



United Nations  
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Cultural Organization

United Kingdom  
National Commission for UNESCO

**Improving Access to Scientific Information  
for Developing Countries:  
UK Learned Societies and Journal Access  
Programmes**

Report by Improving Access to Scientific  
Information Working Group  
*(Natural Sciences Committee)*

*May 2008*



**The UK National Commission for UNESCO is the focal point in the UK for UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization)-related policies and activities.**

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This report is a product of the Improving Access to Scientific Information Working Group of the UK National Commission for UNESCO's Natural Sciences Committee, and is prepared by Natasha Bevan, UK National Commission for UNESCO Secretariat.

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## ACRONYMS

ACU	Association of Commonwealth Universities
AGORA	Access to Global Online Research in Agriculture
ALPSP	Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers
eIFL	Electronic Information for Libraries
eJDS	Electronic Journals Delivery Service
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GNI	Gross National Income
HINARI	Health InterNetwork Access to Research Initiative
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
ICSU	International Council for Science
ICTP	Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics
INASP	International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications
OARE	Online Access to Research in the Environment
PERI	Programme for the Enhancement of Research Information
PLoS	Public Library of Science
TEEAL	The Essential Electronic Agricultural Library
TWAS	The Academy of Sciences for the Developing World
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
WHO	World Health Organization

## PREFACE

A recent UNESCO report (2006) notes that “the unimpeded flow of information is one of the prerequisites for the advancement of science and the building of the knowledge societies”. It is also a condition for strengthening the scientific capacities of developing countries.

Access to information generated through research aids scientific exchange, discussion and the further development of scientific knowledge. It is essential for stimulating further studies, sharing findings and disseminating evidence, informing teaching, practice and policy, and accelerating the development of innovative scientific applications. Access to up-to-date scientific knowledge ensures that research communities are able to build on existing knowledge, certify new discoveries, and do not duplicate efforts.

Scientific journals play a central role in the scientific information system. They are a principal vehicle for disseminating and certifying (through a peer review process) research results across the global scientific community. In addition to the continued tradition of printed paper journals, rapid advances in the digital age have seen scientific publishers make significant moves to provide fast online delivery of journal content and added value services, such as search tools. A European Commission communication on scientific information in the digital age (2007: 3) indicates that about 90% of all science journals are now available online, in many cases via a subscription.

Recent years have seen a concurrent growing global debate around the issue of open access archives and open access publishing. The open access movement aims to ensure immediate and free online access to digital scientific and scholarly material and has seen a growing number of declarations and commitments of varying degrees by governments, research funding agencies, scientific organisations (research institutes and learned societies) and conferences – with the establishment of open access digital repositories – both institutional repositories (IRs) and centralised subject repositories, such as PubMedCentral – by a growing number of institutions, and open access journals, such as PLoS journals.

While the open access movement continues to gain positive ground in increasing access to research findings, most up-to-date scientific literature is at present still made accessible on a subscription-only basis. Strengthening scientific capacity in developing countries has therefore been greatly hampered by their inability to afford essential scientific literature due to the combined forces of the high cost of journal subscriptions, declining institutional budgets and currency weaknesses. In a survey conducted by the World Health Organization in 2000, researchers and academics in developing countries ranked access to subscription-based journals as one of their most pressing problems; in countries with annual incomes of US\$1000 and less per person, 56% of institutions surveyed had no current subscriptions to international journals (The Path to 2015, 2007: 1).

In an effort to counter the resulting information gap between developed and developing countries, a number of free or low cost journal access schemes have been set up in recent years to assist research communities in developing countries in accessing subscription-based international scholarly journal literature.

In 2007 the Improving Access To Scientific Information Working Group of the UK National Commission for UNESCO's Natural Sciences Committee undertook a survey of scientific learned societies in the UK to assess their participation in international journal access programmes which provide free or low cost access to scholarly literature to developing country institutions and readers. The results of this survey are presented here.

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We present these findings to UK scientific learned and professional societies and umbrella organisations, their publishers, journal access programme providers, and other parties interested in improving access to scientific information for developing countries.

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report was undertaken by the UK National Commission for UNESCO's Natural Sciences Committee to assess the participation of UK scientific learned societies in existing journal access programmes which provide free or low access to scholarly literature to developing countries. It is based on the results of a survey of 40 scientific learned societies in the UK, conducted between August and October 2007, which invited learned societies to provide details and views on their journal publications and their participation in journal access programmes for developing countries.

Findings are based on survey responses received for 27 UK scientific learned societies, publishing both in and out of house, which owned a collective total of 169 journal titles (the majority of which were made available online and by subscription). Ten different journal access programmes for developing countries were highlighted by survey responses. A significant majority of responding societies provided access to their journal content through more than one journal access programme for developing countries and commented favourably on their experience of participating in the programmes. Owning only a small number of journals did not preclude responding learned societies from making their journal content available through programmes, which were selected based on subject relevance and maximum benefit. Responding societies tended to rely on programme providers, and their third party publisher where applicable, to promote participation.

Based on the findings detailed in this report, and the conclusions drawn from these, the UK National Commission for UNESCO makes the following recommendations (which are elaborated in section 7):

### **Participation by All Scientific Learned Societies and Organisations**

- Learned society journals make a vital contribution to scholarly research. Journal access programmes for developing countries play a hugely important role in providing essential access to up-to-date scientific literature.
- Those learned societies, and their third party publishers, which participate in these access programmes provide a highly commendable service for countries in need. Wider participation is urgently required to make journal and other relevant content, such as databases and reference books, available to institutions and readers in developing countries.

### **Raising Awareness of Journal Access Programmes**

#### ***Among Scientific Learned Societies***

- Journal access programme providers should ensure that all scientific learned societies that have journals with relevant subject matter are well informed about programmes so that societies can make informed decisions about future participation.

#### ***Among Potential Users***

- Learned societies can help to increase awareness of the availability of their journals among developing world users. This can be done within their own existing capacity, by, for example, including a clear reference to their participation in a journal access programme(s) in their journals, on their own website, on their third party publisher's website, by including reference in correspondence with relevant organisations such as 'sister' societies in the developing world and network organisations, and at relevant international conferences and meetings.

#### ***Among Developed World Supporters***

- Learned societies can also help to increase awareness of journal access programmes among their audiences and partners in the developed world to build up support. Again, this can be done within their own existing capacity through the communication channels and processes available to them.

---

### **Maximising Impact of Journal Access Programmes**

- Journal access programme providers should regularly communicate with partners and stakeholders and with one another to help maximise the impact and reach of journal access initiatives.
- Programme providers should ensure that they communicate optimally with all their partners including those learned societies providing journal content.
- Programme providers should look at having a forum for communication and exchange among all journal access programme providers and key partners to share experience, to discuss existing and future challenges and opportunities, to encourage and facilitate a coordinated approach, and to address how future assistance in the provision of journals (and other material) can be made more effective.

## **1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

This study was undertaken by the UK National Commission for UNESCO's Natural Sciences Committee through its Working Group on Improving Access To Scientific Information. It sets out to assess the participation of UK scientific learned societies in existing journal access programmes which provide free or low cost access to scholarly literature to developing country institutions and readers.

