ITS launches its open access repository (OAR)

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SENIOR ACADEMIC AT ITS AND EXECUTIVE EDITOR OF FUTOURISTIC

ITS has reached another important milestone in its efforts to nurture a research culture at the Institute with the launch of its open access repository (OAR) that will disseminate research by its alumni and academics with the rest of society and also internationally. For this purpose, ITS has chosen the solution by Scholastica HQ, an American company that has vast experience in this sector.

The OAR is accessible at: www.its.edu.mt/oar

Using the Scholastica platform for publishing school dissertations and journals offers multiple benefits that enhance the efficacy, accessibility, and impact of the institution's academic publishing which is now established with its academic journal *Futouristic*. Scholastica provides easy-to-integrate peer review, production, and open-access (OA) journal hosting solutions, allowing the Institute to expedite its entire publishing workflow from submission through publication, which further supports both the OAR and future evolutions of this journal. Mr Cilia was assisted by Ms Celine Farrugia in developing and maintaining the repository.

Futouristic spoke to Christopher Cilia, the Manager at the ITS Library, about the benefits of the OAR to students, academics and the outside community.

How is the online repository going to complement other library services at ITS?
"The online repository will complement existing library services by providing immediate digital access to academic resources, expanding the availability of dissertations, theses, and journals beyond the physical library's constraints. This digital addition will enhance resource accessibility for both on-campus and remote users, supporting ITS's mission to promote scholarly research and knowledge-sharing."

As the librarian, can you compare the demand for physical publications to online sources?
"In recent years, there has been a marked shift in demand from physical publications to digital sources, particularly among students and researchers who value quick access to materials. Online sources offer convenience, immediate availability, and enhanced searchability, making them highly preferred. While physical copies still hold value for in-depth study and archival purposes, online access correlates better with the current academic and research trends."

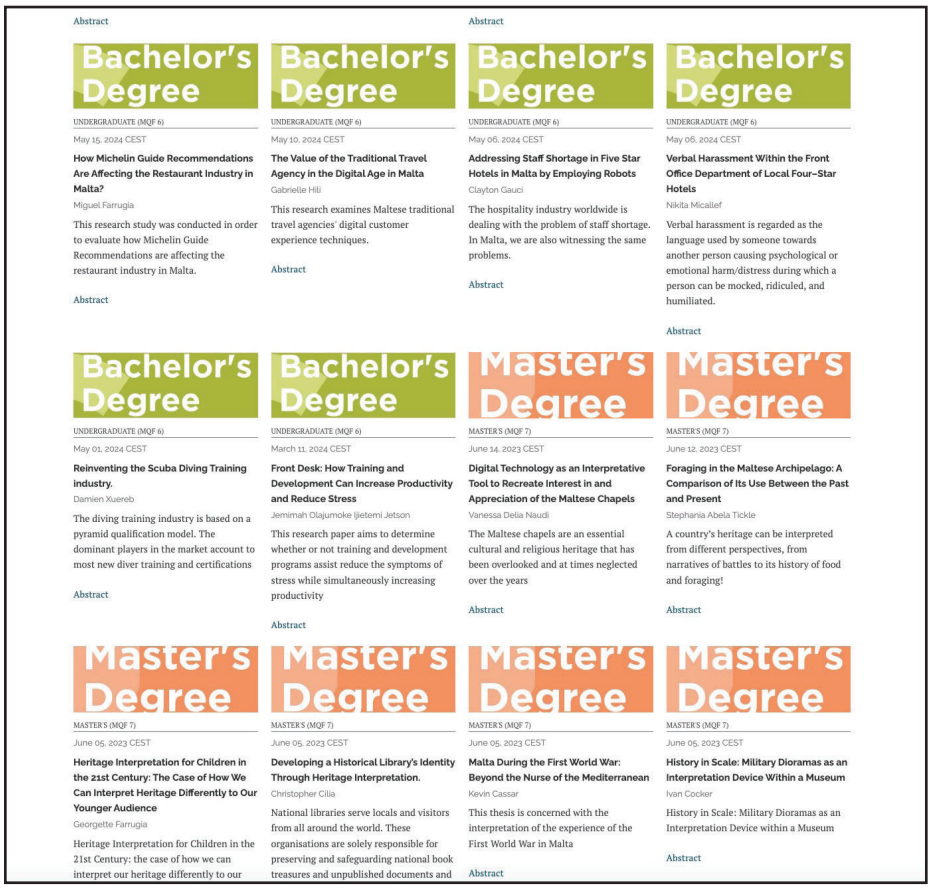
How is the online repository going to be updated?
"The online repository will be updated systematically as new dissertations, theses, and journals are submitted and published. The Scholastica platform provides tools to streamline the publication process, facilitating regular updates and allowing administrators to easily manage the addition of new content. This ensures that the repository remains current and continues to meet the evolving research requirements of the ITS community."

