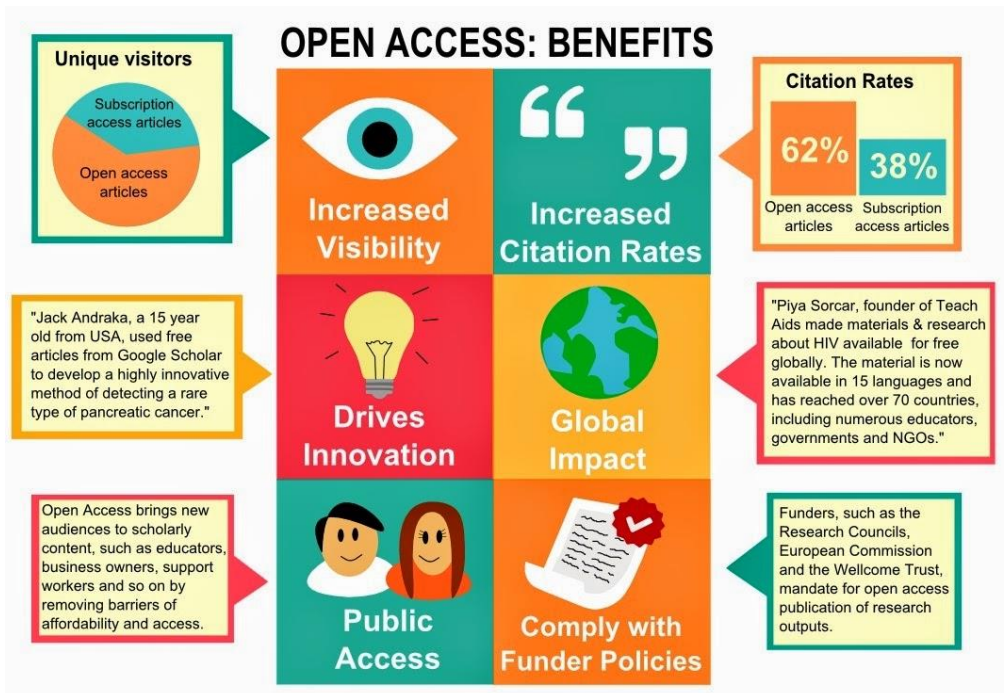


Open Access week 2013: Why Open Access?



Open access week is a global event dedicated to celebrating the success of various open access publications and projects. This year's theme for open access week is 'Redefining Impact', which reflects the remarkable impact that open access projects have had in the world to date. For those of you who are not familiar with the term 'Open Access', here is a quick definition:

"Open Access" to information is the free, immediate, online access to the results of scholarly research, and the right to use and re-use those results as you need." – From the official [OA week website](#).

Why is open access important?

Open access is important as it allows anyone to use and access research with no restrictions. Typically you would have to pay a subscription charge to access particular articles and pay a further charge to obtain the necessary permission from the publisher to use the articles in your research. Most researchers make the common assumption of thinking that these articles are free, but in reality the fee is actually paid by the institution that the researcher is working in. Therefore they never realise how difficult it can be to access these publications or how long it takes the institution to get permission to use these articles. The whole lengthy process means that researchers for example in third world countries can't afford to purchase the publications, limiting their access to vital research that could save lives.

Making your research open access offers a range of benefits for the researcher and the world (as shown in the above infographic). Just last year in the news there was a headline of a 15 year old boy using open access publications found on Google to develop a test to

detect a rare form of pancreatic cancer, potentially saving lives (read the full story on the [BBC News website](#)). This news headline demonstrates the power and impact that open access research can have. A simple Google search of “open access research benefits” will reveal a whole host of benefits of choosing open access for you as a researcher and the wider world. So don’t let the drawbacks of open access outweigh the positive impact you can make on the world! Contact the research team at the library for more information and to see how you can make your research open access.

Are you ready for open access? Let us know your opinion or concerns on making your research open access.