

Connecting People and Information: How an African special library is building bridges

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CSIR Information Services

Pretoria

South Africa

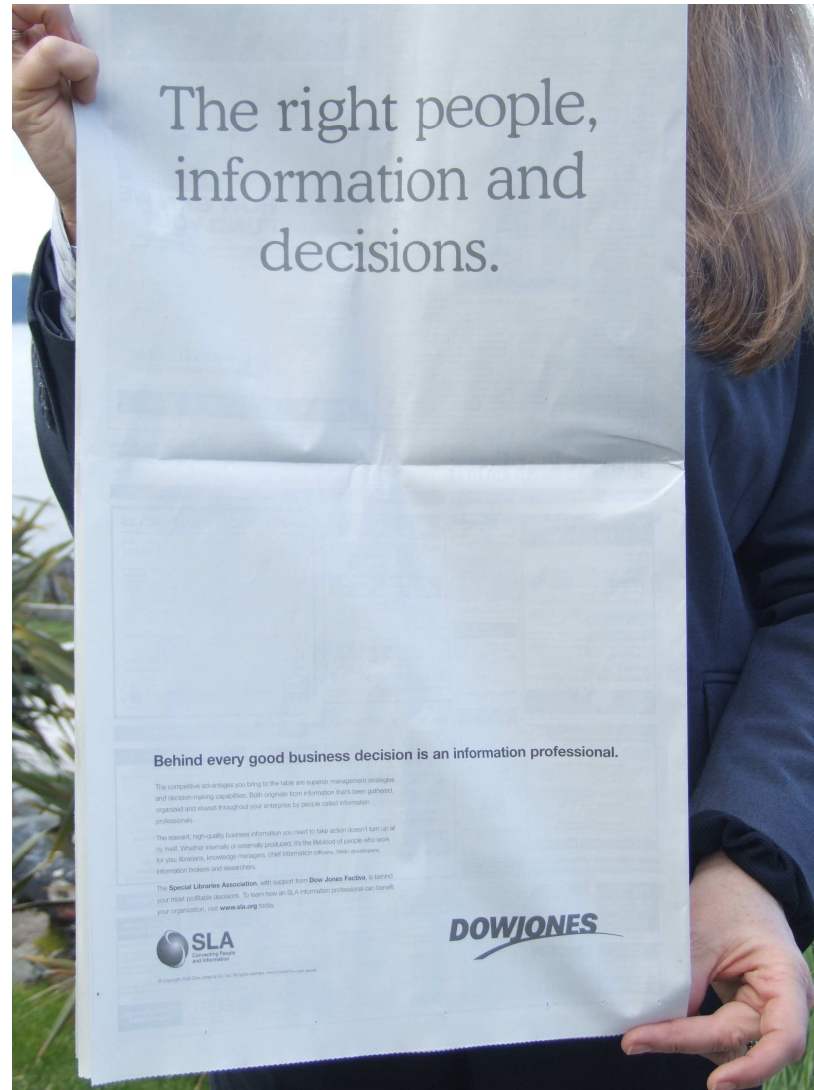
The logo for the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) of South Africa. It features the letters 'CSIR' in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. The 'C' is a large, rounded shape, and the 'S' is a vertical bar. The 'I' is a vertical bar with a small dot above it, and the 'R' is a vertical bar with a curved top.

our future through science

SLA 2008



SLA 2008



“Between a rock and a hard place”



<http://allergyasthma.files.wordpress.com/2007/08/rock-and-a-hard-place.jpg>

But, there's potential!