What kind of content will be available?
"The repository will include a diverse array of academic content, such as student dissertations, faculty research papers, peer-reviewed journal articles, and other scholarly publications relevant to ITS's academic disciplines. Additionally, it can support special collections or thematic content as required, providing a comprehensive repository that reflects the institution's academic output."

What other services does the library provide to students and academics to do research?
"Besides access to publications, the library offers research assistance, database access, interlibrary loan services, citation management seminars, and guidance on research methodology. These services support students and faculty in locating, accessing, and utilizing resources effectively, enhancing their research capabilities."

Anything else you would like to add?
"Implementing Scholastica's platform could position ITS as a leader in digital publishing within academia, increasing the visibility and accessibility of its scholarly output. Additionally, it supports ITS's sustainability objectives by reducing reliance on printed materials and enhancing ITS's academic reputation by showcasing research achievements on a broader scale. By adopting Scholastica's publishing solutions, ITS can offer a robust, accessible, and efficient platform that will benefit the entire academic community, fostering research, collaboration, and knowledge dissemination."





The new online research repository launched by ITS available at www.its.edu.mt/oar

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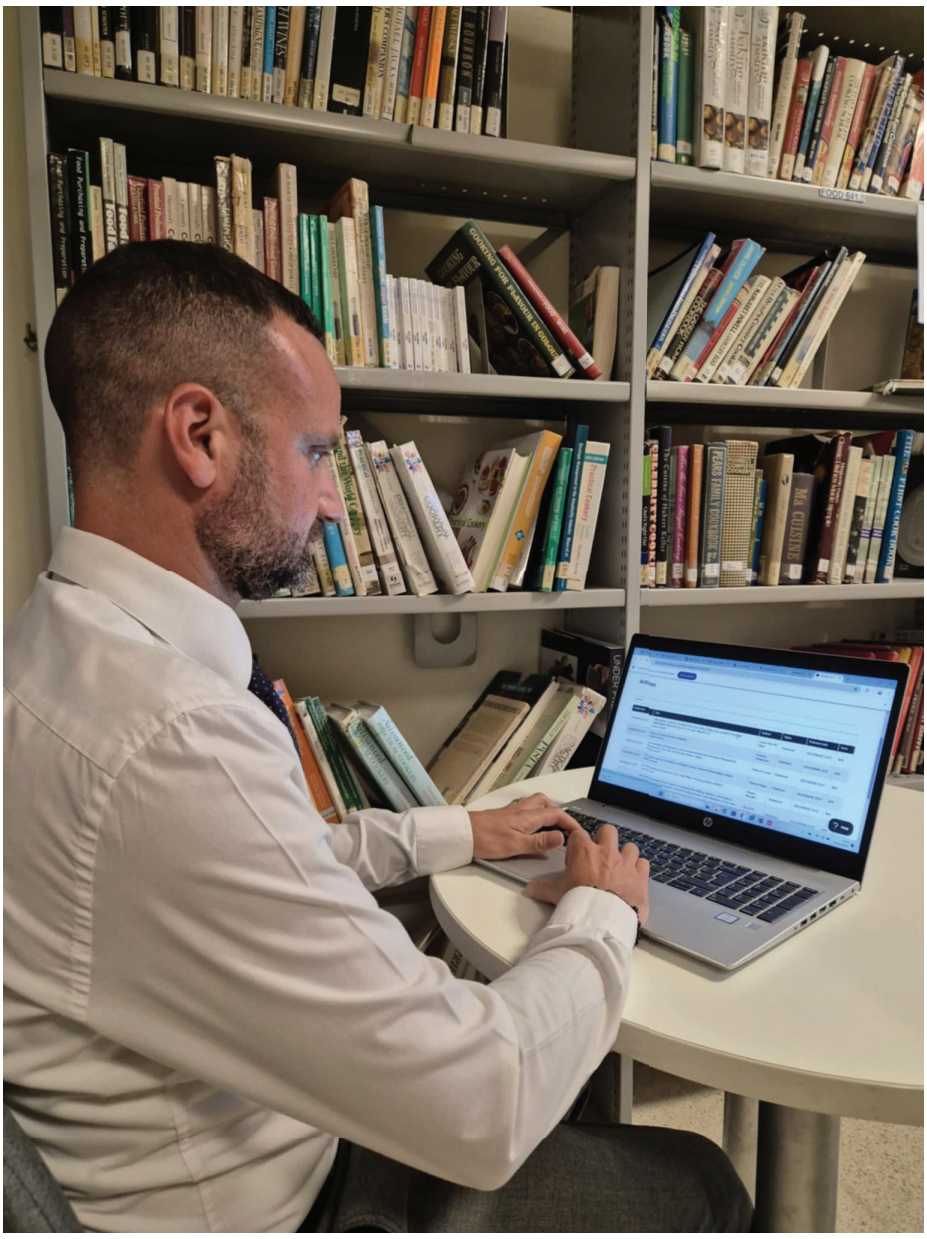
WHY INSTITUTE OF TOURISM STUDIES CHOSE SCHOLASTICA TO HOST ITS OPEN ACCESS REPOSITORY

