

History of the term Open Science #1: the early days

Egon Willighagen 

Published April 7, 2019

Citation

Willighagen, E. (2019, April 7). History of the term Open Science #1: the early days. *Chem-bla-ics*. <https://doi.org/10.59350/8kxrz-48p64>

Keywords

Citeulike, Opensource, Openscience

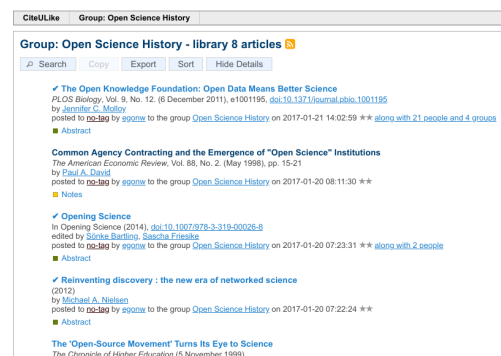
Abstract

Screenshot of the Open Science History group on CiteULike.

Copyright

Copyright © Egon Willighagen 2019. Distributed under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](#), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.

Open Science has been around for some time. Before Copyright became a thing, knowledge dissemination was mostly limited by how easy you could get knowledge from one place to another. The introduction of Copyright changed this. No longer the question was **how to get people to know the new knowledge to how to get people to pay for new knowledge**. One misconception, for example, is that publishing is a free market. Yes, you can argue that you can publish anywhere you like (theoretically, at least, but reality says otherwise), but the monopoly is in getting access: for every new fact (and republishing the same fact is a faux pas), there is exactly one provider of that fact.



Screenshot of the [Open Science History](#) group on CiteULike.

Slowly this is changing, but only slowly. What this really needs, is open licenses, just like open source licenses. Licenses that allow fixing typos, allow resharing with your students, etc.

But contrary to what has been prevalent in the [Plan S](#) discussion, these ideas are not new. And people have been trying Open Science for more than two decades already.

I have been trying to dig up the oldest references (ongoing effort) of the term Open Science (in the current meaning), and had [a CiteULike group for that](#). But CiteULike is shutting down, so I will blog the references I found, and add some context.

A first article to mention is this 1998 article that mentions Open Science: [Common Agency Contracting and the Emergence of "Open Science" Institutions](#) *The American Economic Review*, Vol. 88, No. 2. (May 1998), pp. 15-21 by Paul A. David. Worth reading, but does require reading some of the cited literature.

The follow two magazine articles took the term Open Science to a wider public, and in reply to a conference held at Brookhaven National Laboratory:

- [The 'Open-Source Movement' Turns Its Eye to Science](#) *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (5 November 1999) by Vincent Kiernan
- [A Natural Home for Open Source](#) 1999 *Dr. Dobb's The World of Software Development* (1 October 1999)
- [Open Source/Open Science](#) 1999 *Linux Journal* (1 February 2000) by Stephen Adler

I would also like to note that the [openscience.org](#) website by [Dan Gezelter](#) went online in the late nineties already, which I have used in various of my source code projects, and, of course, also has been used by the [Chemistry Development Kit](#) from the start.