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## ResearchGate vs. the Institutional Repository: Competition or Complement?

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# ResearchGate vs. the Institutional Repository: Competition or Complement?

**Julia Lovett & Andrée Rathemacher**

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March 27, 2018  
Providence, RI



ResearchGate

**academia.edu**



# University of Rhode Island

Rhode Island's public research university

Land-grant and sea-grant institution

Research strengths (per Web of Science):

- Engineering
- Environmental sciences
- Chemistry
- Oceanography
- Marine freshwater biology
- Pharmacology
- Psychology



# URI Open Access Policy

Passed by unanimous vote of Faculty Senate in March 2013

Permissions-based policy (Harvard-style)

“Green” Open Access

Applies to all faculty

Supported by manual workflow that relies on active faculty participation

Search alerts notify library staff of new articles by URI authors

Staff e-mail authors for manuscripts; deposit on authors' behalf





# Our study

## **Population study of full-time URI faculty (September 2016)**

- Which faculty members have uploaded full-text articles to ResearchGate?
- Which faculty members have contributed articles to the URI OA Policy?

## **Web-based survey of full-time URI faculty (October 2016)**

- Familiarity with both the OA Policy and ResearchGate
- Level of participation in both the OA Policy and ResearchGate
- Motivations, benefits, concerns
- If not participated in OA Policy or ResearchGate, why?
- Understanding of legality of sharing articles

F	G	H	I	J	K
Broad Discipline	Rank	OAP Articles (≥ 2013)	RG full-text articles uploaded by author (total)	RG full-text articles uploaded by author (≥ 2013)	RG profile?
A&H	Full	0	0	0	No
SOC	Associate	0	0	0	No
SOC	Full	0	0	0	No
SOC	Associate	0	0	0	Yes
STEM	Associate	0	2	1	Yes
STEM	Assistant	0	0	0	Yes
STEM	Full	0	15	1	Yes
STEM	Full	0	0	0	Yes
STEM	Assistant	0	0	0	Yes (author profile?)
STEM	Full	0	33	3	Yes
A&H	Associate	0	0	0	No
STEM	Full	0	36	6	Yes
STEM	Assistant	0	0	0	No
STEM	Assistant	0	0	0	No
SOC	Assistant	1	0	0	Yes (author profile?)
SOC	Assistant	0	0	0	Yes



## Population study results

- **47%** of URI full-time faculty had profiles on ResearchGate.
- **34%** of URI full-time faculty contributed full-text articles to ResearchGate.

BUT FOR COMPARISON...

- ResearchGate: # of faculty who provided full-texts of articles published *after March 2013*

