

UNIVERSITY PUBLISHING REINVENTED

In March, a group of academics, librarians and university publishers gathered in Canberra for three days to discuss recent trends in academic publishing. Representatives from major Australian university presses shared insights on the impact of open access on scientific publishing, the challenges posed by multimedia web-based content and the pros and cons of 'print-on-demand' publishing.

Professor Aidan Byrne, Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Research Council, opened the Reinventing University Publishing Symposium by questioning the survival of the traditional academic monograph, given the richness that publishing on an electronic medium can offer. He indicated that crowdsourcing and the ease of web publishing has generated much more grey literature and vanity publishing, and made it difficult for quality academic output to stand out.

Professor Byrne indicated that the three principles guiding the open access agenda are societal benefit, research benefit and individual benefit, and concluded by saying all researchers need to get better at explaining why they do the research they do.

Professor Adam Shoemaker, Academic Provost of Griffith University, outlined how his early foray into electronic publishing 15 years ago, Black Words White Page, has generated a much wider audience for his research than a traditional print book could have. He emphasised the importance of social media and websites like *The Conversation* in raising public awareness of academic research. This point was echoed later in the day by Shiro Armstrong, Fellow at the Crawford School of Public Policy and Editor of the East Asia Forum, who agreed that academic blogging can make complex ideas more accessible, offer insights on topical issues with links to deeper research, and should be viewed as complementing traditional academic output.

In addition to the Australian speakers, Kevin Hawkins, Director of Library Publishing, University of North Texas Libraries,



New directions for academic publishing (left to right): Shiro Armstrong, Aidan Byrne, Adam Shoemaker, Roxanne Missingham.

and Sarah Lippincott of the Library Publishing Coalition presented the American perspective, while Ben Johnson, a policy advisor for the Higher Education Funding Council for England, summarised the major UK report *Monographs and Open Access*, led by Professor Geoff Crossick.

All in all, the symposium was both stimulating and thought-provoking and will make a great addition to my ALIA PD points for 2015. I'd like to thank Roxanne Missingham, ANU University Librarian, for organising the event and enabling ALIA Members to be informed on the ways in which academic publishing is evolving.

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