

Foreword

Our knowledge of the world has been improving more and more rapidly with time and is becoming increasingly reliable. It is clear that the adaptation of societies to the knowledge base has become ever more critical for sustained growth. It is sad to note, however, that access to knowledge is becoming restricted and large fractions of the world are being left behind in this enormously exciting enterprise of our time. It is critical to bridge the knowledge-gap in every possible way, especially because every segment of the world today depends on the other. A means of achieving some semblance of balance is offered by implementing Open Access solutions.

Open Access means aims to remove restrictions that exist on the access to articles and knowledge to the world-wide scholarly community, in particular to those in Developing Countries. Scientists in these countries still have difficulty in publishing their work due to the lack of access to the network, to their institutional economic difficulties or to the lack of awareness of available Open Access solutions. One hopes that Open Access will enhance educational and research opportunities and bring the world together.

Open Access solutions are desirable from another point of view as well. The visibility, usage and impact of researchers' own findings can increase with Open Access, as does their power to find, access and use the work of others. Thus, Universities and Research centers also benefit from their researchers' increased impact, which also increases the return on investment of those who fund the research -such as governments, foundations and scientific societies.

We at ICTP are acutely aware of these dimensions. Our experience with Open Access has been successful, both on the technical and organizational level. One concrete example of Open Access services at ICTP are the on-line Lecture Notes Series available through the ICTP

website www.ictp.it. These notes are formally structured pedagogical material on advanced topics directed to young students and researchers, in particular to those working under less favourable conditions. Another example is the ICTP's African Physical Review (www.aphysrev.org) which offers new possibilities to scientists and helps disseminate research carried out by African colleagues. These experiences form the basis for this book, and offer both general and technical insight into "*Science Dissemination using Open Access*", which is the chosen title for the book. This book aims to guide the scientific community on the requirements of Open Access, and the plethora of low-cost solutions available. A compendium of selected literature on Open Access is presented to increase the awareness of the potential of open publishing in general. Discussions on open publishing via Academic Webcasting are also included. The book also aims to encourage decision makers in academia and research centers to adopt institutional and regional Open Access Journals and Archives to make their own scientific results public and fully searchable on the Internet.

The book is a collaborative effort between CERN (Switzerland) and ICTP (Italy) enabled by the support of INASP (UK). I thank the Editors and all the Authors of this compendium for their work as well as their decision to make the book freely available both in print and on the Internet, and am pleased to be able to make these prefatory remarks.

K.R. Sreenivasan
Abdus Salam Research Professor
Director, ICTP