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Specialized Portals, Specialized Information Services, Scholarly Networks

6th Workshop by openTA
Institute for Technology Assessment and System Analysis, KIT

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If we speak of "specialized portals, specialized information services, scholarly networks" we look for similarities among these different socio-technical arrangements. Two main features of these internet-based offerings are: 1) specialization in one or more academic discipline and a corresponding (inter-)disciplinary community; 2) integration of functions and multimodality. This is why we don't include single-purpose services like "simple websites" (e.g. of an expert association), library catalogs, repositories, digital document delivery, blogs, mailing list etc. as "scientific information systems, specialized information services, scholarly networks" which manage diverse functions. The mixture of functions defines the difference we are interested in. But which kind of functions are we talking about?

On a fundamental level we might distinguish between *information* (messages, announcements, events calendar, new book releases), *communication* (two- or multi-sided, e.g. mailing lists, blogs, discussion groups), *cooperation* (multi-sided interaction, collaborative coordination, collective writing in the "cloud", distributed analysis of data) and *transaction* (two-sided in the sense of binding communicative action, e.g. the order of a publication, signing a research proposal).

Following a (stereo)typical scholarly workflow you would start by *searching* for publications, data, projects, partners, sponsors. Once a research project is funded you *create* your *own publications* and research data which are to be *shared* within a specialized (scientific) community. *Workshops* (and virtual seminars or streaming solutions) are also part of this research episode. It might also be useful to offer *research tools*, e.g. online questionnaires and survey systems or shared libraries in the social sciences. Outcomes would have to be discussed, evaluated, improved and reviewed.

Moreover we distinguish between *actors* and *addressed audience*. Do recipients have the opportunity to contribute or do they have to remain passive?

The 6th workshop by openTA provides a forum for operators of scientific information portals and specialized information services as well as for scholarly networks and researchers who do scientific (empirical) work on scientific information systems, specialized information services, or scholarly networks. Besides, the workshop is thought to offer an open

space for the exchange of experiences, discussion about concepts and possible collaborations.

The following questions could be addressed by contributors:

- What do we know about the requirements researchers have regarding informational infrastructures? Which presuppositions are guiding existing services and infrastructures?
- Which kinds of informational architectures are developed, do they have a center or are they organized decentrally? Do they aggregate information or do they also generate content?
- Which functions are important, which functions could be seen as secondary? A central question seems to be if the informational and communicative functions are the main purpose of such services or rather collaborative functions.
- Which kinds of information technology and which mix of technologies are being used? How do they work in practice? Is it better to use already existing software or develop your own informational architecture and platform?
- Which resources are needed for the development and maintenance? What are the financial and business models of such services?
- Are there any results of evaluations regarding scientific information systems, specialized information services, scholarly networks? How to use and improve existing services?

Organizers:
- [Institute for Technology Assessment and System Analysis (KIT-ITAS)](#)
- [FIZ Karlsruhe – Leibniz Institute for Information Infrastructure](#)
- [Working Group Information and Communication of the Network Technology Asssessment (NTA)](#)

Target audience:
- Operators of specialized (scientific) information systems and scientific online portals
- Scientists doing research about internet-based scientific communication and cooperation

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