Bern, 02.06.2021
Dr Aude Bax de Keating, Open Science Portfolio Manager

swissuniversities

2021-2024 Open Science Program

Reviewers Consolidated Evaluation Report Summary

1.   Project Information

Title and Acronym (short title) of the project :	National Open Access Monitoring - NOAM
Primary action line :	National Monitoring
Secondary action line (if applicable) :	
Proposal deadline :	31 May 2021

No	Participating institution(s)	
1	Applicant institution *Consortium of Swiss Academic Libraries*	
2	Partner institution	*To be completed in case of cooperation*
n	Partner institution	*Same*

Total project costs

200 000 CHF

Total federal contribution requested

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100 000 CHF

2. Project Reviewers

Reviewer A

Last and First Name

Institution

Reviewer B

Last and First Name

Institution

3. Evaluation Synthesis

Scores are between 0 and 5.

0 = The proposal does not meet the criteria or cannot be evaluated due to missing information.

1 = Fail. The proposal does not meet the criteria or has serious inherent weaknesses.

2 = Passable. The proposal generally meets the criteria, but has significant weaknesses.

3 = Good. The proposal meets well the criteria, but has a number of major issues.

4 = Very good. The proposal meets very well the criteria, but has a small number of issues.

5 = Excellent. The proposal meets all relevant aspects of the criteria. Any issues are minor.

	Score
1. Objectives & Relevance	5/5
2. Impact	4/5
3. Implementation	3/5
Total	12/15

4. Reviewers recommendations to the Open Science Delegation

Approval :	
Conditional approval :	The project can be approved, but a number of issues need to be clarified beforehand. Critical clarifications should deal with a) the indi-

	cators which would be produced, b) the involvement of users in the design of the system and c) the methodology for the planned survey.
Refusal :	

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5. Consolidated Evaluation

5.1 Strengths and weaknesses

Relevance with the action lines alternative forms of publication, participation to international initiatives & national monitoring (Grade: 5/5)

A) Strengths
The aim of the project is to develop a national monitoring tool for the progress of open access in Swiss publications. This tool will consist of a Swiss view of the Open Access Monitor created for Germany by Forschungszentrum Jülich. This OA Monitor has proven itself as a national tool.
This application is the concrete implementation of the Project Description submitted to the DelOS by SLINER. The Project Description has already been approved by the DelOS.
B) Weaknesses
None

Impact (Grade: 4/5)

A) Strengths
The project is located within the consortium, which ensures all institutions are participat- ing. Thus, it ensures that the OA Monitor will be considered and designed as a national tool.
The OA Monitor will be a powerful and strategic tool to lead OA negociations with pub-lishers.
The project adresses the language and disciplinary biases and plans to combine data from the Dimensions database with data from institutional repositories.

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B) Weaknesses
The paragraph on international cooperation could and should be expanded: it is a pity that only Jülich is mentioned when there are other national monitoring tools, for example the French Open Science Monitor. A state of the art of similar initiatives at European level would have been useful and would be beneficial to the project. Moreover a critical weakness is that the project does not include a framework for the indicators to be pro- duced, yet data needs cannot be defined without knowing which indicators will be needed by users.
The project managers plan to prepare a communication plan but do not provide any de- tails on its content.
There is no indication on how the users wll be involved from the beginning in the design of the tool, yet this would be critical for impact.

Implementation (Grade: 3/5)

A) Strengths
The methodology, timetable and organisation proposed by the project managers are very relevant. They avoid duplication of effort by building on good practice and existing bod- ies. By relying on Forschungszentrum Jülich's proven experience and expertise, the pro- ject managers have every chance of success.
One of the strong points of the project is its organisation, which gives pride of place to collaborative work: thanks to the consortium, SLINER and AKOA, skills are pooled and all the stakeholders involved in this tool will work together
All the risks are well taken into account by the project managers: they are considering building their own infrastructure to reduce their dependence on Forschungszentrum Jülich, which is an excellent idea.