A survey was developed and distributed to UK scientific learned societies by the UK National Commission for UNESCO Secretariat in August 2007.

### **1.1. Journal Access Programmes for Developing Countries**

In recent years a number of initiatives have been established by international organisations and public-private partnerships to provide free or low cost access to international scholarly journal literature for institutions and readers in developing countries. These initiatives have largely focused on the provision of online journal content, made possible by growing advances in the digital age (albeit with the current existence of a North-South digital divide).

#### ***HINARI/AGORA/OARE***

Since 2001 international public-private partnerships, involving three UN agencies – WHO, FAO and UNEP – major science, technology and medical journal publishers, and Cornell and Yale Universities, have provided access to subject-specific peer-reviewed learned journals through three sister programmes: HINARI (Health InterNetwork Access to Research Initiative), launched in 2002 and led by WHO; AGORA (Access to Global Online Research in Agriculture), launched in 2003 and led by FAO; and OARE (Online Access to Research in the Environment), launched in 2006 under the leadership of UNEP.

The three sister programmes share ICT infrastructure and coordinate closely on administration, training, promotion, public relations and evaluation. Through separate interfaces, HINARI, AGORA and OARE each provide free access to primary research from (collectively) 4500 journals, databases, books, and reference works online to countries with a GNI per capita of generally under US\$1000, and at a reduced cost of US\$1000 per institution per year to most countries with a GNI per capita of generally between US\$1000 and \$3000. Resources can be accessed online by users at registered institutions. (See Appendix I for further details of HINARI, AGORA and OARE).

#### ***PERI***

Since 2002 the International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications (INASP), an interdisciplinary body of the International Council for Science (ICSU), has provided access to learned journals and research content through its Programme for the Enhancement of Research Information (PERI). INASP works with publishers and networks of libraries to enable access to multidisciplinary scientific information using ICTs within developing and emerging countries. INASP partners with country coordinators who represent research and librarian communities (consortia) and negotiates on their behalf with publishers to obtain resources either freely or at a price that is appropriate for the recipient countries, at a discount of up to 98% on normal subscription rates, and usually on a countrywide licence basis. Resources can then be accessed online by users at registered institutions. (See Appendix I for further details of PERI).

#### ***eJDS***

Since 2001, the Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP), which operates under the aegis of two UN agencies – UNESCO and IAEA – and the Academy of Sciences for the

Developing World (TWAS) – has provided an electronic Journals Delivery Service (eJDS) to facilitate free access to scientific literature in the fields of Physics and Mathematics. eJDS distributes scientific articles from participating publishers and societies via email to registered scientists in institutions in developing countries who do not have access to sufficient bandwidth to download material from the internet in a timely manner and/or cannot afford them. (See Appendix I for further details of eJDS).

### **TEEAL**

The Essential Electronic Agricultural Library (TEEAL) is a project of Cornell University's Albert R. Mann Library in cooperation with over 60 major scientific publishers, societies and index providers, which started in 1999. TEEAL is an annually updated full-text and bibliographic library of key learned journals in the field of agriculture, containing journal volumes from 1993 to the present, which is offered in the form of a local area network system (LanTEEAL2.0). TEEAL is available at well below cost to institutions in over 100 low-income countries and can be used by up to 30 simultaneous users at an institution. TEEAL complements online programmes such as AGORA. (See Appendix I for further details of TEEAL).

### **Highwire**

Journal providers publishing online with the assistance of Highwire Press have the option to offer free online access to developing countries, based on either journal access programmes such as HINARI, or on a HighWire-based programme offering access to countries appearing in the World Bank's list of low income economies plus a few others. Individual Highwire-affiliated publishers use the list from the World Bank as a guideline for determining their policies and access to participating life science journals is granted automatically to users in eligible countries. (See Appendix I for further details of Highwire).

### **Association of Commonwealth Universities Low Cost Journals Scheme**

Since 2002, the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) has operated a scheme to help universities in developing countries within the Commonwealth to secure access to print learned journals at an affordable price. The scheme offers multidisciplinary print journals to ACU member universities in eligible developing countries at substantial discounts. (See Appendix I for further details of the ACU Low Cost Journals Scheme).

### **Other initiatives**

The principal pan-publisher initiatives outlined above do not discount the existence of other journal access initiatives, including electronic Information for Libraries (eIFL) and the Journal Donation Project which were highlighted by a handful of societies over the course of the survey.

## **1.2. UK Scientific Learned Societies**

Learned societies exist in order to foster and disseminate knowledge about academic subject areas. They play a major role in scholarly publishing and society journals are extremely important, both qualitatively and quantitatively, to scientific research. The Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers (ALPSP) estimates that about one third of all journals are published by learned societies and associations. Furthermore it also estimates that about three quarters of the top 200 journals ISI citation index are titles published by non-profit publishers, which includes those owned by learned societies (ALPSP, 2006: 16).

This study sets out to assess the participation of scientific learned societies based in the UK in existing initiatives to provide free or low cost access to scholarly journal literature to institutions and readers in developing countries.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

### 2.1. Survey Design

A short questionnaire was developed to gather quantitative and qualitative information from scientific learned societies in the UK. The questionnaire asked for details of societies' journal publications as well as for details and views on their participation in journal access programmes for developing countries.

Questions addressed included: the number and type of society journal publications; mode of publishing; awareness of journal access programmes; which journal access programmes the society participated in; how the society publicised its participation; the society's experience with participation; and reasons for not participating in certain programmes.<sup>1</sup>

### 2.2. Survey Distribution

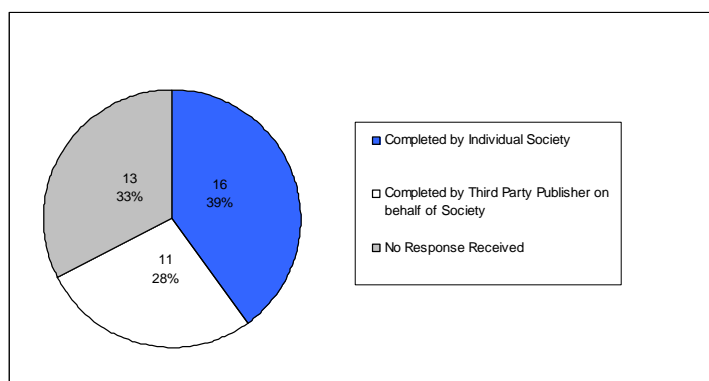
Forty scientific learned societies in the UK were invited to complete the survey (as listed in Appendix II). In each case the survey was sent in August 2007 – both electronically and by post – to the individual within the society's structure who was considered most appropriate to complete a return; in most cases this was the publications manager. Thirty of the societies that received a survey were individual members of ALPSP.

### 2.3. Survey Responses

In total, 27 survey responses were received between August and October 2007 with two late returns received in November 2007 and February 2008. Thirteen societies did not complete a return. This return rate of approximately three-quarters was lower than expected.