<http://gallery.photo.net/photo/6353826-lg.jpg>

CSIR (Council for Scientific and Industrial Research)

- Leading scientific research organisation in Africa
- Established in by Act of Parliament in 1945
- Multidisciplinary research: Biosciences, Natural Resources and Environment, ICT, Materials and Manufacturing, Built Environment and Defence.
- Approximately 700 research staff

CSIR, Pretoria, South Africa



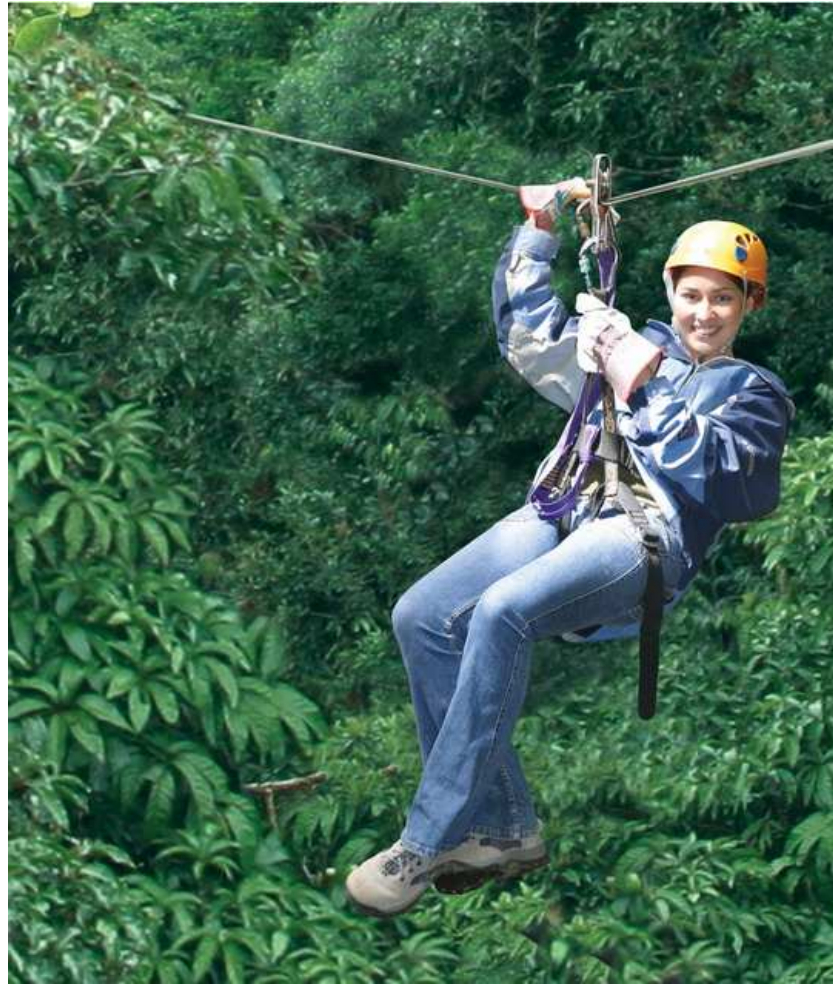
CSIR Information Services

- Twenty-seven staff members plus interns
- Centralised library services with information specialists placed in Operating Units
- Small information centres at remote sites
- At one time the top S&T library in the country
- Collection Budget: Operating Units pay for all books, journals and other published material.
- “Just-in-time-and-just-for-us” rather than “just-in-case” acquisition process.

First Steps on CSIRIS' Digital Journey:

- Early 2000s: faced an information “chasm”
- Journal subscriptions had dwindled from over 6000 in the early 80s to less than a thousand titles.
- First step: Electronic Table of Contents service to compensate for cancelled subscriptions (one Unit cancelled all their subscriptions)
- Difficulties:
 - TOC arrived up to 6 weeks before copies were available in the country – no ILL
 - Copyright – too many articles from one issue
- Very slender connection but a start.....!

The first cable of our bridge connecting researchers and electronic information is strung!



http://www.monteverdeinfo.com/canopy/selvatura/photos/selvatura-gallery/images/canopy_tour_01_lq.jpg

Early access

- 2003: Started subscribing to 3 e-journal platforms through SASLI deals: ScienceDirect, EbscoHost and ACS
- Researchers embraced the digital age enthusiastically
- 35103 downloads during the first year
- Embargoes still a problem
- Access to only a limited number of publishers

But, our bridge was starting to look distinctly better



Still a bit wobbly, but we're getting there!



