

New Metaphors in Scientific Communication: Libraries and the Commons

The idea of communicating scientific ideas as a "paper" is an ancient one. But the need to compress information to a single flat plane evaporates with the internet - we can communicate incredibly rich and different types of data, visuals, multimedia, semantic annotations, software and more along with the run of words on the page. This change has to date only been hinted at as we still remain focused on the "article as PDF," a digitization of the metaphor of paper. The search for new metaphors is afoot. The idea of the "commons" as found in culture through Creative Commons and in software through the Free / Libre Open Source Software community is one of those new metaphors. This talk will examine the potential role of the commons in scientific communication and the potential roles that libraries might play in the evolution of a science commons.