Of the 27 survey responses received, 16 were completed by the society in question and 11 were completed on behalf of the society in question by its third party publisher (9 by Wiley-Blackwell and 1 each by Oxford University Press and SAGE Publications) (*Fig. 1*).

*Fig. 1. Survey Responses Received*



Of the 27 survey responses received, 10 societies published their journals in-house, and 17 contracted out publishing of (at least one of) their journals to a (commercial or not-for-profit) third party (12 to Wiley-Blackwell; 1 to Bioscientifica; 1 to Cambridge University Press; 1 to Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory Press; 1 to Institute of Physics Publishing; 1 to Nature Publishing Group; 1 to Oxford University Press; and 1 to SAGE Publications).

<sup>1</sup> The survey confined itself to dealing with learned society journals, although it should be noted that a number of the journal access initiatives outlined in this report also include a wide range of text/reference books, indexes and databases.

Of the 27 survey responses received, 15 societies were in the field of the life sciences, 8 in the physical sciences, 2 in mathematics, 1 in engineering, and 1 in all sciences as the UK's national academy of sciences. The lowest return rate was from societies in the field of engineering.

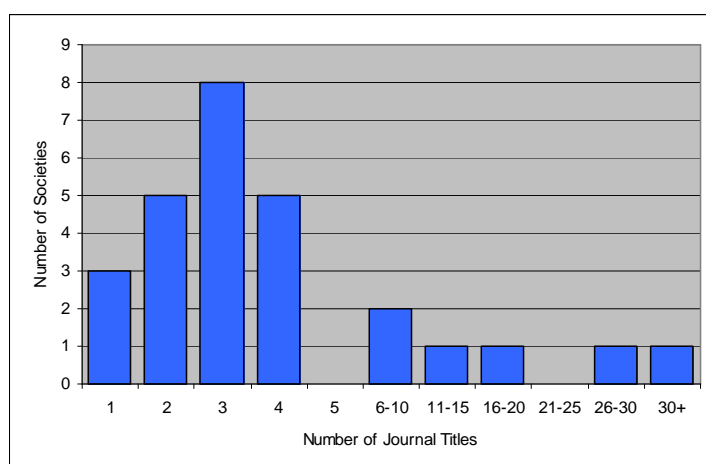
### 3. RESULTS

#### 3.1. Publishing Activity

##### 3.1.1. Number of Journals

A collective total of 169 journal titles were published by the societies who responded to the survey. Twenty-one of the societies had between 1 to 5 journal titles, 4 societies had between 6-25 journal titles and 2 had over 26 journal titles (*Fig. 2*).

*Fig. 2. Number of Journal Titles*



##### 3.1.2. Type of Journal

The majority of these 169 journal titles were peer-review research journals (146 titles) with a much smaller number being review journals (12 titles), abstracts (8 titles), translations (4 titles), letters (1 title) and conference papers (1).<sup>2</sup>

##### 3.1.3. Publishing Mode/Model<sup>3</sup>

Ninety percent of journal titles included in the survey were made available in both print *and* electronic format. In addition, a further 9% of titles were published only electronically. Only 1% of journal titles (from one society) were published only in print (*Fig. 3a*). This reflects the general global trend of science journals being made available online.

*Fig.3a. Publishing Format*

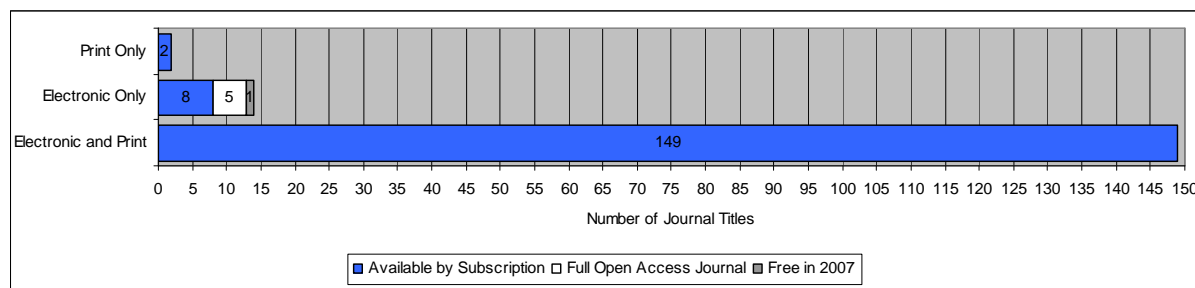
Electronic and Print	Electronic Only	Print Only
149 titles	14 titles	2 titles
90%	9%	1%

<sup>2</sup> Three societies indicated that they had a journal title which was a combined peer review research/review journal; these have been included in both category totals.

<sup>3</sup> Excludes 4 translation journals referred to above as no further information was made available for these titles.

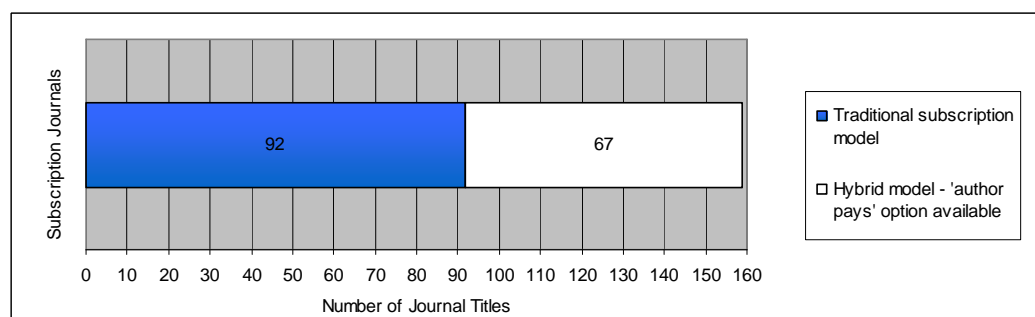
Ninety-six percent of journal titles were made available by subscription, with every society providing at least one of its journal titles by subscription. Only 3% of titles were open access journals (5 titles offered by 3 societies)<sup>4</sup>, with one additional title offered free in 2007 (*Fig.3b.*)

*Fig.3b. Publishing Format*



Of the 159 subscription journals, 67 of these titles (published by 13 different societies) provided a hybrid business model with an 'author pays' option available (*Fig.4.*)<sup>5</sup>

*Fig.4. Publishing Model*



## 3.2. Participation in Journal Access Programmes for Developing Countries

### 3.2.1. Societies Participating in Journal Access Programmes

Twenty-five of the 27 UK scientific learned societies that responded to the survey participated in one or more journal access programmes for developing countries. A significant majority of the societies participated in more than one scheme and only two societies indicated that they did not participate in any journal access programme (*Fig. 5.*)

*Fig.5. Number of Journal Access Programmes That Societies Participate In*

more than 1 journal access programme	18 societies
One journal access programme	7 societies
No journal access programme	2 societies

<sup>4</sup> 'Open Access Journal' refers to a full journal with all articles freely accessible online immediately upon publication.

