

Advancing Research Through DataCite's Global Access Fund: Busitema University, Uganda



August 22nd, 2024

Global Access Fund

Global Access Program

6 min Read

<https://doi.org/10.5438/0tk1-e896>

The [DataCite Global Access Fund \(GAF\)](#) is a strategic initiative designed to enhance equitable access to research infrastructure by supporting organizations in regions and communities currently underrepresented in the global open science infrastructure landscape. In this blog post series, we will explore the projects of the [GAF awardees](#), sharing insights into the outcomes and future aspirations. Each of the blog posts will focus on how the projects lead to the creation of a more inclusive global research community, sharing what they have achieved so far and outlining their plans for further development and impact.

In today's rapidly evolving scholarly landscape, the role of libraries in raising awareness about metadata, open research practices, and the importance of integrating persistent identifiers (PIDs) into research workflows is more crucial than ever. Recently, [Busitema University Library](#) organized a week-long event to equip library professionals, ICT practitioners, and research administrators with the skills and knowledge to advocate for open-access initiatives, implement institutional repositories and utilise DataCite's open infrastructure services.



Participants of the "DataCite & Open Scholarship Cadres for Uganda" workshop standing in front of the Engineering Library.

The “[DataCite & Open Scholarship Cadres for Uganda](#)” workshop was held at the Engineering Library, Faculty of Engineering and Technology, Busitema University from Monday 27th to Friday 31st May 2024. This five-day event, funded by [DataCite's Global Access Fund](#) was facilitated by [Dr. Frederick Kiwuwa Lugya, University Librarian, Busitema University](#), who has played a pivotal role in advancing open scholarship initiatives within Uganda's academic landscape.

Taking a train-the-trainer approach, the workshop's primary objective was to establish a cohort of open scholarship trainers who could effectively promote the adoption of DataCite's open infrastructure services in their respective institutions. The twenty-eight participating institutions are all members of the [Consortium of Uganda University Libraries \(CUUL\)](#). This endeavour is part of a larger project to enhance the visibility and accessibility of research outputs within the country.

Busitema University Library has taken a proactive stance in implementing this initiative with the support of the Global Access Fund from DataCite. The Fund's mission to facilitate the discoverability of research outputs aligns perfectly with the goals of this project. The workshop itself was a significant step towards achieving these objectives. Thirty-one participants from twenty-eight out of seventy-six CUUL members were carefully selected to participate in this train-the-trainer workshop – forming the “Cadres” of this event. The training covered a wide array of topics, including open scholarship principles, DataCite infrastructure services, and advocacy strategies.

As the project progresses, the focus is not only on the initial workshop but also on sustained engagement and advocacy among the Cadres. As part of the Consortium of Uganda University Libraries membership, the Cadres are committed to the goal of achieving 100% open scholarship and DataCite infrastructure services within the next five years.

Under the stewardship of the University Librarian, Busitema University Library, the efforts of the Cadres shall not be limited to just the initial workshop, but rather focused on sustained engagement and advocacy among all CUUL member institutions. The Cadre at each of the twenty-eight CUUL member institutions has mapped out a comprehensive list of activities, including regular training sessions and knowledge-sharing through weekly blog posts. The

activities are mapped in the form of a matrix that will be reported in an academic paper under development.

Cadres have shown extremely high enthusiasm and excitement to be a part of this movement towards openness and accessibility in academic research. Busitema University is looking forward to the positive impact these initiatives will have on CUUL institutions and the scholarly community as a whole. The DataCite Community should stay tuned for more updates on Uganda's journey towards 100% open scholarship and DataCite infrastructure services.



Participants of the workshop were consulted by trainers.

An online forum – [DataCite & Open Scholarship Cadres for Uganda](#) has been established to ensure that the momentum generated by the workshop is maintained and built upon over the project's remaining implementation period. Looking ahead, the overarching goal is to spark a nationwide discourse on the merits of open scholarship and open science while concurrently

increasing awareness of the significance of integrating DataCite open infrastructure services for enhanced research discoverability.

Through the concerted efforts of Busitema University and the engagement of stakeholders within the [Consortium of Uganda University Libraries](#), this project aims to make substantial strides towards fostering a culture of open scholarship within Uganda's academic community. The impact of this initiative extends far beyond the confines of a single workshop. It represents a collaborative effort to empower academic institutions in Uganda and their stakeholders to embrace open practices, thereby contributing to a more transparent and accessible national research landscape. Through initiatives such as these, the Ugandan academic community is well-positioned to embrace open scholarship principles such as transparency, openness, and accessibility.

Overall, the first half of the year was a transformational experience. The Cadres were empowered to play an instrumental role in advancing open scholarship and research accessibility within their respective institutions. It is heartening to know that 31 DataCite and Open Scholarship Cadres for Uganda have been recruited and trained, marking a significant step forward in fostering a culture of open access and scholarly communication.

To access detailed information about the workshop, including the signed inception report, training curriculum, project website, and the final workshop report, please visit the [Project Website](#).

We look forward to keeping you informed about the progress and impact of this transformative project.

Fredrick Kiuwa Lugya holds a [PhD \(Illinois\)](#), [Masters \(Illinois\)](#) and Bachelor (Mak) degrees in Library and Information Science. He has certification in Quality Assurance Practice, E-Learning Pedagogy, Library Automation and Digitization, Administrative Law, Project Monitoring and Evaluation, and Library Marketing and Advocacy. With over eighteen years of experience as a librarian, Fredrick has delivered top-notch information services, including heading [Busitema](#)

[University Library](#). Fredrick is grounded in Human Information Behavior research and his [research intersects](#) the concepts and principles relating to people, information, and systems, with a strong emphasis on context. He is currently leading several research projects at [Busitema University](#). Before joining Busitema University as the University Librarian, Fredrick led the digitisation agenda of [Makerere University Library](#) and has implemented several library technology projects in government departments and corporate companies.