



## A day in the life of an open scholarship manager Ina Smith

**Making research openly accessible and marketing research are Ina's passions. Since being trained as a secondary school teacher and librarian, she has come a long way and her career has steered her in a direction she never would have expected!**

**"Choose a job you love, and you will never have to work a day in your life", Confucius said.**

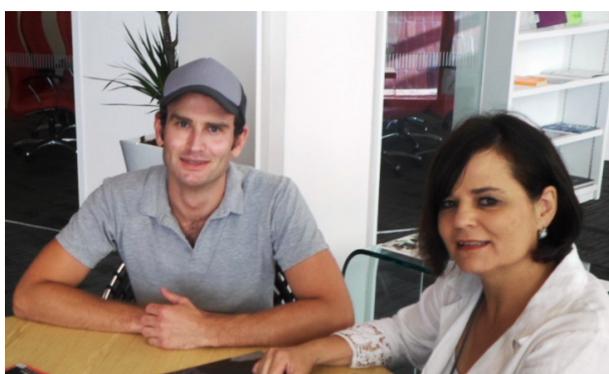
On a normal workday, my two cats wake me up at around 7:00 am, and 40 minutes later I set off for work. Few people are fortunate enough to be able to take a brisk ten-minute walk to work, at the same time enjoying the beautiful surroundings. But I am lucky to live very close to Stellenbosch University, where I work as an open scholarship manager in the Library and Information Service. Stellenbosch is the top research university on the African continent and is situated in the quaint little town of Stellenbosch in the Western Cape Province of South Africa. It is surrounded by beautiful mountains, wine lands and the ocean within driving distance. Being a university within a historic town, there is always a buzz – mainly because of the mixture of locals, students and tourists from all over the world who enjoy visiting, studying or settling here.

Once I arrive on campus, my first stop is Café G.O.1 in the 'Neelsie' Student Centre, for one of the best coffees in town. Arriving at my desk, I then attend to the most urgent e-mails. Since our next graduation period has been scheduled for April 2014, now is a busy time with an increase in questions from students and supervisors, for example on how to submit their theses or dissertations to SUNScholar (we use DSpace software), the open access (OA) and full-text research repository of Stellenbosch University. The repository management component of my job involves making the research output of our University as visible as possible, so that others all over the world can benefit from it and cite it, which will in the end also impact on the research profile of our University. Since we recently upgraded to a new version of DSpace, I need to support the metadata editors quite a bit. Assisted by our systems administrator, this is fortunately not a problem. My job also includes digitally preserving our most important asset – our research – for years to come so that it will be accessible to future generations.

*"...others all over the world can benefit ..."*

97 As this is a Monday morning, I meet with my two assistants at 10:00 to discuss our plans for the week. We identify problems, do risk assessments, identify possible projects and prioritize. The repository assistant mainly focuses on submitting research articles made available by academics for submission to SUNScholar. The open access journals assistant focuses on digitizing retrospective theses and dissertations (previously available in print only), retrospective journal articles previously available in print only, and also on customizing the look and feel of OA journals we host, using Open Journals Systems (OJS). The service through which we host OA journals is referred to as SUNJournals, and the process involves setting up the journal, providing training and support, requesting eISSNs and registering digital object identifiers (DOIs). As journal manager for the hosted journals I am constantly on the lookout for ways to increase the visibility of the 16 hosted journals. Networking with the SA Department of Higher Education and Training, the Academy of Science of South Africa and other higher education institutions in our country is very important as we cannot function in isolation.

“...we cannot function in isolation.”



Working with a graduate student (Theo Sonnekus, PhD Visual Studies) in the Research Commons of the JS Gericke Library at Stellenbosch

Throughout the day, I then respond to questions on copyright (often in consultation with the intellectual property rights officer), publishing books and articles, what open access research is all about, how OA can increase a researcher’s citation count and the impact of one’s research, and how to submit research to the repository. I enjoy the interaction when presenting workshops to graduate students and academics, and during this time of year the focus is on the submission of theses and dissertations. To make provision for students not on campus, I utilize webinar technology so that they can follow everything from the comfort of their office, home or wherever in the world they find themselves. I must admit my training as a secondary school teacher and my graduate studies in computer-integrated education (MEd [CIE]) come in handy when conducting training, whether virtual, developing animated online tutorials or presenting live training in our state-of-the-art electronic classroom.

“... my training as a secondary school teacher ... comes in handy ...”

During lunch, I often go for a walk through the lovely botanical garden on campus or one of the nature reserves close by.

Back to work, and a third component of my role as open scholarship manager involves the hosting or managing of conference web pages and the publishing of conference proceedings, using Open Conference Systems (OCS). We have just recently discovered how valuable this tool is, and I am looking forward to doing some marketing and training in this regard. Overall, I find working with academic researchers and postgraduate students highly stimulating, and I’m constantly looking at ways to better support them.

In 2012, we were fortunate to host the Berlin 10 Conference, and as conference co-ordinator I had to oversee all activities for the conference. It was a great challenge which I enjoyed tremendously! Networking with the who’s who in open access and welcoming the world to our little town was an incredible experience. Another annual event we support is

98 International Open Access Week, presented during October. I have already started planning what to do this year, and am always looking for new ideas and ways to further promote open access. There is such a need for expertise, and I gladly share my knowledge and experience when invited to present at conferences, present workshops or when visitors want to come and visit and learn from me. I always learn from them too, and am so thankful for such wonderful opportunities! A recent highlight was participating in authoring a chapter on OA infrastructure for an OA curriculum to be published by UNESCO to be implemented and used by librarians and library schools from all over the world. It is also a privilege to 'give back' to the library profession by serving as deputy chair of the Higher Education Library Interest Group (HELIG) of the official body for librarians in South Africa, the Library and Information Association of South Africa (LIASA). Recently I had to assist with a webinar on library orientation, and it was an eye-opener to see how responsive people are within an online real-time environment.



With colleagues during a meeting on an OA curriculum for UNESCO, New Delhi, India, 2013.

Left to right: Shalini Urs (University of Mysore, India), Susan Veldsman (Academy of Science of South Africa, South Africa), Ina Smith (Stellenbosch University, South Africa ) and Barnali Chakrabarty (Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia), India)



At the Taj Mahal, during her 2013 working trip to India. Ina always finds time to explore new places in between work. Her motto in life: "Work hard, play hard!"

99 I enjoy going to the gym after work – which can be any time from 18:00 onwards – and am a typical night owl. Once back from the gym, I spend some time with our daughter (who is a first-year student at Stellenbosch University) and my husband (who phones me, since we commute between Stellenbosch and Pretoria, in the northern part of the country). Then I settle down to read some academic papers in preparation for my doctoral studies.



Ina and Rikus, her Friesian stallion. "When on his back, grace, beauty, spirit and fire come together – and I become free!"

The highlight of my week, however, is Saturday, when I become an equestrian! My horse is a huge black Friesian stallion, and we participate in equestrian shows from time to time. I am really proud of him! Once in a while I play flute at special events. 'Toastmasters' once a month helps me to improve my presentation skills, and it is so much fun to listen to presentations by others! There is never a dull moment in my life, and not one day is the same, but I hope I have given you an insight into a fairly typical working day. If life ever becomes dull, I will find something to make it interesting again and challenge myself to try something new, such as white shark cage diving – not for the faint-hearted!

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