<http://blogs.bootsnall.com/JamesM/>

Slide 12

CSIR
our future through science

Beyond 60 Initiative

- 2005 – CSIR 60 years old.
- Mandate: “multidisciplinary research....to improve the quality of life of the people of South Africa”
- CSIRIS - pivotal role in enabling our scientists to do innovative and groundbreaking research
- Information audit July 2005 – 300 researchers
 - Questionnaires, interviews, discussions
- Support from top scientists (Fellows)
 - Document: “User needs for information access, data analysis, knowledge management and reporting”.

Lobbying CSIR Executive

CSIRIS Task Team:

- Appointed by CSIR Executive
- Report: *“Meeting the needs of the future CSIR as leading multidisciplinary research and technology innovation organisation”*
- Pointed out urgent need for more e-resources
- Outlined a Virtual Research Environment (VRE) for the CSIR which would support the complete e-research process
- List of recommended resources and costs

e- Resources Evaluation Process

- Information mapping exercise results
- Emerging Research Areas (ERAs)
- Additional recommendations/requests
- SASLI deals
- Value for money, not necessarily cheapest!

Some Serious Civil Engineering!

- E-journal platforms grew from 3 to 11 in a matter of months.
- Several A&I databases and other e-resources added as well
- Carefully selected Open Access resources
- Federated search – Google Scholar SFX (free to developing countries)
- A-Z title list
- 2008: Linking to 28 e-journal platforms, 12 A&I databases and many other e-resources



Measuring value

CSIR Fellows' requirements:

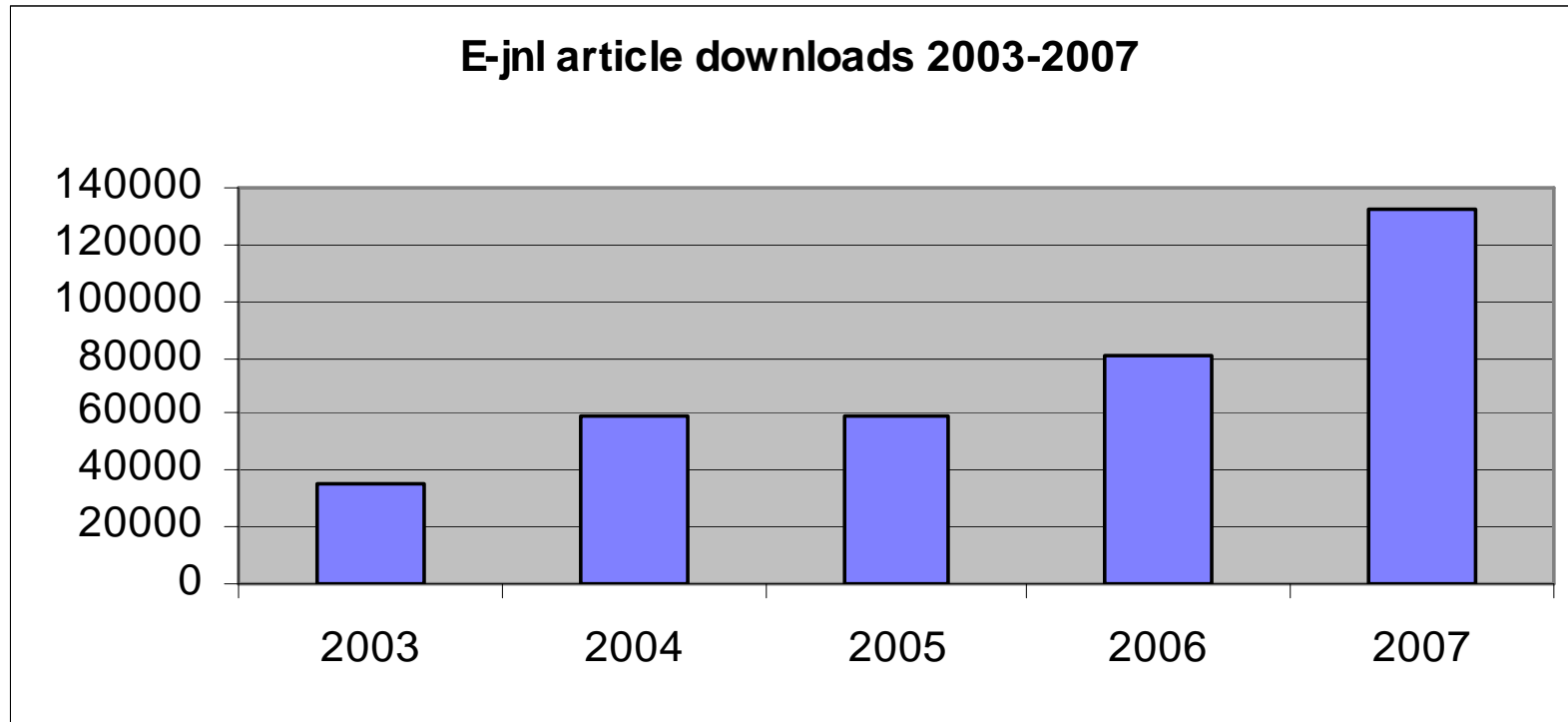
“... researchers need access to 90% of their information requirements within minutes, 95% within days, and 100% within 2 weeks. The most appropriate mechanisms to satisfy these needs vary according to information type”.