<sup>5</sup> This refers to a journal where only some of the articles contained within are freely accessible immediately upon publication. The author is given the option to pay a fee to the publisher to make his/her article available in this way. For example, the Royal Society of Chemistry offers this option under its "Open Science" plan, Wiley Blackwell under its "Online Open" service.

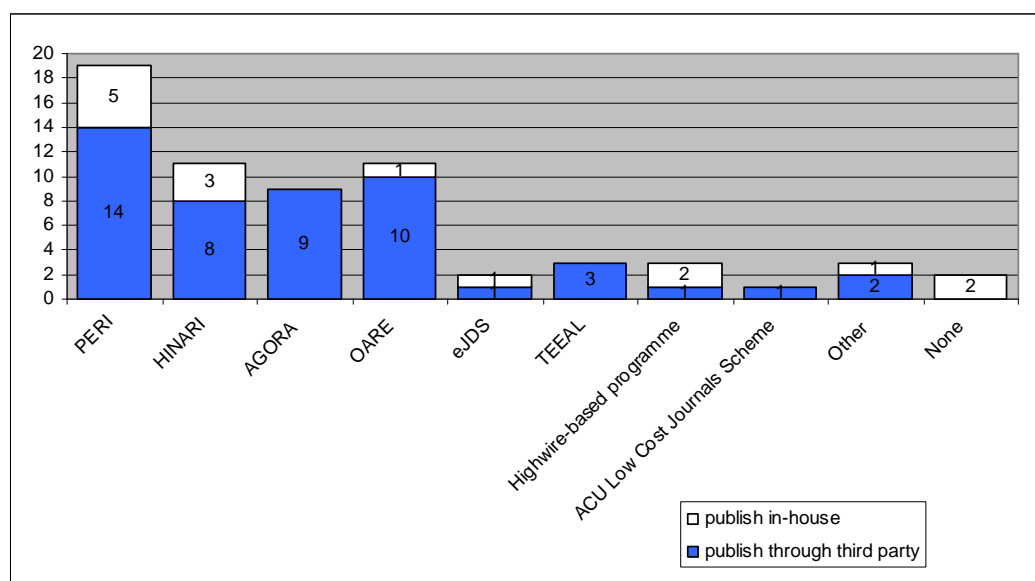
### 3.2.2. Participation Rates for Different Journal Access Programmes

INASP's PERI drew the greatest society participation (19) from those organisations that responded to the survey. The UN sister programmes – HINARI, AGORA and OARE – had the next greatest level of participation, with 11 societies participating in HINARI, 9 in AGORA and 11 in OARE (Fig. 6a).

The majority of societies that participated in the PERI programme also participated in at least one of the UN sister programmes (14 out of the 19 societies that participated in PERI). Just under half of the societies that participated in a UN sister programme participated in more than one of them; just over a third of societies that participated in HINARI also participated in AGORA and/or OARE; all of the societies that participated in AGORA also participated in HINARI and/or OARE; and approximately three quarters of the societies that participated in OARE also participated in HINARI and/or AGORA. (see Appendix III).

A smaller number of societies also participated in TEEAL, Highwire-based programmes, eJDS, the ACU's Low Cost (print) Journals Scheme, and other journal access programmes for developing countries (eIFL, and the New-York based (print) Journal Donation Project) (Fig. 6a).

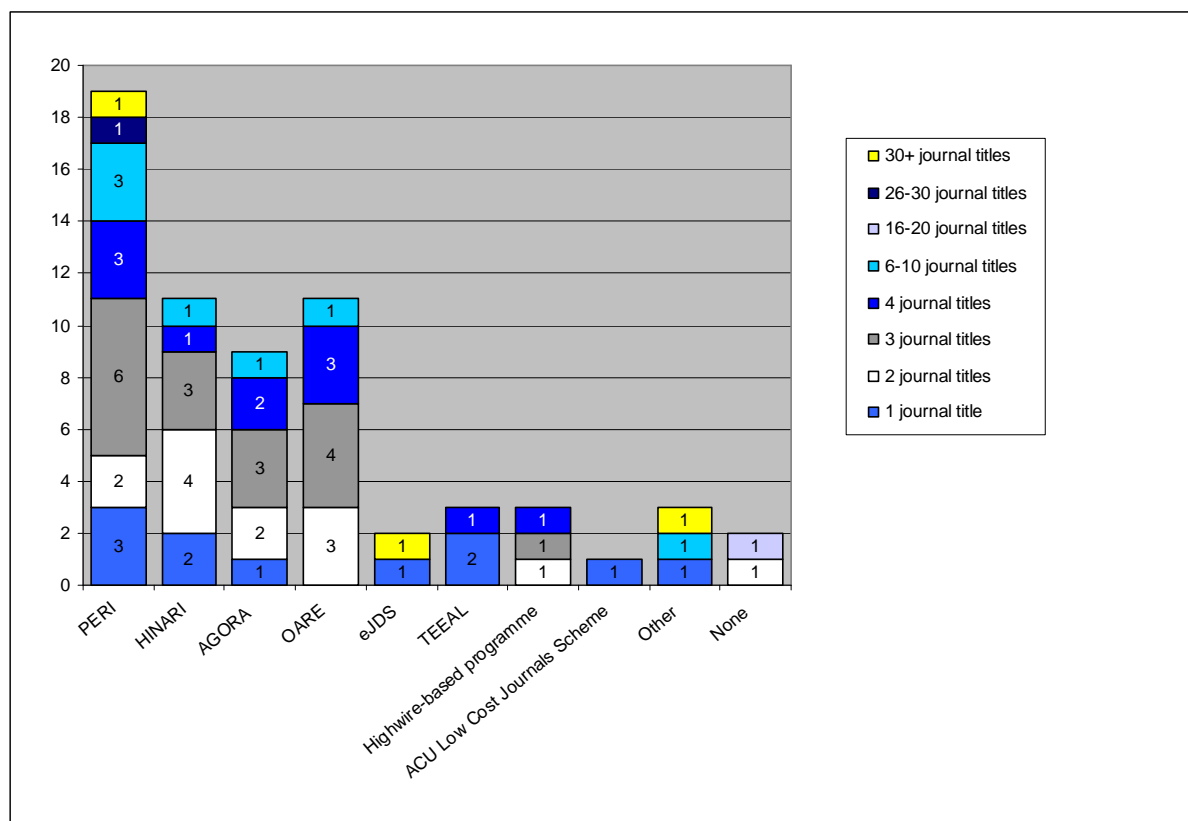
Fig. 6a. Number of Societies Participating in Each Journal Access Programme



Societies broadly indicated that they provided access to both current and archive journal volumes and that content was made available as full text articles and abstracts, and in pdf and html format, where provided for by the journal access programme provider. For each of the programmes that they participated in, societies indicated that they made available all journal titles that they considered relevant (Fig. 6b). In a small handful of cases some societies did not include all their journal titles (4 societies); and in these instances reasons given included: content in some journal titles was not relevant to the particular journal access programme in question (2 societies); missing journal titles were open access journals and therefore already freely available (2 societies)<sup>6</sup>; and journal titles involved some form of collaboration so not all were included in each programme (1 society).

<sup>6</sup> It should be noted that some journal access programmes include open access journal titles.