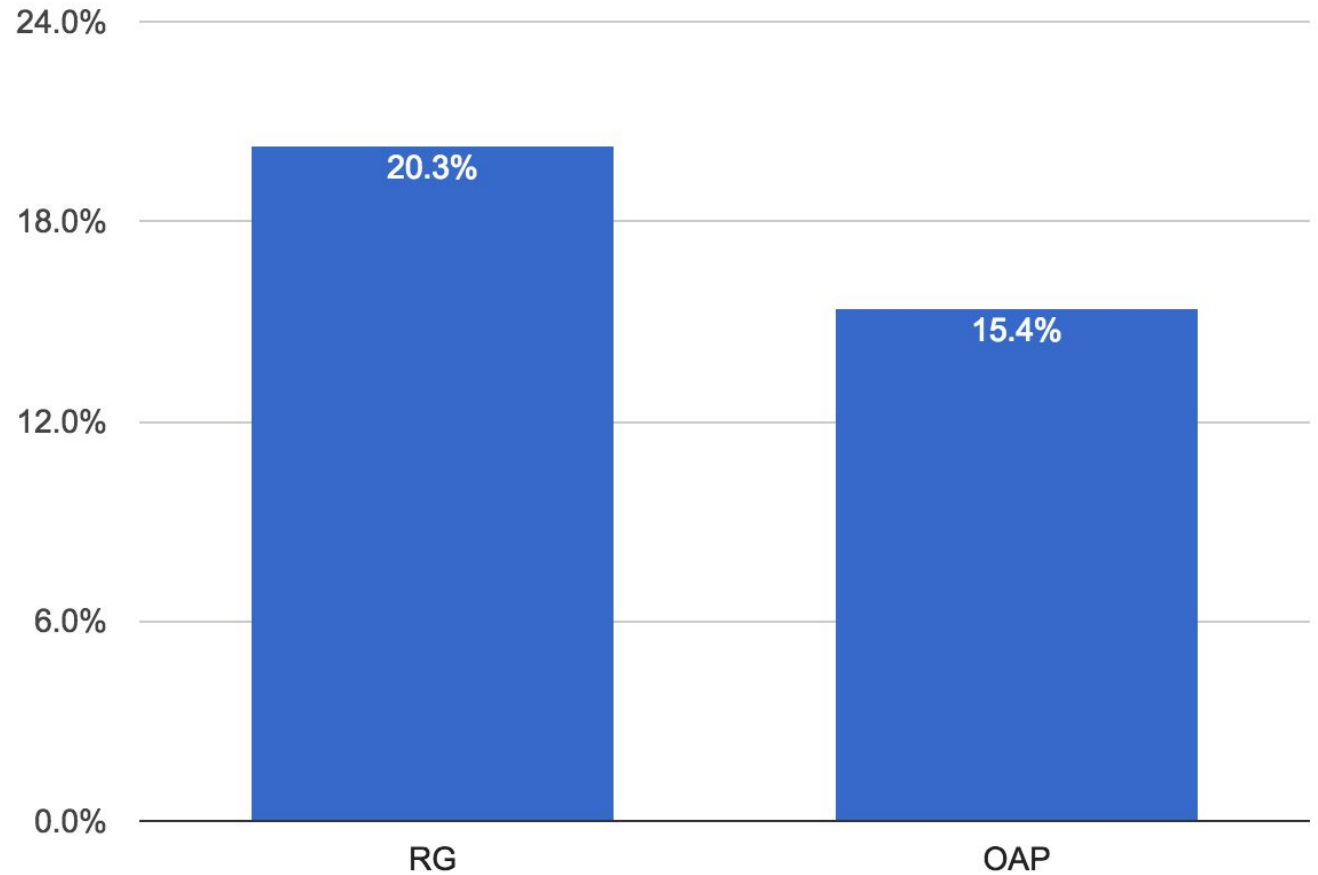
vs.

- Open Access Policy: # of faculty who provided articles in compliance with policy (passed in March 2013)

*Percent of faculty  
in population  
study contributing  
full-texts of  
articles to the URI  
OA Policy and  
ResearchGate  
(n=558)*

