Science and Knowledge Openness: Developing Open Science Skills and Competencies in the Academic World

Call for Proposals

This call for consultant bids outlines work commissioned by ADBU, the French Association of directors and management staff at academic libraries and documentation centres, and LIBER, the Association of European Research Libraries (Ligue des Bibliothèques Européennes de Recherche), to carry out a study titled:

'Science and Knowledge Openness - Developing Open Science Skills and Competencies in the Academic World'.

You are invited to send us your offer to undertake this work as described below by March 18th 2022.

LIBER is the voice of Europe's research library community. Its mission is to provide an information infrastructure enabling world class research at LIBER Institutions. The organisation promotes and advocates for European libraries in all European and national fora where the voice of LIBER needs to be heard.

ADBU is the French association of directors and management staff of university libraries and documentation centres. In the changing ecosystem of knowledge and information, ADBU promotes the vision of an academic library with a strong societal role. ADBU is interested in the strategy and evolution of scientific and technical information and is constantly questioning, with openness and audacity, the place of academic libraries in society.

1. Objectives and context

In the context of dynamic and complex change in **open research practices and scholarly communication**, it is of primary importance to gather intelligence on **current and future competencies and skills.** This is crucial in order to endorse and support the open science movement, and to help improve the way scientific research is conducted and results disseminated. In recent years, a better understanding of the competencies that are necessary for open science communities and support staff has featured high on the agenda of many professional groups and universities. This study is a follow-up to this preliminary work (see below: the context of the study).

The main objective of the study is to highlight how libraries and librarians are involved in new open science research practices, what roles they play, which competencies are at stake and the complementarity of their skills with those of the researchers and other support staff, including in the following contexts:

- **In research projects**, as research supporters and partners (Principal Investigators (PI's), Co-Principal Investigators (Co-PI's), support, expertise, advisory), from active provision to equal partnership;
- In the **task forces of international professional organizations** that are working on infrastructures, policies and methods related to open research;
- In **international expert groups** working to formalize recommendations to enable more open science;
- In the bodies that reflect on the evolution of **research evaluation** towards a greater recognition of open science practices.

The study will thus highlight the added-value of librarians and people working in libraries and also highlight innovative and unprecedented skills and organizational methods implemented by libraries today and which will be brought to scale in the near future among European libraries.

The **context** of this study follows programmes and initiatives such as the:

- The UNESCO Recommendation on Open Science;

- Strategic priorities of the [Horizon Europe](#) programme;
- [LIBER Open Science Roadmap](#);
- [European Open Science Cloud](#) (EOSC) and [LIBER-EOSC workshop series outcomes](#);
- [From principles to practices: Open Science at Europe's universities](#) (EUA)
- [Universities 2030](#) strategy;
- [Open Education Initiative](#) launched by SPARC-Europe;
- [LIBER Open Science Training Methods and Practices](#) study;
- [LERU Roadmap for Open Science](#), and;
- European strategies related to the circulation and economy of knowledge and data.

All these resources, and others identified by the consultant, can be used as documentary inputs to the study. The requested study complements these already published elements by focusing fully on the skills used by libraries in several research environments (see above).

2. Who is this study for?

This study is addressed to all open science stakeholders:
- **Policymakers and leaders** at the international, national, professional organization, and academic levels;
- **Researchers**, leaders of research communities and research VPs;
- **Open science communities** in national and European universities, professional organizations, national and international organizations;
- **Library** directors, library staff.

3. What is the perimeter of the study?

The study focuses on Europe and European widening countries but will not be able to address all the countries. A selection of countries should be made in conjunction with the actors to be addressed (see deliverable 1 below in section 4).

4. Deliverables

The entire study consists of 5 deliverables within a period of 18 months (maximum). The work will be done in cooperation with a group of experts, consisting of ADBU and LIBER members and under the responsibility of a steering committee.

1. Definition of the methodology for conducting the study

The first deliverable is for the consultant to suggest, in close cooperation with the LIBER-ADBU group of experts, a method for selecting the countries and actors to be interviewed during the 2 phases of the study (see points 2 and 3 below). Twenty interviews will be conducted during phase 1, mainly libraries' representatives, and 20 more during phase 2, mainly researchers.