B) Weaknesses
The workpackage on the repository survey is unclear and differs significantly from the project description by SLINER. The project description included a tender for repository aggregation data pilot during this MVP phase. However, this tender does not appear in the application. The content of this WP is not detailed enough: in particular, it is not clear what the survey will cover and how its results will be integrated into the MVP and the website. Given the lack of details, the reviewers are skeptical on what can be achieved with the survey and the possibility of achieving a sufficient level of quality.
The skills and composition of the project team are not detailed. It seems to be understood that the project manager will be in charge of all WPs, but this is not clearly explained.

5.2 Key additional remarks from the reviewers

Regarding the budget

The planned budget seems reasonable but the project managers do not provide any de- tails or justification on the amounts requested or on the expenses covered by the re- quested grant. Particularly for what concerns infrastructure costs.

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Regarding the proposal

This is a top-down project which has previously been the subject of a Project Description submitted to the DelOS. As this description is more detailed than the application, it is necessary to refer to it in order to be able to review the application

6. Specific comments for each criteria

6.1. Pertinence

A) Relevance: Is the project in line with the relevant action lines?

How does the project meet specifically the objectives of the relevant action lines (namely alternative forms of publication, participation to international alternatives and national mon- itoring) from the Open Access Implementation Plan?

The aim of the project is to develop a national monitoring tool for the progress of open access in Swiss publications. This tool is based on a proven national monitor, the Ger- man monitor. Thus the project is perfectly and obviously relevant with the action line Na- tional Monitoring.

In the case of a top-down project by call for tenders, how would the offer also meet the additional specifications requested by the tender? (Please note that this question does not apply to bottom-up projects).

The Project Description has been approved by the DelOS.

B) Coherence: How well does the project fit?

Can you give examples of innovative components/ elements of your project compared to similar initiatives/ projects?

Through the integration of data from the repositories, the project attempts to propose so- lutions to the problems and biases usually encountered in any scientific publication analy- sis project: the absence of DOIs, the over-representation of the English language, the over- representation of certain disciplines and of certain publication types. By way of com- parison, the French BSO does not solve these problems.

> To what extent do you find the interoperability (as defined in the FAIR principles) measures foreseen by the project (or the offer) at national and international level satisfactory?
>
> The data will be published in open data and can be reused by other institutions. Based on Forschungszentrum Jülich's experience, interoperability and compliance with the FAIR principles will be a priority of the project.

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6.2. Viability

A) Impact: What difference does the project make?

How do you assess the expected benefits for the following target groups: the swissuniversities' members, their partners, the Swiss scientific community?

The benefits of this project are important for all the stakeholders concerned at national level: they will benefit from a relevant steering and monitoring tool that is easy to maintain and develop. This tool will provide a time 0, from which it will be possible to measure a positive or negative evolution, in the short, medium and long term. At the local level, institutions will be able to reuse the data to evaluate their own open access policy. The experience of the French Open Science Monitor shows that such a tool is useful to all and is used by all. It can also be used as a communication tool. However, impacts are difficult to ascertain as there are no details on which indicators should be produced, relevance will depend on the fit between data and indicators.

How does the project promote interdisciplinarity to produce effects outside its own field of application?

Thanks to the repository survey and the integration of their data into the website, the project managers propose a method to solve the problem of the over-representation of STEM disciplines and the under-representation of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. This method, which seems relevant, will make the barometer a powerful tool for all disciplines, usable by all, and covering all disciplines. However, this part lacks of critical details.

To what extent will the proposed results and/or services strengthen the position of the Swiss scientific community at the international level?

The monitoring tool will provide a point of comparison between Switzerland and other countries with a strong open access policy. It will also allow Switzerland to cooperate with other countries that have also created their own national tool. It will also make the Swiss scientific community independent of third-party evaluation bodies. The fact that the Swiss tool will include data form institutional repositories will strengthen the Swiss position be- cause it is quite unique at the international level and because we lack monitoring data on Humanities and Social Sciences publications. International cooperation could be devel- oped based on the Swiss experience on integration of repository data.

