

IAU Horizons: Call for papers

Democratizing Knowledge: Open Science in a Closed World?

2020 has seen an unprecedented acceleration of the use of digital technologies in higher education. Many of these have been forced by the COVID-19 pandemic because of the need for physical distancing. Although vaccine programmes have commenced in several countries, many universities are still operating under restricted conditions in terms of social gathering and activities. At the same time, the pandemic has also demonstrated the need for science and research to provide solutions to challenges of our time, of which many are global in nature. This has been illustrated by the pursuit of a vaccine as a key instrument to fight the current pandemic, but it is likewise the case for numerous disciplines in the search of new solutions for the development of a more sustainable world.

The question is whether the process of discovery and development of solutions around the world could be accelerated if scientific results and data were shared more openly. UNESCO is currently developing a new international standard setting instrument, a Recommendation on Open Science, and describes Open Science as a movement aiming to make science more open, accessible, efficient, democratic, and transparent.

However, to ensure that science truly benefits the people and the planet and leaves no one behind, there is an urgent need to transform current processes. In today's fragmented scientific and policy environment, a global understanding of the meaning, opportunities and challenges of Open Science is missing. The purpose of the global recommendation is to build a global consensus on Open Science, including a common understanding and a shared set of values and proposals for action. The draft UNESCO Recommendation on Open Science is currently under intergovernmental negotiations before it will be considered by the UNESCO General Conference in November 2021.

In this context, it is important to discuss the current state of play of Open Science from the perspective of higher education institutions. The next *In Focus* section of the *IAU Horizons* magazine is therefore dedicated to the topic: **Democratizing Knowledge: Open Science in a Closed World?** Has the current context accelerated progress towards more Open Science initiatives? What are the opportunities as well as challenges moving forward? Who are or should be the key actors of transformation in the field and what levels of action or systemic changes are required if Open Science is to move from ideal to action within the universities?

Call for papers: Democratizing Knowledge: Open Science in a Closed World?

Please send your expression of interest in submitting a paper for the *In Focus* section to Trine Jensen (t.jensen@iau-aiu.net) by **Friday, 19 February**. Please include a brief abstract outlining the scope and angle of the proposed article. Authors retained for publication will be informed by **Wednesday, 24 February**.

The articles are short opinion pieces of max 800 words. Deadline for submission of contributions is **Monday, 15 March**.