The selection must both take into account the most advanced actors on the subject in Europe today, but also be the result of more in-depth investigation of initiatives and work carried out by less visible actors, or those working on emerging subjects within the scope of open science such as citizen or participatory science.

2. First stage of the study: Open science skills and competencies within research libraries

This first stage of the study compiles a **desktop information collection** and elements coming from **interviews** of key stakeholders (twenty interviews or so) from various libraries and professional organizations in Europe. It will consist of:

- **A reminder of the DNA** of research libraries and librarians: their knowledge on openness, the way they address new challenges of open science (such as privacy and security matters, specificity within disciplines…).
  → This work will mainly consist of a literature review based on reference documents and already published information (see above).

- **A detailed inventory** of competencies and skills of people working in libraries related to the 7 following positions/activities:
    - Open Access publication support,
    - Research data management, FAIR data management, participation to initiatives such as the GoFAIR, other tools and methods like AI,
    - Data curation,
    - Training in open science practices such as data management and dissemination,
    - Bibliometrics and new metrics support,
    - Open science advocacy and expertise within organizations,
    - Citizen Science facilitation, librarians in charge of public engagement

This way of describing skills is not limiting. Other ways could be to link them to the different criteria of the Unesco recommendation for open science and, of course, to the research cycle.

→ This work will mainly be based on a series of interviews.

- Representative, innovative and/or high-level examples of **training programs and job descriptions** dedicated to librarians.
  → This work will be the result of a compilation of information gathered during the interviews and collected online.

3. Second stage of the study: Cooperation on open science with research communities and research libraries

The second stage of the study focuses on the application of library skills during the research cycle. The three dimensions developed below will be worked on, on the basis of **interviews** (about twenty) conducted with previously identified researchers (see deliverable 1 above).

- **Success stories**, best practices, case studies told by researchers focused on outstanding cooperation with libraries/librarians: The goal is to value the unique skills held by the libraries, regarding data (preparation, curation, monitoring, transmission, archiving) and in other areas of open science processes. It is not a justification for libraries (i.e. legitimation of their role) but it is a focus on all the competencies and skills housed in libraries or among librarians and on the fact that collaborative work between libraries and academics is mutually beneficial.

- Evidence from **high-value stakeholders** and leaders in universities and international organizations of the need to cooperate with libraries to advance open science on reasonable and reasoned terms.

- **Innovative modes of organization** where librarians do not necessarily work within the libraries but always in touch with the researchers.

4. Recommendations

Based on the study (first and second phases), this deliverable will be forward-looking recommendations on the evolution of librarians' skills, training, upskilling and recruitment regarding open science advancement in the form of a report written in English.

Recommendations for future work on the same topic are also expected, either on quantitative data collection or on community building for example.

5. A scientific and advocacy communication pack

- An advocacy tool kit with key messages, promotional materials, target recommendations, infographics, posters, taglines… based on the results of the two phases of the study.

- A long version and short summary of the whole study

5. Sequencing of the study phases

- Study kickoff: (Month 1)
    - project goals, deliverables and workflow;
    - communication and coordination.

- Deliverable 1: Study methodology in cooperation with the experts group (Month 2 - 3)
    - Interviewees identification;
    - Interview processes (questions form, outlines,...)

- Deliverable 2: Open science skills and competencies within research libraries (Month 3 - 7)
    - Iterations with the expert group;
    - Presentation of the results to the expert group;
    - Presentation and validation of the results with the steering committee.

- Deliverable 3: Cooperation on open science with research communities and research libraries (Month 8 - 12)
    - Update and adjustment of the list of interviewees, to be discussed with the expert group;
    - Iterations with the group;
    - Presentation of the results to the expert group;
    - Presentation and validation of the resultats with the steering committee.

- Deliverable 4: Final report and further recommendations (Month 13)
    - Presentation of the results to the expert group;
    - Presentation and validation of the resultats with the steering committee.

- Deliverable 5: scientific and advocacy communication pack (Month 14)

- Presentation of the results to a dedicated LIBER and ADBU group including communication experts and the steering committee

6. Additional Requirements and budget

The expected deliverables will:

- Be written in English;
- Include the details of the methodologies used;
- Apply a CC-BY licence for all deliverables;

The study should also emphasise the following definitions:
- Competencies;
- Skills;
- Types of competencies and skills covered in the deliverables;
- Types of concrete skills per competency.

