fully support ORCID to automate research outcomes reporting. Others reported that they had now started adding their iDs to newly submitted publications and were happy to see this supported by publishers. There seems to be a sense amongst those researchers who have claimed their ORCID that they have done their part and are now awaiting more ORCID support from publishers and in particular funders.

Outputs

Communications Material

The project created **ORCID webpages** as part of the wider College "Scholarly Communication" website. The pages provide a general introduction to ORCID, information about the College ORCID project, instructions on how to claim the identifier and add it to Symplectic Elements, and an FAQ. The webpages were regularly updated in response to communication with College staff. The webpages will stay online, but will be updated to reflect the end of the current project.

The project team sent several emails to staff across the College to inform them about ORCID, to introduce the project and to give instructions on how to claim and use ORCID iDs. Other communication materials include: slides as part of general open access presentations to academics; slides for the info screens across the College; instructions on the Symplectic Elements login page; and a short summary for the online staff briefing and the Library news pages.

ORCID iDs

The main outputs of the project are the ORCID iDs. In this context it is important to distinguish between the number of iDs overall and the number of iDs that have been claimed. We do not know how many iDs have been claimed, but we can track iDs that have been linked to Symplectic Elements. Not only does this demonstrate that colleagues have claimed their iD but also that they see value in using ORCID to link systems and that they are happy for the College to engage with them through their ORCID iD.

Project achievements in numbers	#
Overall number of staff included initially	4,347
Staff excluded (because they had chosen not to be listed in the College's public staff directory)	332
Staff opting out through the online form	25
Staff who added their existing ORCID iDs to Symplectic Elements before the roll-out	439

Project achievements in numbers	#
Staff with existing iDs, as identified through ORCID de-duplication	325
New staff iDs created	3,226
Metadata on publications ("works") added to the ORCID registry	>240,000
Staff iDs linked to Symplectic (as of 19/01/15)	1,155
Staff asking for their newly created iD to be deleted (usually because they already had one that was missed by the de-duplication)	7

ORCID Partnership

Throughout the project, the ORCID organisation has been supportive and helpful. The ORCID support responded promptly, even when our queries related to issues that are actually covered by the ORCID knowledge base, and their responsiveness during the roll-out has been exemplary. Through this collaboration we have developed a positive partnership, which is reflected by the invitation to the Project Manager to join ORCID's Outreach Steering Group.

Lessons Learned

Consider the Culture of your Institution

Academic institutions often have a distinct culture and just because an approach worked well in one organisation does not mean it will automatically work in another. Imperial College is a science-based university where academics are used to a degree of automation of research information workflows: Symplectic Elements can pick up most of their outputs automatically from sources like Web of Science and Scopus. This may not be the case at another institution and communications and the overall approach for an ORCID initiative should take this into account.

Involve all Stakeholders early on

All relevant stakeholders at Imperial College were involved early, in most cases before the project had even started. The project was taken forward as collaboration between ICT, Library and Research Office. Discussions with academics from all faculties, via the Open Access Publishing working group, led to approval from the Provost's Board, the highest academic committee at Imperial.

I am strongly supportive of this initiative.

James Stirling, Imperial College Provost

Similarly, HR and Legal Services were involved before the project was set up. Using the existing framework of the Open Access Project, stakeholders were kept informed throughout the project. This ensured support from

across the College, including engagement from senior stakeholders such as the Provost (who sent the first email to all staff), the College Secretary (who approved setting up an email distribution list for all staff), the Chair of the Open Access Working Group (who was the institutional champion for the ORCID proposal) and the Vice Dean of the Faculty of Natural Sciences (who chaired the ORCID project board).

Go for it!

Considering several thousand academics were involved, the small number of opt-outs and the large number of claimed iDs show that academics understand the benefits of ORCID and are willing to engage. Based on this experience we would encourage other institutions to get actively involved in promoting ORCID.

Communicate often, and clearly

The success of the project can be directly related to the communications. We had been advised early on to keep messages to the busy academic community as short and precise as possible, and to present clear actions. Looking at the response rate to emails sent throughout the project, the shortest ones had the most uptake. It has also been useful to send follow-on emails to staff as even after having received five emails some colleagues had not realised that they had already been issued an iD. Just in response to the email sent on 8th January more than 300 academics linked their ORCID to Symplectic.

User Experience: It cannot be simple enough

Where researchers are requested to interact with systems both the instructions and the choices presented should be as clear as possible. As the option to link ORCID iDs to Symplectic Elements is presented on the first page after login our first email did not specify the exact location of the feature; this resulted in queries from researchers who either had not realised they need to scroll down or had expected to find ORCID support in the Symplectic profile pages. We specified this clearly in follow-on communication, including screenshots, which resulted in a much lower number of queries later on. Based on the experience we would strongly recommend to design an ORCID registration process as one clear workflow, with advice and help text directly included – it seems a majority of academics acted purely on information in the emails and on screen during the registration, not taking into account FAQs.

Do not fixate on Number of iDs created, focus on Number of iDs used

It is easy to create identifiers for all staff of a research organisation. However, the number of identifiers created should not be seen as a key indicator of success. iDs are only valuable if they contain or reference relevant information and are used by the researchers. Therefore we would encourage those who consider to create iDs for their staff to add publications information and, more importantly, to engage with staff to ensure uptake.

Opportunities

New ORCID Creation Process

ORCID are now supporting a new iD creation process. The institution does still provide information about staff, but only when an academic clicks on a registration link is the record created and populated with information. This happens in the background, so apart from giving the institution permission to write to the record the process looks similar for the researcher. However, as records are only created following a request from an academic this addresses issues around consent, and it avoids unclaimed iDs being made public. This approach therefore combines benefits of the “encourage” and “create” approaches outlined above and may be well worth investigating for those considering to issue staff with iDs.

Further Work at Imperial College

Further engagement with ORCID at Imperial will be taken forward through the Open Access project. Imperial College will continue its ORCID membership, covered by the Library budget, and project staff will continue to engage with academics to increase the number of iDs linked to Symplectic. We are putting a process in place to encourage new staff to register for an iD via Symplectic Elements and we hope to be working with Symplectic to improve the process (for example by integrating an option to pre-populate newly created ORCID profiles with the information stored in Elements). Imperial will continue to work with other universities to increase ORCID uptake. We have recently invited ORCID to join meetings with our partners, and we will share our experience with ORCID through conference presentations and in response to queries about the Imperial ORCID project from other HEIs. We are actively engaging with publishers and funders to improve ORCID support.

Opportunities for the wider Sector

The full benefits of ORCID can only be realised when it is widely used and supported, by publishers, funders, institutions and authors. Publishers should enable the linking of ORCID iDs to publications across all of their systems and including all co-authors, and they should add these iDs and further information, including funder, grant and licence, to the article metadata. Funders should collect ORCID iDs during the application stage and enable academics to add iDs of all project staff. This would allow funders to automatically receive updates on new outputs. The onus is not just on funders and publishers though: academics have to engage with ORCID and their host institutions need to provide support. Authors and universities would then, like funders, automatically receive publications metadata, resulting in better research information and efficiencies in research management.

For the UK sector, the approach outlined above could be used to support the open access policy for the next REF: if publishers could be persuaded to associate DOIs with ORCID iDs and to share article metadata with CrossRef on acceptance, universities could harvest the data from the ORCID registry and make it available to authors within days of acceptance. This would serve as a reminder to deposit the manuscript and would also make the process easier by providing DOI and basic metadata. Considering the risks of missing publications for the next REF such a workflow would be highly valuable – and will shortly be supported by ORCID.