Fig. 6b. Number of Societies Participating in Each Journal Access Programme



### 3.2.3. Publicising Participation in Journal Access Programmes

Societies were asked to indicate how they publicised that their journals were made available to readers in developing countries through particular journal access programme(s). The vast majority of societies (23 out of 25 societies) relied on the journal access programme service provider to publicise the availability of their journals. A slightly smaller number of societies (17 societies) indicated that they publicised their participation in particular journal access programmes through their publisher's/publishing arm's website and marketing materials. Only 6 societies that participated in journal access programmes indicated that they publicised this on their own society website. Those societies that published through Wiley-Blackwell had mention of the relevant journal access programme(s) on their print journal jackets. (Fig. 7)

Fig. 7. Method of Publicising Participation

Through Journal Access Programme Service Provider	Publisher's Website and Leaflet/Material	Society Website	Literature taken to Events	Correspondence with Membership and other Global Organisations	Print Journal Jackets
23 societies <i>of which</i> 8 publish in-house  15 publish through a third party	17 societies <i>of which</i> 2 publish in-house  15 publish through a third party	6 societies <i>of which</i> 4 publish in-house 2 publish through a third party	2 societies <i>of which</i> 0 publish in-house 2 publish through a third party	1 society <i>of which</i> 0 publish in-house 1 publish through a third party	10 societies <i>of which</i> 0 publish in-house 10 publish through a third party

### 3.2.4. Societies' Experience of Participation in Journal Access Programmes

Societies were asked to comment on their experience with participating in these programmes. Comments were received from a range of societies, from small to the larger societies, as well as from some third party publishers on behalf of societies.

A clear majority of the comments received from societies (or a third party publisher on their behalf) were positive:

*"...experience with HINARI has been very positive, and we have been delighted to see increasing usage year-on-year." [Society participating in PERI and HINARI]*

*"...sales colleagues tell me that INASP runs a solid programme and is well organised..." [Society participating in PERI, eJDS, Highwire-based programme, and eIFL]*

*"Usage is increasing slowly from a very low starting point – this is not an access problem but an infrastructure problem with the countries involved, i.e. problems with internet availability/electricity supply, etc." [Society participating in HINARI]*

*"Feedback from user community has been sufficiently positive to ensure continuation in the programmes." [Society participating in PERI, AGORA, OARE and TEEAL]*

*"Generally speaking experience has been good, although direct communication with some of the participating institutions in poor and developing countries has been very difficult at times. Fortunately eIFL and PERI have made considerable efforts over the past year to improve matters." [Society participating in PERI, eJDS, and eIFL]*

*"... the Publisher's] experience is good. There is a lot of communication with the WHO and other agencies about the programmes and a Partners Meeting is held once a year where we learn about what's going on, technical issues, usage, etc." [Third Party Publisher for various societies participating in PERI, HINARI, AGORA, OARE, and TEEAL]*

*"These days, we take advice of our publishing collaborators. It is interesting to note that, without any discussion between the different collaborators, our journals have ended up in an almost identical set of programmes – this suggests the programmes chosen are the most suitable ones for our type of mathematical research journals." [Society participating in PERI, eJDS, Highwire-based programme, and eIFL]*

A few societies, however, noted that institutional take-up of their journals through the journal access schemes was lower than they would have expected. In such cases societies (or third party publisher on their behalf) were keen to work with the programme providers to ensure that the usefulness and uptake of content was as successful as possible.

*"The feedback from programme administrators about the usefulness and uptake of the content provided could be improved." [Society participating in PERI and OARE]*

*"We have been put off by the poor use of our journal under the PERI scheme." [Society participating in PERI]*

*"The take-up of offers for countries to be included in the series has been lower than [we] would have expected." [Society participating in PERI and OARE]*

*"Institutional take-up, where institutions have to choose whether to receive our content, is variable. For PERI we only have had limited take-up. From [the publisher's] perspective we are keen to do all we can to participate in schemes and work with the organisers to make take-up as successful as possible as part of our commitment to disseminate our material. [Third Party Publisher for society participating in PERI, HINARI and ACU Low Cost Journals Scheme]*

### 3.2.5. Non-Participants Awareness of Journal Access Programmes

Where societies were not participating in particular journal access programmes, they were asked to indicate which of the programmes they were aware of, why they did not participate in them and whether they were considering participation.

It should be noted that not all the survey returns specified this information. Where information was provided, overall there was an equal divide between societies that indicated that they were aware of the journal access programmes and societies that indicated that they were unaware of the journal access programmes (Fig. 8).

The programmes which seemed the most well known amongst non-participant societies were HINARI, AGORA and OARE, while eJDS and the ACU's Low Cost Journals Scheme appeared to be the least well known schemes.

Fig. 8. Indication of Programme Awareness

	PERI	HINARI	AGORA	OARE	eJDS	TEEAL	Highwire	ACU Low Cost Journals Scheme
<b>Aware of Journal Access Programme</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>
<i>Unsure of programme details / not been approached</i>	1				1	1	1	
<i>Not considered relevant</i>	1	3	4	2	2	2	2	2
<i>Concentrating on other programmes</i>		1	1	1		2	1	
<i>Currently considering programme</i>		2	3	3	1	1	2	1
<i>Put off considering other programmes because of poor use of journal in existing scheme</i>			1	1	1	1	1	1
<i>Decided to opt out</i>							1	
<b>Unaware of Journal Access Programme</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Not Specified</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>

Where a society was aware of a particular programme but not participating, the most common reason was that the scheme's subject area was not considered relevant to the society's journal titles. Three societies indicated that they were currently considering participation in a number of programmes (in addition to the one that they already participated in).

## 4. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The results of the survey suggest that UK scientific learned societies have a good participation rate in journal access programmes that provide free or low cost access to scholarly literature to developing country institutions and readers. Ninety-two percent of responding societies indicated that they made journal titles available through a journal access programme, with 67% participating in more than one programme. Societies demonstrated a willingness and desire to make content available in this manner, with access being broadly offered to all journal titles that were considered relevant, both current and archive volumes:

*“We appreciate the efforts of these organisations to increase our reach to these countries which would normally be very difficult.”*

*“... we are keen to do all we can to participate in schemes and work with the organisers to make take-up as successful as possible as part of our commitment to disseminate our material.”*

Those societies that did not currently participate in any such programmes cited an unawareness of the programmes and/or lack of subject relevance as the reasons behind their non-participation rather than any negative reactions. (Though one could of course assume that any societies that had negative reactions would not have taken the time to respond to the survey questionnaire).