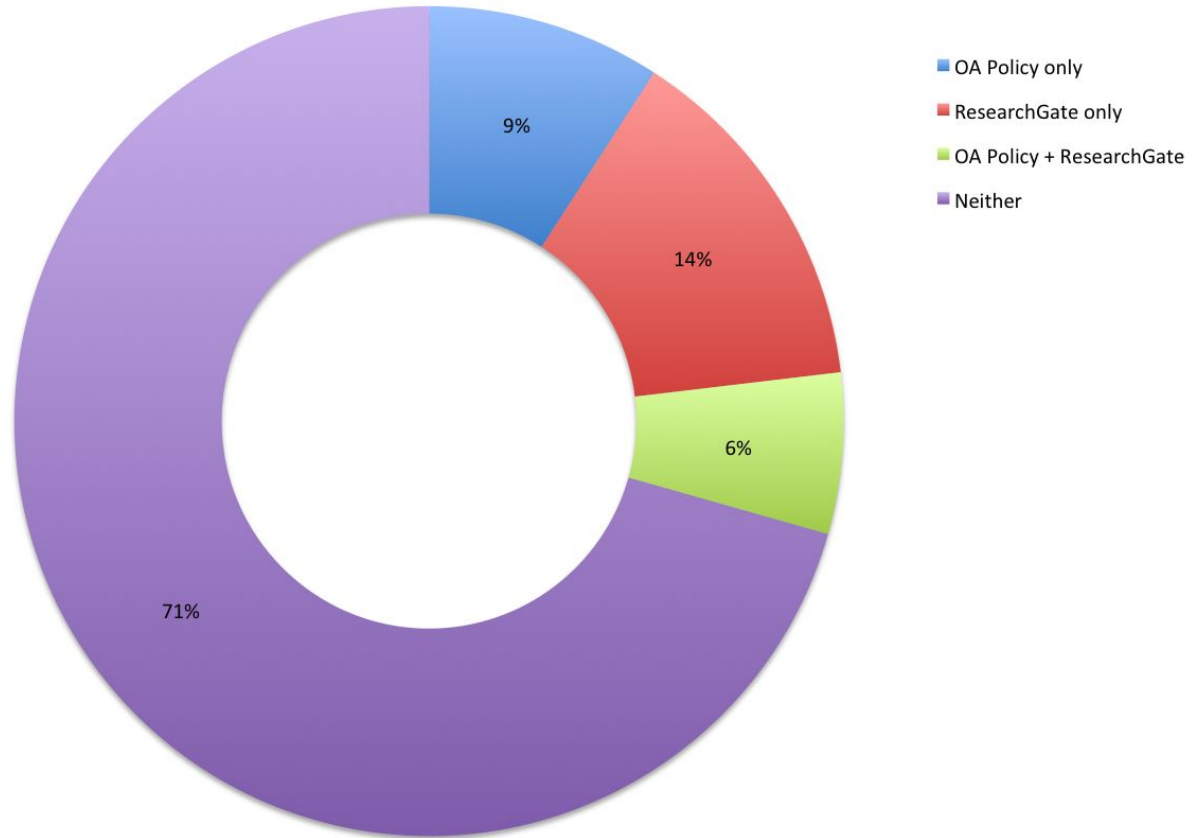
Population  
study  
results

**% of URI faculty contributing full-texts (articles published after  
March 2013) to ResearchGate and the Open Access Policy**