The financial proposal should not exceed **40 000 euros** all taxes and charges included.

7. Candidates selection

The winner of the Call for Proposals will be chosen on the basis of:
- The evaluation of a note and a set of documents in response to the above specifications.
- A pre-selection process (see below).

Proposals submission process:
- The notes have to be deposited through a form to be found on this web page: https://adbu.fr/adbu-liber-study
- It will be possible for the candidates to ask questions directly on the same web page.
- Answers will be displayed on the web page and candidates will also be notified by email.

The note should combine the following:

- Rewriting of the problematization of the study, as the candidate would have understood it;
- Proposed deliverables, compatible with the requirements specified;

- A work methodology to be as detailed as possible;
- A timeline for carrying out the study, compatible with the requirements specified;
- A detailed financial proposal in euros, at a fixed price, and all taxes and charges included;
- A list of recent references justifying the candidate's experiences within libraries and research activities;
- A statement of alignment with the General Data Protection Regulation.

The candidates are free to provide any other document they deem necessary. Applications must be written in English.

Pre-selection process:
A pre-selection will be made by the study experts group on the basis of the note submitted.

Mandatory, individual interviews will be held with the pre-selected candidates (10 minutes for the candidate to present their main ideas, 20 minutes for questions/answers). This will be organised online.

These meetings will cover both the content and the methodology. If necessary, these meetings will allow the candidates to adapt their proposal, both in terms of content, and of budget, and each party to clarify any useful point.

Selection process:
Both the note (adapted after the pre-selection meetings) and the pre-selection interview are of value to select the winner of the call. This may then lead to adapting the specifications, if necessary, and by mutual agreement.

Evaluation criteria:
The successful proposal will be selected based on the following criteria:
- Quality of the proposal;
- Value for money;
- Proven track record of work led in the libraries/research/higher education sectors;

8. Confidentiality

It is up to ADBU and LIBER to determine whether and, if so, how they wish to disseminate all or part of the contents of the study.

To this end, both the candidates and the selected service provider undertake to keep the documents relating to this study confidential, and guarantee that ADBU and LIBER will have exclusive access to them.

This confidentiality concerns the present specifications, the application file, and the deliverables of the study, whether they are final documents or working documents.

This commitment is valid for an unlimited period of time, during or after the completion of the study.

If any documents are to be released to third parties, both the applicants, and the successful contractor must obtain the explicit written agreement of ADBU and LIBER.

This confidentiality setting will be included in the contract to be signed by both parties.

9. Time schedule for the study and the duration of the assignment

The consultant's assignment is expected to begin in May 2022 and have a turnaround time of 18 months (maximum). The consultant is requested to commit to this planning. The month by which the study must be completed is November 2023.

10. Other Conditions Attached to this Request for Proposals

1. The consultant cannot derive any rights to reimbursement of quotation costs or to obtaining the order from this Request for Proposals.
2. ADBU and LIBER may (temporarily) suspend and/or revoke this Request for Proposals. In such a situation, you are not entitled to reimbursement of the costs incurred for this Request for Proposals.
3. By submitting a Proposal, you declare that you meet all the requirements set out in this Request for Proposals and that you agree to the terms and conditions set.
4. General conditions of sale, sector conditions, or other conditions of the Tenderer are expressly excluded and do not apply to this agreement.

Activity	Date
Call published	January 24th
Deadline for asking questions	February 18th
Publishing answers to questions Note of Information	February 28th
Deadline for submission proposals (offer)	March 18th
Reviews of the consultancy firms' proposals	by April 1st
Notification to the shortlisted bidders	April 1st
Pre-selection meetings	Week of April 4th
Possibility to modify the proposal	by April 10th
Communication of the decision	April 15th
Meeting with chosen consultant / Commencement date of agreement	Between April 25th and May 6th

ADBU and LIBER reserve the right to change the above proposed schedule. In the event that ADBU and LIBER proceed to change the intended schedule, this will be communicated to all parties concerned. Tenderers cannot derive any rights from this intended schedule. The dates mentioned in this (or the amended) schedule for the submission of questions and the submission of proposals are regarded as deadlines.