Ten different journal access programmes covering a wide range of disciplines were highlighted by the survey responses: HINARI; AGORA; OARE; PERI; eJDS; TEEAL; Highwire-based programme; ACU Low Cost (print) Journals Scheme; eIFL and the (print) Journal Donation Project). These are all pan-publisher initiatives focusing on developing countries. Only one society indicated that it ran its own journal initiative for developing countries – this was the Royal Society of Chemistry’s archive initiative. A number of the survey responses highlighted comparative benefits of the pan-publisher programmes:

*“Until recently [our] journals did not participate in any such programmes, the general feeling on our publications committee being that the generous exchange programme of individual journals with our library was sufficient. Over the years this has become increasingly anomalous and ... it was agreed we should participate in those [programmes] recommended ...”*

*“We are a small society and do not have the resources to manage individual programmes ourselves – we will consider special requests from organisations on an individual basis and can request our publishers to enable access, but the majority of our access comes via schemes that are supported by [our publisher], enabling societies with relevant content to opt in to the scheme[s].”*

Both societies which publish in-house and those which publish through a third party (commercial or not-for-profit) publisher have been attracted to participate in journal access schemes. A number of the 17 societies that contracted publishing out to a third party publisher indicated that they relied on the advice of their publishing collaborator to identify appropriate schemes, suggesting that third party publishers can play a significant role in a society’s decision to ‘opt in’ to journal access programmes.

It is clear from the survey results that having only a small number of journal titles (whether published in or out of house) does not preclude societies from making their journal content available through the programmes. The majority (74%) of societies who participated in at least one journal access scheme owned under 5 journal titles, each contributing to a combined total volume of content from over 160 journal titles.

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Societies indicated that they participate in those journal access programmes which they consider to be the most relevant for their subject matter and which they consider will maximise benefit. Where given, the most common reasons for not participating in a particular programme were a lack of knowledge of the scheme and/or non-applicable subject matter. PERI, HINARI, AGORA and OARE attracted the most number of participants and appeared to be the most well known, while more specialised, and less well known, programmes, such as eJDS (specifically covering the fields of physics and mathematics) and the ACU Low Cost Journals Scheme (specifically covering print journals) included a more limited number of society journal titles. It should be noted that this is not to suggest that these latter, more specialised, programmes do not play an important role in contributing to improving journal access for developing countries.

Societies tended to rely on the journal access programme service provider and their publisher, where this was third party, to promote their participation in a programme. Very few publicise their participation on their society website, even though one third party publisher indicated that it encouraged societies to do so, and even fewer societies appear to promote their participation through correspondence with their membership and other organisations around the globe.

The majority of feedback on the experience of participating in journal access programmes was very positive, with societies citing examples of increasing usage, as well as good organisation and communication by programme providers. Some societies did indicate that take-up of their journal(s) was not as high as expected, though there was clear recognition that usage was coming from a very low starting point and of the part played by existing infrastructure problems in recipient countries. Other factors at play may include: relevance, timeliness and comprehensiveness/volume of journal content; visibility of the journal titles; access and usage limitations and barriers imposed on users; levels of programme training for users; reliability and usability of programme interfaces – though these are outside the scope of this report. Respondents indicated that they were keen to receive better feedback from programme providers about the usefulness and uptake of the content provided in order to work with the organisers to make take-up as successful as possible.

## 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made based on the trends drawn from the survey in this report of UK scientific learned societies' participation in existing journal access programmes which provide free or low cost access to scholarly literature to developing country institutions and readers. While the survey was focused on the activity of scientific learned societies in the UK, the report's findings have an international significance. These recommendations therefore can be extended globally.

### Participation By All Scientific Learned Societies and Organisations

Learned society journals make a vitally important contribution to scholarly research. The 40 scientific learned societies in the UK which were invited to complete this survey represent nearly 300 journal titles.

The majority of learned society journals are available on a subscription-only basis. While about 40% of subscription journals included in this UK survey are based on a hybrid business model which offers an 'author pays' option to make articles freely available, this only provides access to a limited number of articles.

**Journal access programmes for developing countries play a hugely important role in providing researchers, practitioners and students with essential access to up-to-date scientific literature that they would otherwise be unable to afford and often otherwise be unaware of. Those learned societies, and their third party publishers, which participate in these access programmes provide a highly commendable service for countries in need. Wider participation is urgently required to make journal and other relevant content, such as databases and reference books, available to institutions and readers in developing countries.**

### Raising Awareness of Journal Access Programmes

#### ***Among Scientific Learned Societies***

Not all learned societies in the UK are aware of existing journal access programmes for developing countries. **Journal access programme providers should ensure that all scientific learned societies** that have journals with relevant subject matter **are well informed about programmes** so that societies can make informed decisions about future participation.

#### ***Among Potential Users***

**Learned societies can help to increase awareness of the availability of their journals among developing world users.** It is noted that (particularly smaller) societies have limited resources to promote their participation in journal access programmes, while it is expected for the access programme providers with a dedicated resource and wide outreach to do this. However, societies can contribute to raising awareness within their own existing capacity, by, for example, including a clear reference to their participation in a journal access programme(s) in their journals, on their own website, on their third party publisher's website where applicable, by including reference in correspondence with relevant organisations such as 'sister' societies in the developing world and network organisations, and at relevant international conferences and meetings.

#### ***Among Developed World Supporters***

**Learned societies can also help to increase awareness of journal access programmes among their audiences and partners in the developed world to build up support.** Again, this can be done within their own existing capacity through the communication channels and processes available to them.

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## **Maximising Impact of Journal Access Programmes**

**Journal access programme providers should regularly communicate with partners and stakeholders and with one another to help maximise the impact and reach of journal access initiatives.**

A number of survey respondents indicated that they were keen to receive better feedback from their programme providers about the usefulness and uptake of the content they provided and to work with those managing/coordinating the programmes to make take-up as relevant and successful as possible. **Programme providers should ensure that they communicate optimally with all their partners including those learned societies providing journal content.**

It is recognised that journal access programmes are not uniform; existing programmes differ in subject area, management, method of delivery, reach, and position in relation to other complimentary same-organisation activities. However, a significant percentage of learned societies and third party commercial and not-for-profit publishers participate in more than one journal access programme. And on the other end of the stakeholder spectrum, the programmes are designed to reach a similar set of users in developing countries. While the HINARI, AGORA and OARE programmes already coordinate closely, **programme providers should look at having a forum for communication and exchange among all journal access programme providers** and key partners to share experience, to discuss existing and future challenges and opportunities, to encourage and facilitate a coordinated approach, and to address how future assistance in the provision of journals (and other material) to developing countries can be made more effective.

## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX I: Journal Access Programmes for Developing Countries

The following information was extracted from the websites of each initiative on 7 January 2008.

#### HINARI (Health InterNetwork Access to Research Initiative)

[www.who.int/hinari](http://www.who.int/hinari)

Established: Launched in 2003. Led by WHO. Multiple programme partners are responsible for different aspects of HINARI.

Participating publishers: more than 100 (as of January 2008).

Content: Free or low cost access to more than 3700 peer-reviewed biomedical and related social sciences journals (as of January 2008). It also contains many databases, indexes and reference books.

Reach: Eligibility is broadly based on GNI. Local publicly funded and not-for-profit institutions in 70 countries, areas and territories (from 2008) included in 'Band 1' – most countries with GNI per capita below US\$1000 (World Bank figures, 2006) – may register for free access. Local publicly funded and not-for-profit institutions in 37 countries, areas and territories (from 2008) included in 'Band 2' – most countries with GNI per capita between US\$1000-\$3000 (World Bank figures, 2006) – may pay an access fee of US\$1000 per institution per year. Eligible categories of institutions are: national universities, research institutes, professional schools (medicine, nursing, pharmacy, public health, dentistry), teaching hospitals, government offices and national medical libraries. All staff members and students are entitled to access to the journals.