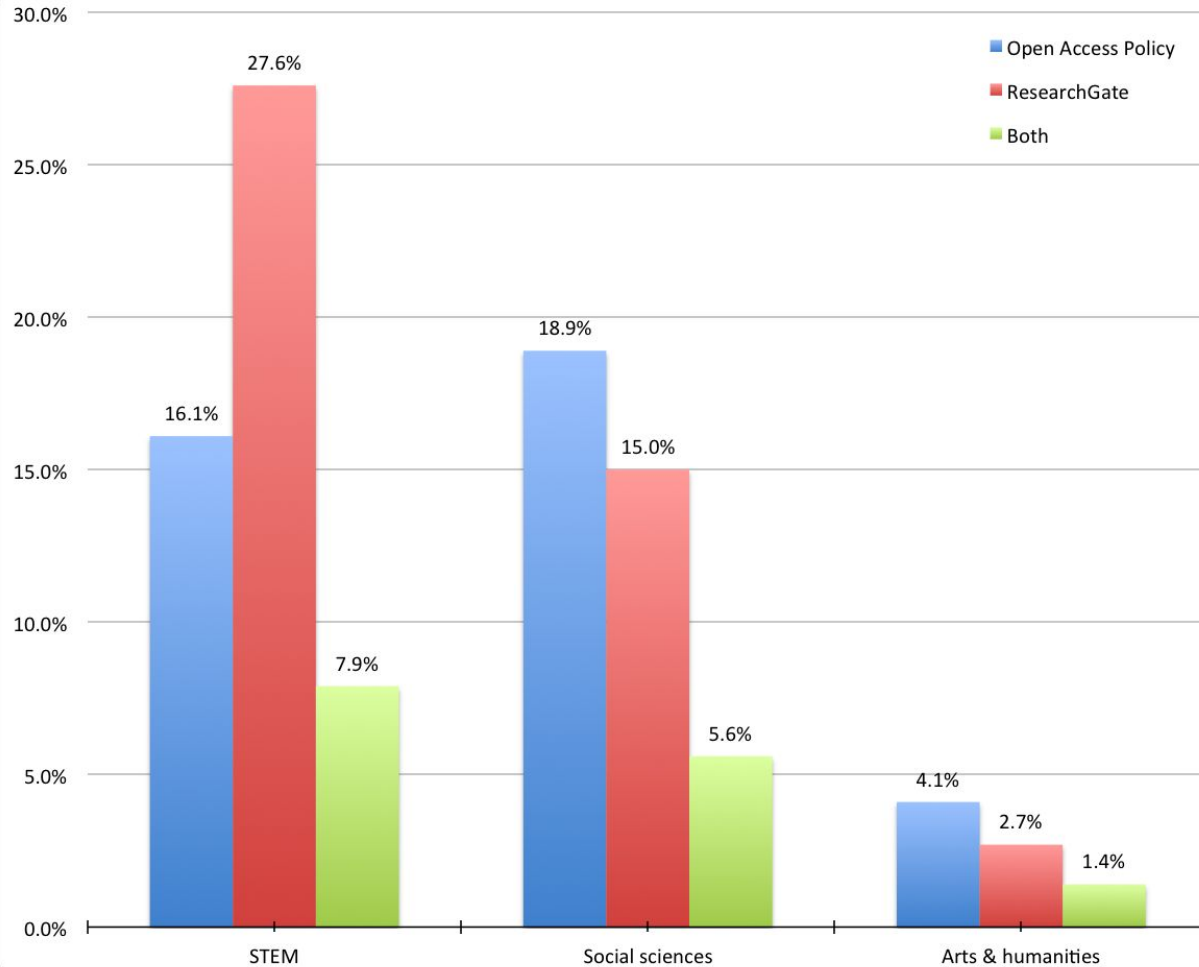
# Population study results

*Percent of faculty in population study contributing full-texts of articles to the URI OA Policy, RG (articles published after March 2013), both, and neither (n=558)*