How are we doing against the standard?

- Downloads (Instant access) 97%
- Paper document delivery within 1 week: 3%
- Book deliveries still a problem – e-books?
- Information needs not met?

CSIR

Full text Downloads 2003-2007



Connecting the World to the CSIR



Institutional Repository

- An Institutional Repository (IR) has been defined as a set of services for storing and making available digital research materials created by an institution and its community.

Source: Library Consortium of New Zealand (LCoNZ)

CSIR Institutional Repository

- CSIR Research Space launched August 2007
- Open access
- Aims to preserve and disseminate intellectual output of CSIR researchers
- First non academic IR to exist in SA
- Runs on D-Space software
- Access via internet
- Registered with major repository harvesters

CSIR Research Space Structure

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser window displaying the CSIR Research Space website. The address bar shows the URL: <http://researchspace.csir.co.za/dspace/community-list>. The page content is a hierarchical list of research areas:

- **General science, engineering & technology**
 - **General science, engineering & technology**
 - [General science, engineering & technology](#)
- **Information & communication technology**
 - [Accessibility research](#)
 - [Citizen information services](#)
 - [Digital doorway](#)
 - [First mile first inch](#)
 - [High performance computing](#)
 - [Human language technologies](#)
 - [ICT for earth observation](#)
 - [ICT in education, youth, gender](#)
 - [Intelligent environment for independent living](#)
 - [Knowledge systems group](#)
 - [Open source](#)
 - [Remote Sensing](#)
 - [Wireless technologies](#)
- **Laser technology**
 - [Laser materials processing](#)
 - [Laser physics and technology](#)
- **Materials science & manufacturing**