How can the planned communication, promotion, standardization and exploitation measures guarantee the future positioning of the envisaged service at national and international level?

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The project managers plan to carry out a communication plan and to organize workshops presenting different use cases. It is a pity, however, that they did not go into more detail on this point. They could have envisaged specific workshops, at the international level, on the integration of data from the repositories, on the question of disciplinary and linguistic bias, etc. It is also crucial that the code of the tool is open source and well documented, especially regarding the integration of data from the repositories, as it is very likely that other countries will be interested in re-using it.

What measures does the project propose to promote gender and cultural diversity?

The topic is not really relevant to this project, but the data, for example on authorship of publications, can be used to take appropriate action on diversity

How do the measures dealing with age diversity respond to the needs of researchers or pilot users at different stages of their career?

The topic is not really relevant to this project, but the data, for example on author-ship of publications, can be used to take appropriate action on age diversity. The project manag- ers plan to organize tranings and specific workshops on these use cases.

Additional question for projects/offers targeting the development of services or e-infrastructures: How does the project address the services usability (adaptation to different digital skills levels) and e-accessibility issues (adaptation to specific disabilities)?

Although the project managers say that they plan to organize training on this subject and want to make the website and data understandable to everyone, they do not give concrete examples of their actions, do not explain how they will do this and only provide a vague answer.

Durability: Will the benefits last?

Which risks are foreseen regarding the viability of the project once the Program funding has come to an end, and how does the project address these risks?

The risks that the MVP will not be maintained in the medium and long term are low because of the very moderate cost (but unfortunately neither explained nor detailed in the application) of the future website, but also because the structure carrying the project and its results is the Swiss consortium, a perennial structure which was not created ex-nihilo for the project. However, the real added value of the project lies in the possible follow-up projects which are for the moment only hypotheses. It will be important to ensure quickly that they can be launched.

6.3. Resource mobilization

A) Effectiveness : Is the project achieving its objectives?

What indicators and verification measures have been considered to ensure the progress of project activities?

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The project managers explain that contrary to what was announced in the Project De- scription, they are abandoning an independent evaluation because they intend to publish the raw data in open data so that the institutions can evaluate the quality of the service and of the data themselves. This is a very good idea, but it needs to be clarified in its scope and methods: how will this be done? How will the feedback be taken into account? Etc.

How does the adopted work plan support the achievement of the project objectives?

The fact that a recognised institution such as Forschungszentrum Jülich, that has already carried out the same type of work was called in, rather than starting from scratch, gives confidence that the project will succeed. The work plan and the division into work pack- ages are coherent and well structured, but the content of the work package on repository survey is not sufficiently developed.

Is the governance of the project organized in such a way to enhance the partners' confi- dence in its success (with a special focus on participation to decision-making)?

One of the strong points of the project is its organisation, which gives pride of place to collaborative work: the consortium of academic libraries, AKOA and SLINER will work to- gether on this project.

How relevant do you find the risk management matrix?

The risk management matrix is relevant and covers all possible risks. The project manag- ers propose credible scenarios and alternatives in each case.

B) Efficiency: How well are resources being used?

How could the available resources be improved or optimized (or even completed during project implementation) to achieve the objectives?

The project managers wish to establish a stronger cooperation with Swissuniversities to strengthen the visibility of the project on the international level: it is an excellent idea since Swissuniverities has more political power and more international visibility.

To what extent will this project help to avoid duplication of effort and redundancy among swissuniversities members?

Since the project is located within the swiss academic consortium and will be designed as a national tool, with the possibility for institutions to carry out assessment of the data, it is very unlikely that similar projects will appear in the swiss academic community.

To what extent does the consortium or the project team have the necessary skills to achieve the objectives?

The skills and composition of the project team are not detailed. It seems to be understood that the project manager will be in charge of all WPs, but this is not clearly explained.

7. Final Additional Remarks regarding this Application

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