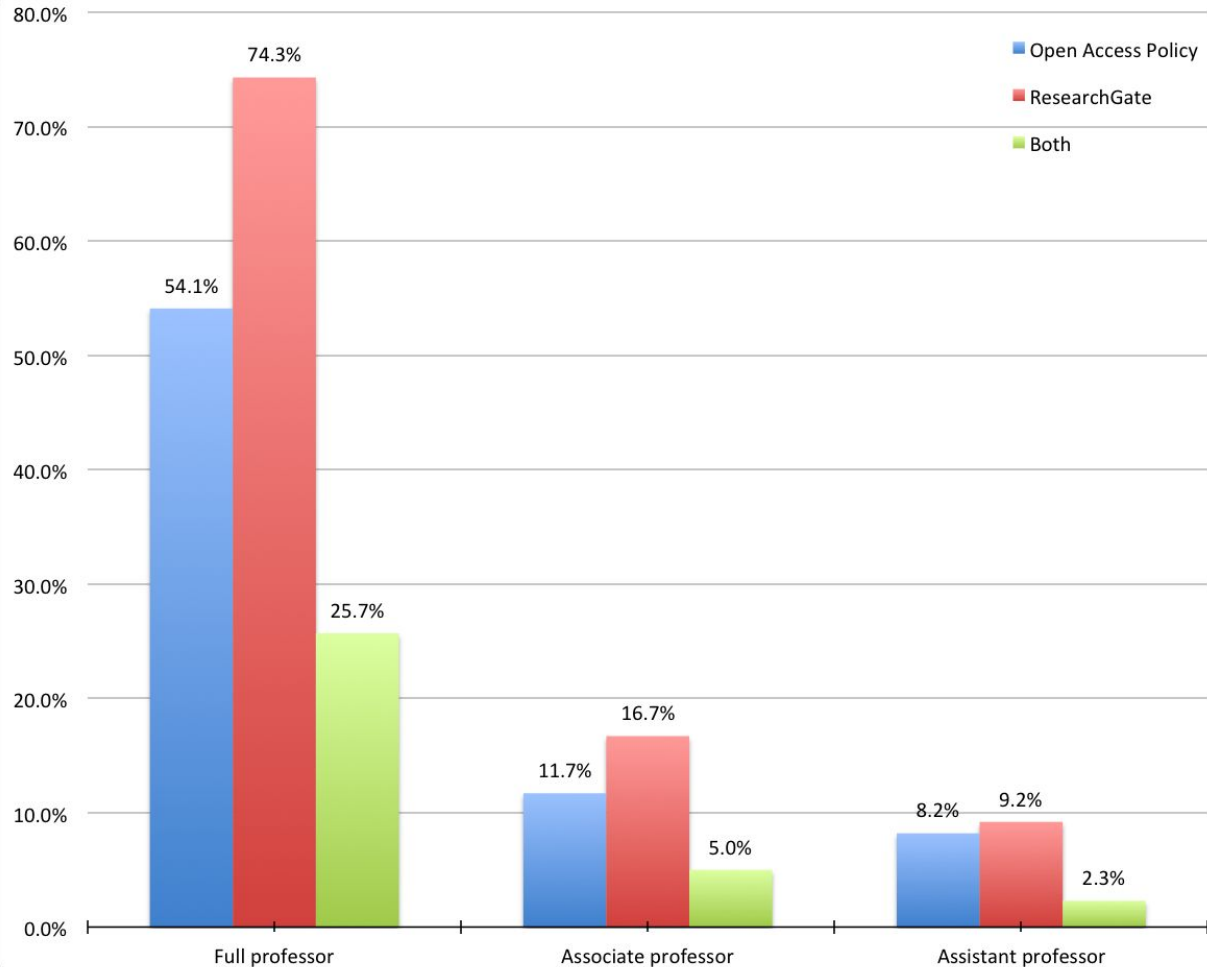
# Population study results

*Percent of faculty in population study contributing full-texts of articles to the URI OA Policy, RG (articles published after March 2013), and both, by broad discipline (n=558)*



# Population study results

*Percent of faculty in population study contributing full-texts of articles to the URI OA Policy, RG (articles published after March 2013), and both, by rank (n=558)*



# Survey results: Demographics

- 23 multiple-choice questions through SurveyMonkey
- Sent successfully to 710 full-time URI faculty (all ranks)
- 135 responses = **19% response rate**
- Responses by College: relative to distribution of faculty,
  - Arts & Sciences under-represented while College of the Environment & Life Sciences over-represented (11-12%)
- Responses by Rank
  - Full professors over-represented by ~15%
  - Assistant Professors and Lecturers under-represented
- 51% of respondents complied with OA Policy (vs. 13-14% actual rate across URI)

# Authors think ResearchGate offers more benefits:

	DigitalCommons@URI	ResearchGate
Connected with other researchers	8.8%	63.6%
Shared my work more broadly	60.3%	80.0%
Increased the visibility and impact of my work	52.9%	78.2%
Tracked statistics on downloads of my work	36.8%	56.4%
Archived my work for the long term	17.7%	n/a
Other (please specify)	22.1%	9.1%

Survey: Benefits of having articles available in DigitalCommons@URI (n=68) and ResearchGate (n=55)

# Authors dislike sharing manuscript versions:

- Preference for final published version of record
- Not wanting multiple versions of same work available
- Not wanting version with potential errors and typos to be publicly available
- Manuscript often messy => potentially misunderstandings by readers
- Manuscript does not share pagination of final version => difficult to cite
- Not having ready access to accepted manuscript version, especially when not corresponding author
- Time and effort to reassemble manuscript, e.g. reintegrating figures and tables into text