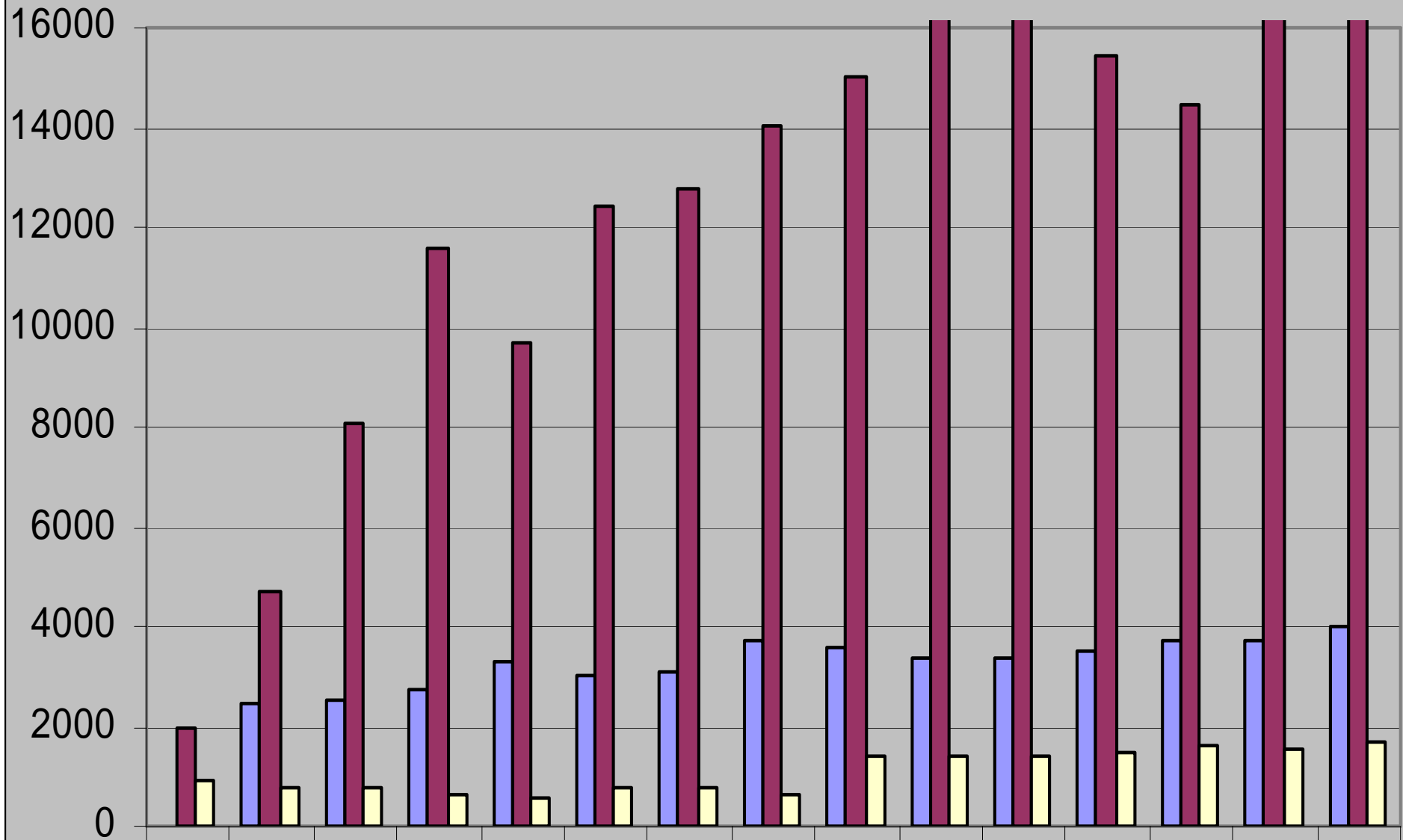
Two red arrows point from the list to red-bordered boxes. One arrow points from the 'Information & communication technology' section to a box labeled 'Communities'. Another arrow points from the 'Laser technology' section to a box labeled 'Collections'.

