Requesting permission: approaching publishers, lessons learned, and the many successes!

Kyle Brady
University of St Andrews

UKCoRR Members day July 2017

This work is covered by a Creative Commons CC BY attribution licence - https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/
• Our workflow
• Recording process
• Templates
• What have we learned
• Success stories!
• Some dry statistics
• Some take-aways

Can we have permission please?
Our workflow

- Check SherpaRomeo
- Check Journal/Publisher website (if it has one)
- Email author – check publishing contract
  - If no contract – author may have right to do as they wish with AAM
    - Email journal for permission (as a courtesy)
  - If contract is silent on retained rights
    - Email journal for permission
We record all the output details.

We give each request an ID.

Look at all that green! 😊
Our Process, cont...

- The responses to permission requests (emails) are copied to a folder and renamed according to the ID in the spreadsheet
- So, we can quickly find a permission email if needed, say if a take-down request was received
- But is this the best way?
  - It is future proof?
- We think it’s important to keep the emails in their original form for authenticity
- But is an email admissible as proof in this context?
Templates help

- Permissions are time-consuming!
- Templates help (a lot)
- In many cases the standard template doesn’t quite fit and requires a little tweaking, e.g.
  - If you’ve contacted them before
  - If the book isn’t yet released
  - If the journal is sort of ‘open access’
Lessons Learned

• This is more often the norm for humanities
• Small publishers often have a closer relationship with their authors – so we try to keep this in mind
• We never push for OA, and if they decline we see their point of view and thank them.
• Most small publishers are delighted to have their stuff hosted elsewhere
• A lot of small publishers are pro-OA without even realising it
• Contacting lone-wolf journals and small publishers is great advocacy practice, and making new contacts across the world is very satisfying!
• A bit of flattery never hurts
• And...sadly you can’t win ‘em all
Some success stories

- Small society publisher – colleague emailed because DOI didn’t resolve, so she ended up walking them through the process of registering DOIs with CrossRef.
- US university Press. I helped their rights manager understand UK OA landscape – this fed into their OA policy
- University of Helsinki Library – ended up discussing OA in Finland – I hadn’t realised that they were early pioneers! And learned that one of their colleagues had visited us in St Andrews many years ago.
- German copyright law – Self-archiving enshrined in law
- Medieval studies journal asked if they may tweet a link to our repository
- Most recently the Austrian Embassy in Poland granted permission – and sent a copy of the final version for deposit!
- …
Some statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The 100 most recent permission requests:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Journal article</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book chapter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference contribution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working paper</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- 60% of permission requests potentially in scope for REF OA policy
- Potential reduction of REF exception 39c - The publication concerned actively disallows open-access deposit in a repository, and was the most appropriate publication for the output.
Food for thought

• What do you do when a publisher or journal doesn’t reply
  • Risk management
  • Is no news good news?
  • Rely on take-down policy?
• How long do you wait before chasing
  • Often 4-6 weeks
  • But should it be shorter?
• What if it’s in scope for REF, do you make a firmer case?
• Foreign language journals, do you translate your request?
  • Google translate?
  • Do you take advantage of a multilingual colleague?
• We just take a simple ‘yes’ as good enough, as long as it’s from the journal/publisher. But should we need something a bit more authoritative? Should we check the person’s credentials? Are we always sure they even understood the question?
• Should we do more to protect our collections?
Kyle Brady,
Principal Library Assistant (Scholarly Communications)
Repository and Open Access Support | University Library | University of St Andrews

E: kb59@st-andrews.ac.uk | T: 01334 468851