**Celebrating our institutional repository**

By [Rosalyn Bass](https://blogs.kent.ac.uk/isnews/author/rb583/) | 20 March 2023



Our institutional repository at Kent is sweet 16 and we are celebrating [our 100,000 entry](https://kar.kent.ac.uk/100000/) with a party.

The Kent Academic Repository (KAR) is our institutional research repository. Its mission is to provide reliable, long-term, and open access to University of Kent research, making research easier for everyone to find and use our research.  
KAR:

* provides an official record of research works
* preserves research works digitally
* manages Open Access

# How it started

Work began on KAR in 2007 using free EPrints software from the University of Southampton, together with JISC funding and a project team of four Information Services staff.  
The initial aim was to act as a temporary research outputs record store for an RAE (pre REF) pilot project.   
The scope widened to making KAR an “*Institutional Repository (IR) containing up to 10,000 records (5000 with full text) with its operation and availability embedded within the University’s research workflow. “*

16 years on we have gone way beyond this and have now reached our **100,000 entry**.

KAR facilitated Open Access right from the start, but at that time OA was not the fully understood or the supported concept that it is now in 2023.  
KAR now contains **18446 fully Open Access items** that can be discovered, used and downloaded by anyone from anywhere in the world. You can discover the global reach of KAR from its dashboard

# How we manage KAR

KAR is managed and developed in-house by these teams in Information Services

* [Research and Scholarly Communication Support Team](https://www.kent.ac.uk/library-it/supporting-your-research)
* Corporate Systems
* Curation and Discovery
* Divisional Library Liaison Support Team

# KAR valued and essential

KAR is now a vital and essential system at Kent. It is used for

* reporting to external funders and governing bodies, including the Research Excellence Framework
* demonstrating compliance with community standards, such as funder Open Access requirements
* feeding information to academic profile webpages
* providing evidence for academic staff promotions
* supporting communications and marketing
* showing information about use and reach of research works

Since 2014 it has been the platform that holds and preserves our PhD theses. As we work through [projects to digitise some of our older print theses](https://blogs.kent.ac.uk/isnews/university-of-kent-print-theses-available-digitally-online/) more and more of our post-graduate work is being made available world-wide, demonstrating our research contribution and longevity.

Some of these uses were not envisaged when it first began, but KAR has been capable of flexing to meet changing needs without compromising its archival integrity or moving way from established international metadata standards and best practice.

**Recent achievements**

We are continually working to improve and develop KAR. We exchange ideas with other Universities and horizon scan to be on the lookout for changes we may need to make. We benefit from other Universities’ experience, and share our own expertise with the wider community.  
Recent achievements include:

* accessibility improvements to benefit those who rely on assistive technologies
* inclusion of persistent identifiers such as ORCiD, DOIs, funder IDs
* use of the JISC PubRouter tool to help populate KAR with journal article details

# Future plans

Next we aim to work on:

* integrating the [Credit Contributor Roles taxonomy](https://credit.niso.org/) into KAR
* improving the way KAR deals with pre-print early versions of articles that have not been peer-reviewed.
* better ways of reporting from KAR, particularly for our REF team in Research and Innovation Services.

# Explore our success stories

[#CelebratingKAR – Library and IT news (kent.ac.uk)](https://blogs.kent.ac.uk/isnews/tag/celebratingkar/)

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