CSIR Research Space Content

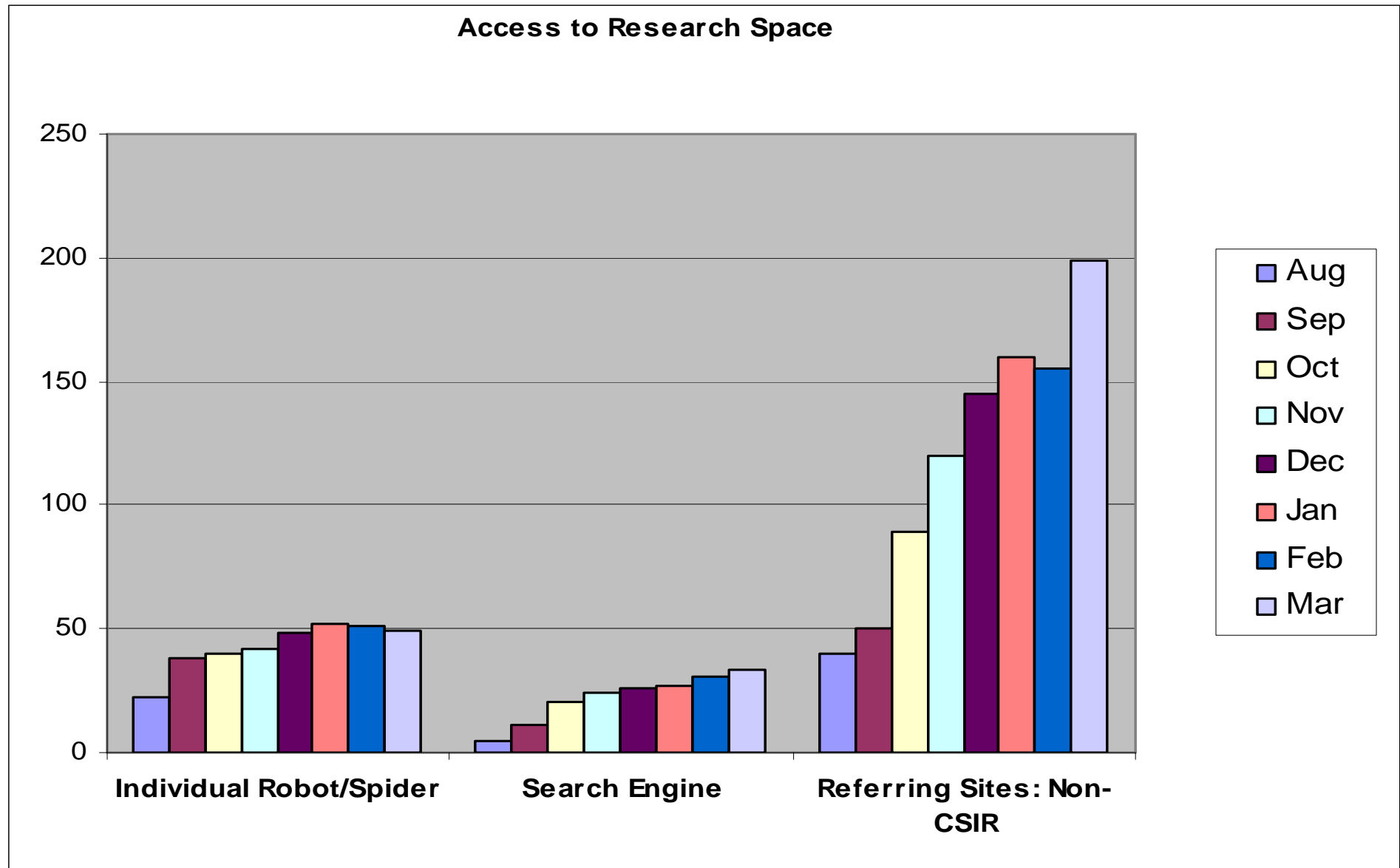
- Available in full text digital format (.pdf)
- Free downloads
- Copyright clearance for articles (via SHERPA RoMEO or publisher)
- Types of items published:
 - Previously published articles
 - Publicly funded research reports
 - Data sets
 - Multimedia files
 - CSIR research papers
- Withdrawal of items on the database should any copyright violations come to light