Last Review: 2006, commissioned by partners (Usage Review of HINARI and AGORA by John Scott of the Center for Public Service Communications, Arlington, Virginia, USA; and HINARI/AGORA Infrastructure (Partners) Review by Mark Ware, Mark Ware Consulting, Bristol, UK).

#### AGORA (Access to Global Online Research in Agriculture)

[www.aginternetwork.org](http://www.aginternetwork.org)

Established: Launched in 2001. Led by FAO. Multiple programme partners are responsible for different aspects of AGORA.

Participating publishers: 44 (as of January 2008).

Content: Free or low cost access to over 1000 peer-reviewed agriculture, food, fisheries, nutrition, veterinary science, and related biological, environmental, and social sciences journals (as of January 2008). It also includes several databases and indexes.

Reach: Eligibility is broadly based on GNI. Local publicly funded and not-for-profit institutions in 70 countries, areas and territories (as of January 2008) included in 'Band 1' – most countries with GNI per capita below US\$1000 (World Bank figures, 2006) - may register for free access. Local publicly funded and not-for-profit institutions in 37 countries, areas and territories (as of May 2007) included in 'Band 2' – most countries with GNI per capita between US\$1000-\$3000 (World Bank figures, 2006) – may pay an access fee of US\$1000 per institution/per year. Eligible categories of institutions are: universities and colleges; research institutes; agricultural extension centres, government offices and libraries. All staff members and students are entitled to access to the journals.

Last Review: 2006, commissioned by partners (Usage Review of HINARI and AGORA by John Scott of the Center for Public Service Communications, Arlington, Virginia, USA; and HINARI/AGORA Infrastructure (Partners) Review by Mark Ware, Mark Ware Consulting, Bristol, UK).

#### OARE (Online Access to Research in the Environment)

[www.oaresciences.org](http://www.oaresciences.org)

Established: Launched in 2006. Led by UNEP. Multiple programme partners are responsible for different aspects of OARE.

Participating publishers: 46 (as of January 2008).

Content: Free or low cost access to over 1300 peer-reviewed journals covering a wide range of disciplines including Biology; Biotechnology, Genetics and Genetically Modified Species; Botany and Plant Biodiversity; Climatology, Climate Change and Meteorology; Ecology and Wildlife Conservation; Energy Conservation and Renewable Energy; Environmental Chemistry; Environmental and Natural Resource Economics; Environmental Engineering; Environmental Law, Policy and Planning; Fish and Fisheries; Forests and Forestry; Geography, Population Studies and Migration; Geology and Earth Sciences; Natural Environmental Disasters; Oceanography and Marine Biology; Pollution and Environmental Toxicology; Satellite and Remote Sensing Technologies; Soil Sciences and Desertification; Waste Management; Water, Hydrology and Wetlands; Zoology and Animal Biodiversity (as of January 2008). OARE also provides access to abstract and index research databases.

Reach: Eligibility is broadly based on GNI. Local publicly funded and not-for-profit institutions in 72 countries, areas and territories (as of January 2008) included in 'Band 1' – most countries with GNI per capita below US\$1250 (World Bank figures, 2006) – may register for free access. Local publicly funded and not-for-profit institutions in 36 countries, areas and territories (as of January 2008) included in 'Band 2' – most countries with GNI per capita between US\$1250-\$3500 (World Bank figures, 2006) – may pay an access fee of US\$1000 per institution/per year. Eligible institutions include all public institutions and all local non-governmental organizations. Examples include universities and colleges, professional training schools, research institutes, government ministries and other government offices, libraries, public media, and local NGOs. All staff members and students are entitled to access to the journals.

Last Review: None, as launched outside of 2006 HINARI and AGORA independent review.

### **PERI (Programme for the Enhancement of Research Information)**

<http://www.inasp.info/file/105/peri-access-to-journals-and-research-content.html>

Established: Pilot from November 2000-December 2001. Full Programme began January 2002. Managed by INASP.

Participating publishers: journals, texts and databases from 47 sources (as of January 2008).

Content: Free of low cost access to a selection of over 20,000 full-text online journals (not all peer-reviewed) covering a wide range of disciplines. Also provides access to citation, bibliographic and reference databases and indexes. CD-ROM (or DVD) format can be provided where they are available.

Reach: Eligibility is broadly based on Human Development Index indicators and classification by the World Bank as low-income or lower-middle income. Not-for-profit institutions in 92 developing countries listed by INASP as eligible (as of January 2008) can register with PERI. INASP negotiates (or supports local negotiation) with publishers and other content owners to obtain resources at a price that is appropriate for the recipient countries. Some publishers make their content free to the countries included within this programme; others are obtained at a discount of up to 98% on the normal subscription rates. Nearly all resources are made available on a countrywide license basis. Local institutions eligible to register for their use include university departments, university libraries, not-for-profit research institutes and centres, higher education institutes, colleges, polytechnics, teaching hospitals, indigenous non-government organisations and indigenous civil society organisations. Access is also available to health professionals and agricultural extension workers and other professionals with a not-for-profit remit, working within remote areas. Access is not available for any military institutions or academies.

Last Review: 2005, internal review (Mid-Term Review of the Programme for the Enhancement of Research Information 2001-2004, focused on relevance, management, usage, sharing and sustainability).

### **eJDS (electronic Journals Delivery Service)**

[www.ejds.org/](http://www.ejds.org/)

Established: Launched in autumn 2001. The programme is an Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP) / Academy of Sciences for the Developing World (TWAS) initiative.

Participating publishers: journal articles from 8 publishers (as of January 2008).

Content: Free access to unspecified number of journals in the fields of mathematics and physics only. Individuals can search articles via the eJDSweb interface or through email. Scientists receive individual journal articles via email upon request (with a download quota per user of 3 a day, 12 a month, 100 a year – as of January 2008).

Reach: Scientists in institutions in developing countries who do not have access to sufficient bandwidth to download material from the Internet in a timely manner and/or cannot afford the connection; each publisher stipulates which countries can access their journals via this service (e.g. Institute of Physics stipulates 42 countries – as of January 2008 – listed on its website). Scientists register individually to the service.

Last Review: Unknown.

## **TEEAL (The Essential Electronic Agricultural Library)**

[www.teeal.org/](http://www.teeal.org/)

Established: Launched in 1999. Managed by Cornell University's Albert R. Mann Library.

Participating publishers: Journals from over 60 major scientific publishers, societies and index providers.

Content: Low cost access to over 140 journals in the field of agriculture (including subjects such as: crop and soil science, economic and rural development, food science and nutrition, livestock production, microbiology, veterinary medicine). TEEAL provides an annually updated full-text and bibliographic library (currently from 2003-2006) in the form of a local area network system (LanTEEAL2.0). (*The library was previously offered as a set of compact discs, but this option was recently discontinued*).