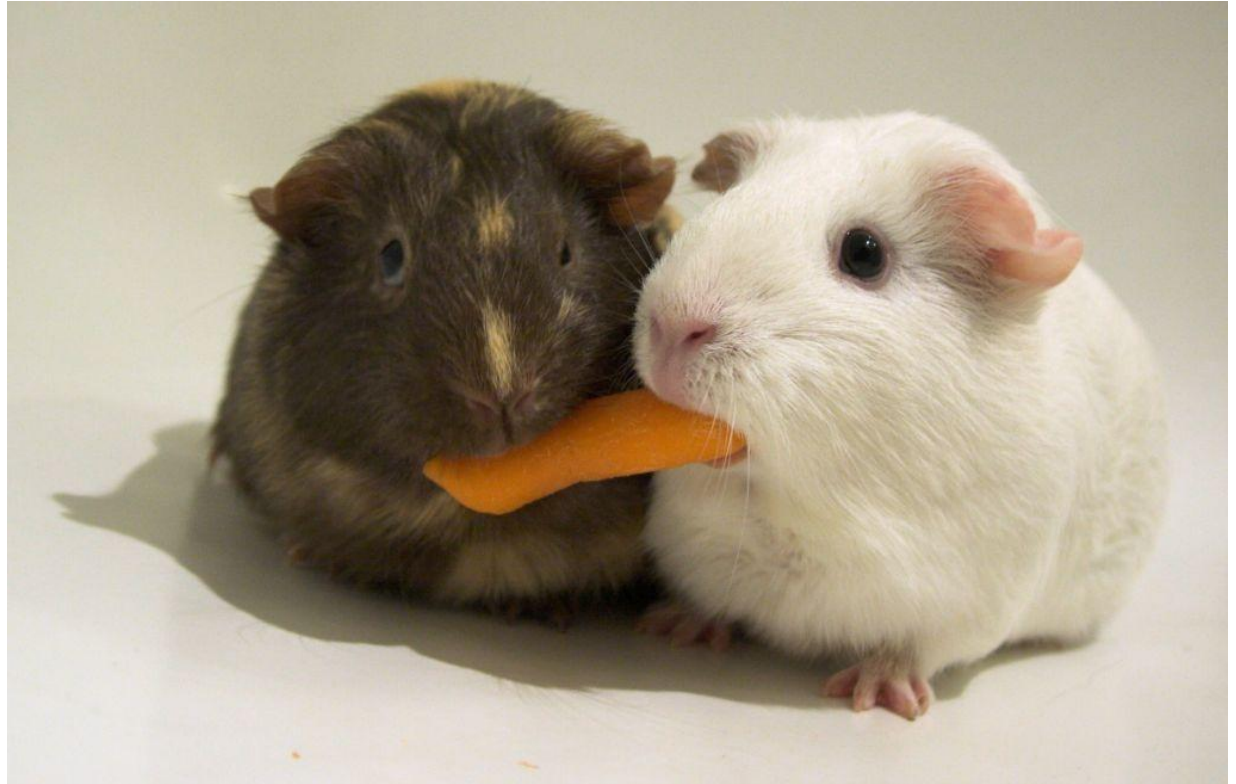
# Authors are confused about copyright:

	<b>Open Access Policy</b>	<b>ResearchGate</b>
Legal under copyright law	50.4%	21.4%
Violates the copyright of the publisher	8.4%	17.5%
Not sure	41.2%	61.1%

**Survey: Opinion of legality of complying with the OA Policy (n=131) and posting article full-texts on ResearchGate (n=126)**

# Sharers gonna share...

Statistical analysis revealed that having shared research on one platform meant an author was more likely to have shared on the other.



## Conclusions:

- URI faculty who posted articles to RG *more* likely to have complied with OA Policy, not *less*.
- Only a minority of faculty are sharing their work through either service.

=> Academic social networks not a threat to OA.

=> We need to recruit more faculty to share their work in general.

## Conclusions:

- Strong preference for sharing publisher PDF; aversion to sharing author manuscript versions.
  - => Education and outreach to authors around options for legally sharing articles is needed.
  - => Green OA through IRs will remain an activity of a minority of authors?
    - => If so, supports efforts to hasten the transition to Gold OA publishing system.

## Discussion questions:

=> Librarians: What are your experiences with faculty authors and academic social networks like ResearchGate and Academia.edu?

=> Why don't more faculty share their work in general?

- Are there significant ways they are sharing besides IRs and ASNs?
- Will sharing by authors always be a minority activity?
- How can sharing be effectively incentivized?

=> Have others also experienced authors' dislike for sharing their manuscript versions?

- If this is common, should we focus more on the transition to Gold OA, so that OA doesn't depend so much on authors?

# Questions?

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THINK BIG  WE DO<sup>SM</sup>