Research Space Usage

.pdf download Access Non CSIR visitor Access - CSIR Visitor



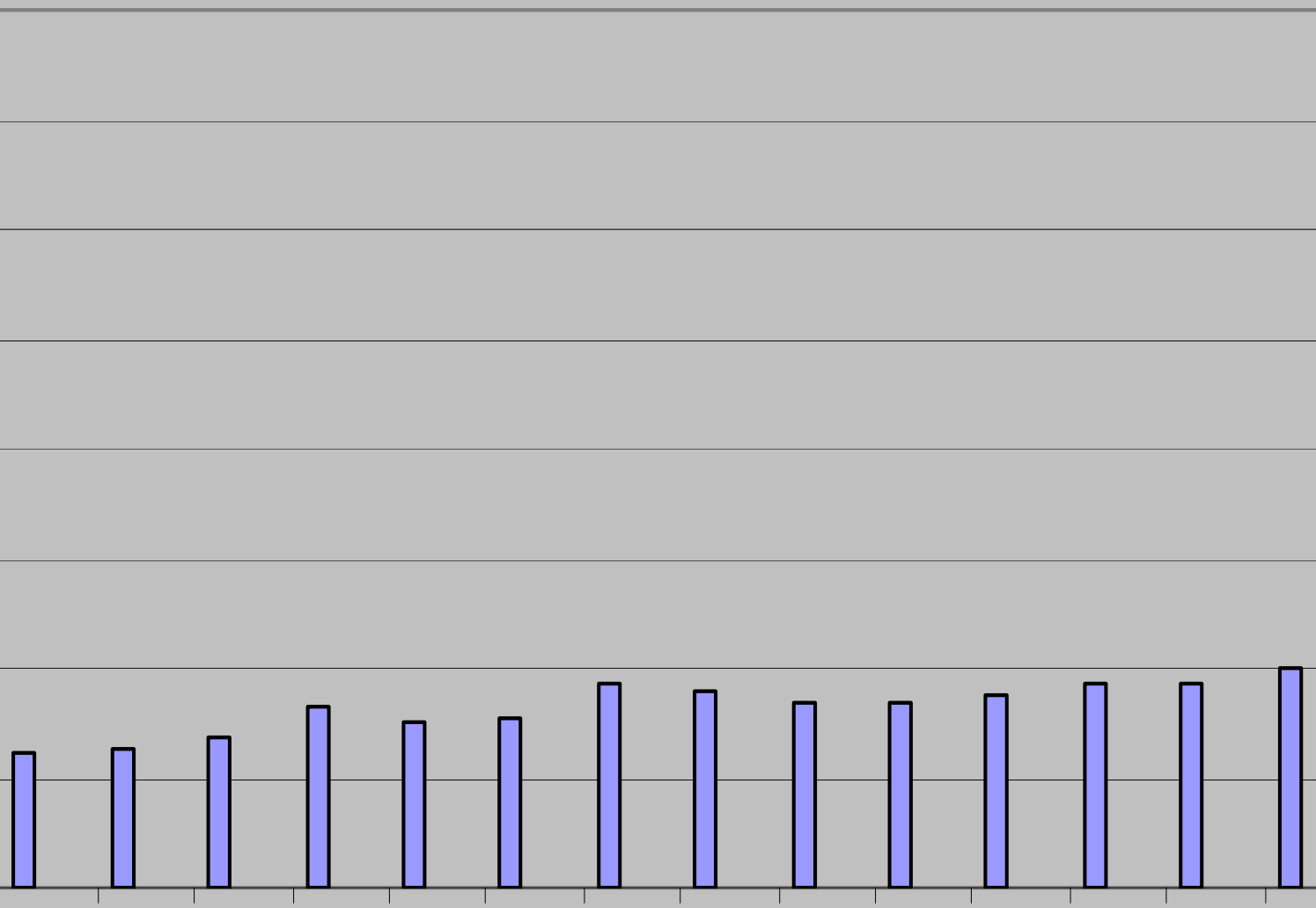
Access to CSIR Research Space



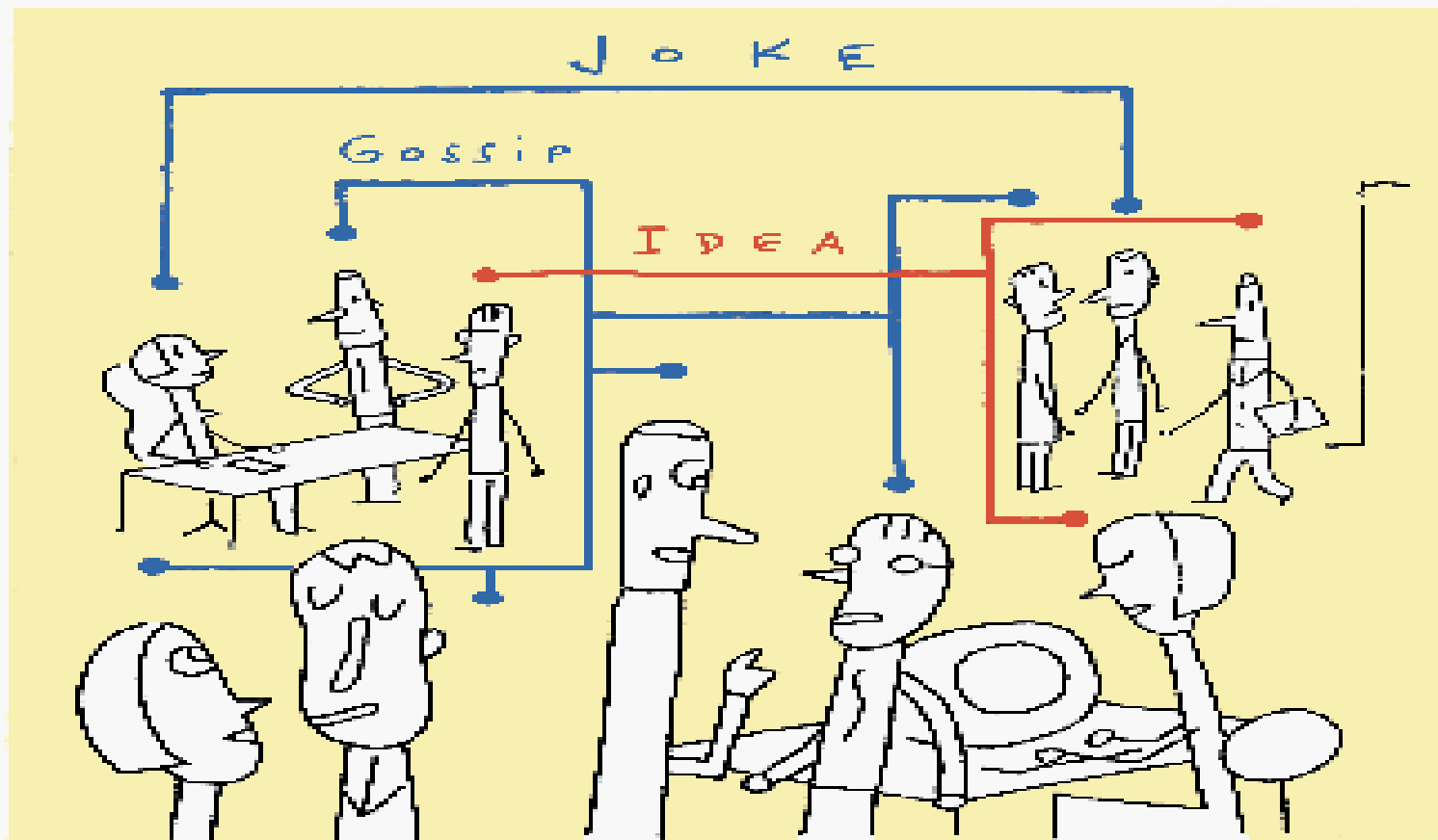
■ .pdf dow nload

16000
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Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sept Oct



Connecting CSIR Scientists with other Scientists



Source: <http://gladwell.com/pdf/office.pdf>

CSIR Knowledge Commons

Purpose

- Facilitate knowledge exchange
- Scientific interaction
- Networking

Knowledge Spaces

- Individual or Space – individual time for learning, concentration and reflection
- Team Space – collaborative learning
- Social Space – casual interaction in a non-threatening environment

Source: Doyle and Nathan (2002)

What the CSIR Knowledge Commons will offer:

- Carrels
- Work stations
- Reading area
- Coffee shop
- Project display area
- Auditorium
- Training room
- Discussion rooms
- Help desk

CSIR Knowledge Commons



CSIR Knowledge Commons



CSIR Knowledge Commons



Tips on Building Bridges

- Align your goals with that of the organisation
- Know your allies in high places & draw on their influence
- Use every opportunity to demonstrate the value of information services – get on the agenda of executive meetings
- Negotiate!
- Build good relationships with publishers
- Make use of special offers for developing countries
- Link to relevant Open Access (OA) resources – keep up to date on what's available
- Use Open Source Library Software (OSS)
- Make access to information easy for your users

“Moving from Collections to Connections”

Linda Stoddart, Dag Hammarskjöld Library ,
United Nations

Questions?

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Full Paper:

http://www.sla.org/pdfs/2008CP_HallandMniki.pdf