Reach: Available to public sector and not-for-profit educational and research organizations institutions in over 100 of the lowest income countries as listed in the World Bank's 1998-99 World Development Report. Institutions in 111 countries listed by TEEAL as eligible (as of January 2008) can purchase the library at a substantially discounted rate of US\$6500 – and US\$1000 for each annual update. The library can be used by up to 30 users at the institution simultaneously.

Last Review: 2004, internal review (TEEAL: A User Study, report to the Rockefeller Foundation (core funder), focused on impact, relevance, accessibility and usability).

## **HIGHWIRE**

[highwire.stanford.edu/lists/devecon.dtl](http://highwire.stanford.edu/lists/devecon.dtl)

Established: Offered reduced rate subscriptions for developing countries from 1999.

Participating publishers: Highwire Press hosts 1098 journals from over 130 scholarly publishers (as of January 2008). HighWire Press works with its partners to publish, distribute, and archive e-journals. An unspecified number of publishers that publish through Highwire offer free access to developing economies.

Content: Free access to 293 journals in a wide range of disciplines, including natural and social sciences and the humanities (as of January 2008).

Reach: Eligibility is broadly based on the World Bank's list of 53 low income economies, plus Angola, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Djibouti, Georgia, Indonesia, Turkmenistan, and Ukraine (as of January 2008). Individual publishers use the list from the World Bank as a guideline for determining their policies, so some variation in access per publisher does occur. Individuals do not need to sign up for this service as Highwire software automatically detects the country they are connecting from and grants access accordingly.

Last Review: Unknown

## **ASSOCIATION OF COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITIES (ACU) LOW COST JOURNALS SCHEME**

<http://www.acu.ac.uk/lowcostjournals/>

Established: Began Low Cost Journals Scheme as a pilot in 2002 (initially to African countries and since expanded).

Participating Publishers: 13 major publishers (as of January 2008).

Content: Low cost subscription to unspecified number of print journals in a wide range of disciplines, including natural and social sciences and the humanities (as of January 2008).

Reach: Eligible institutions are universities which are members of the Association of Commonwealth Universities and which are situated in one of the 25 countries listed by the ACU (as of January 2008). 14 countries included in 'Band A'

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are eligible to subscribe to print journals at either the individual subscription rate, or another rate equivalent to 20-25% of the normal institutional subscription, plus distribution charges at cost (or exempted) (as of January 2008). 11 countries included in 'Band B' – countries in the lowest rank of the United Nations Human Development Index (2003) – are eligible to subscribe to print journals at an even further reduced rate where possible (as of January 2008). Individual publishers specify to which of the 25 countries they offer low cost subscriptions.

Last Review: Unknown.

## APPENDIX II: Learned Societies in the UK

The following scientific learned societies in the UK were invited to complete the survey sent in August 2007.

Anatomical Society	Return Received
Association of Applied Biologists	Return Received
Biochemical Society	Return Received
British Association of Psychopharmacology	Return Received
British Ecological Society	Return Received
British Institute of Radiology	Return Received
British Medical Association	No Return Received
British Pharmacological Society	Return Received
British Society for Immunology	Return Received
British Society for Rheumatology	No Return Received
Genetics Society	Return Received
Geological Society of London	Return Received
Institute of Biology	Return Received
Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining	No Return Received
Institute of Mathematics and its Applications	Return Received
Institute of Physics	Return Received
Institute of Physics and Engineering in Medicine	No Return Received
Institution of Chemical Engineers	No Return Received
Institution of Civil Engineers	No Return Received
Institution of Engineering and Technology	No Return Received
Institution of Mechanical Engineers	Return Received
Institution of Structural Engineers	No Return Received
Linnean Society of London	Return Received
London Mathematical Society	Return Received
Mineralogical Society of Great Britain and Ireland	Return Received
Nutrition Society	No Return Received
Physiological Society	Return Received
Royal Aeronautical Society	No Return Received
Royal Astronomical Society	Return Received
Royal Geographical Society	Return Received
Royal Meteorological Society	Return Received
Royal Society	Return Received
Royal Society of Chemistry	Return Received
Society for Applied Microbiology	Return Received
Society for Experimental Biology	No Return Received
Society for General Microbiology	No Return Received
Society for Reproduction and Fertility	Return Received
Society for Endocrinology	Return Received
United Kingdom Environmental Mutagen Society	No Return Received
Zoological Society of London	Return Received

## APPENDIX III: Learned Societies in the UK Participating in Journal Access Programmes for Developing Countries

The following indicates the journal access programmes that each scientific learned society in the UK participates in.

		Number of Journal Titles	PERI	HINARI	AGORA	OARE	eJDS	TEEAL	High ire- based progra mme	ACU	Other
Anatomical Society	Return Received	1	X	X							
Association of Applied Biologists	Return Received	2	X		X	X		X			
Biochemical Society	Return Received	4		X							
British Association of Psycho-pharmacology	Return Received	1	X	X						X	X – Journal Donation Programme
British Ecological Society	Return Received	4	X		X	X		X			
British Institute of Radiology	Return Received	3		X					X		
British Medical Association	No Return Received										
British Pharmacological Society	Return Received	3	X	X							
British Society for Immunology	Return Received	3	X	X	X						
British Society for Rheumatology	No Return Received										
Genetics Society	Return Received	2		X	X	X					
Geological Society of London	Return Received	4	X								
Institute of Biology	Return Received	2									
Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining	No Return Received										
Institute of Mathematics and its Applications	Return Received	6	X	X	X	X					
Institute of Physics	Return Received	44	X				X				X – eIFL
Institute of Physics and Engineering in Medicine	No Return Received										
Institution of Chemical Engineers	No Return Received										
Institution of Civil Engineers	No Return Received										
Institution of Engineering and Technology	No Return Received										

		Number of Journal Titles	PERI	HINARI	AGORA	OARE	eJDS	TEEAL	High ire- based progra mme	ACU	Other
Institution of Mechanical Engineers	Return Received	17									
Institution of Structural Engineers	No Return Received										
Linnean Society of London	Return Received	3	X		X	X					
London Mathematical Society	Return Received	11	X				X		X		X – eIFL
Mineralogical Society of Great Britain and Ireland	Return Received	3	X								
Nutrition Society	No Return Received										
Physiological Society	Return Received	2	X	X					X		
Royal Aeronautical Society	No Return Received										
Royal Astronomical Society	Return Received	4	X			X					
Royal Geographical Society	Return Received	3	X			X					
Royal Meteorological Society	Return Received	4			X	X					
Royal Society	Return Received	7	X								
Royal Society of Chemistry	Return Received	27	X			X					
Society for Applied Microbiology	Return Received	3	X	X	X	X					
Society for Experimental Biology	No Return Received										
Society for General Microbiology	No Return Received										
Society for Reproduction and Fertility	Return Received	1						X			
Society for Endocrinology	Return Received	3		X							
United Kingdom Environmental Mutagen Society	No Return Received										
Zoological Society of London	Return Received	3	X		X	X					

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## **Appendix IV: References**

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