Scholastica (www.scholasticahq.com) offers a platform designed to simplify the publishing of open access (OA) journals by providing tools and services for the entire publishing lifecycle. The platform enables journals to create and host websites without needing coding or web development expertise. The websites are user-friendly and optimised for online reading, with a responsive design that adapts to various devices. They include site-wide search, mobile-friendly pages, social media integration, RSS feeds, and blog options.

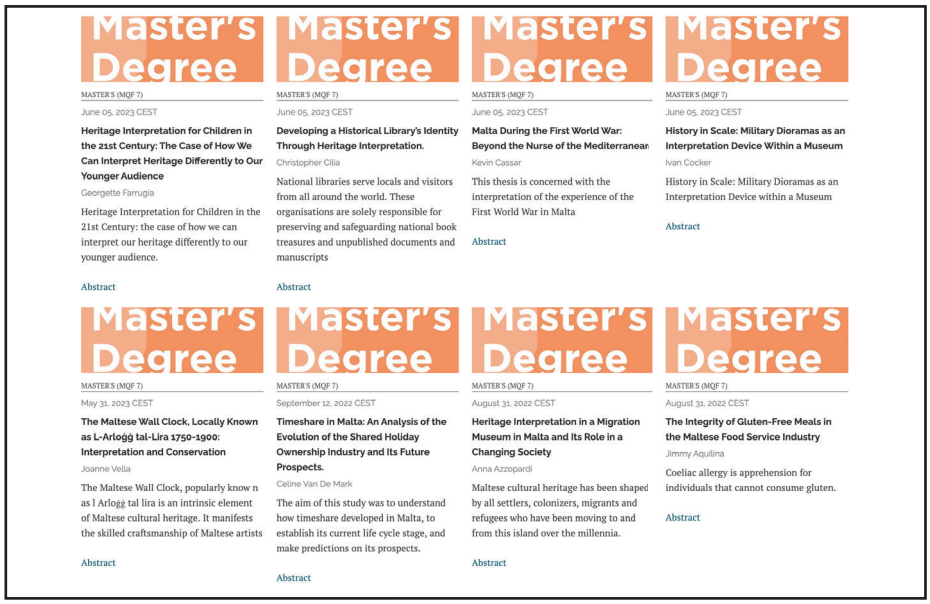
Key features of Scholastica's platform include easy customisation using a simple editing tool for website creation. The platform is optimised for online reading, discoverability and search engine indexing. It has a mobile-friendly design ensuring accessibility across devices. The platform also facilitates automatic generation of metadata in HTML and XML (JATS standard), including references, funding information, DOIs, ORCIDs, ROR IDs and CRediT roles. Scholastica simplifies archiving and indexing with integrations with archives and indexes. A built-in analytics suite tracks readership metrics, such as page views and downloads, and public metrics pages offer transparency with page views, downloads, and reader location data. They also allow integration of Altmetric badges.

Scholastica helps journals reach a wider audience through search optimisation, mobile-friendly design and rich machine-readable metadata. The platform generates metadata that facilitates crawling by Google Scholar. It also provides insights into readership through its analytics suite.

The platform is easy to use, with no setup fees and ready for immediate use, including free PDF back issue imports. It is a fully hosted solution, managing all software needs and technical support, such as maintenance, updates and backups. Scholastica prioritises data security, metadata enrichment, archiving, and indexing, adhering to current industry standards.



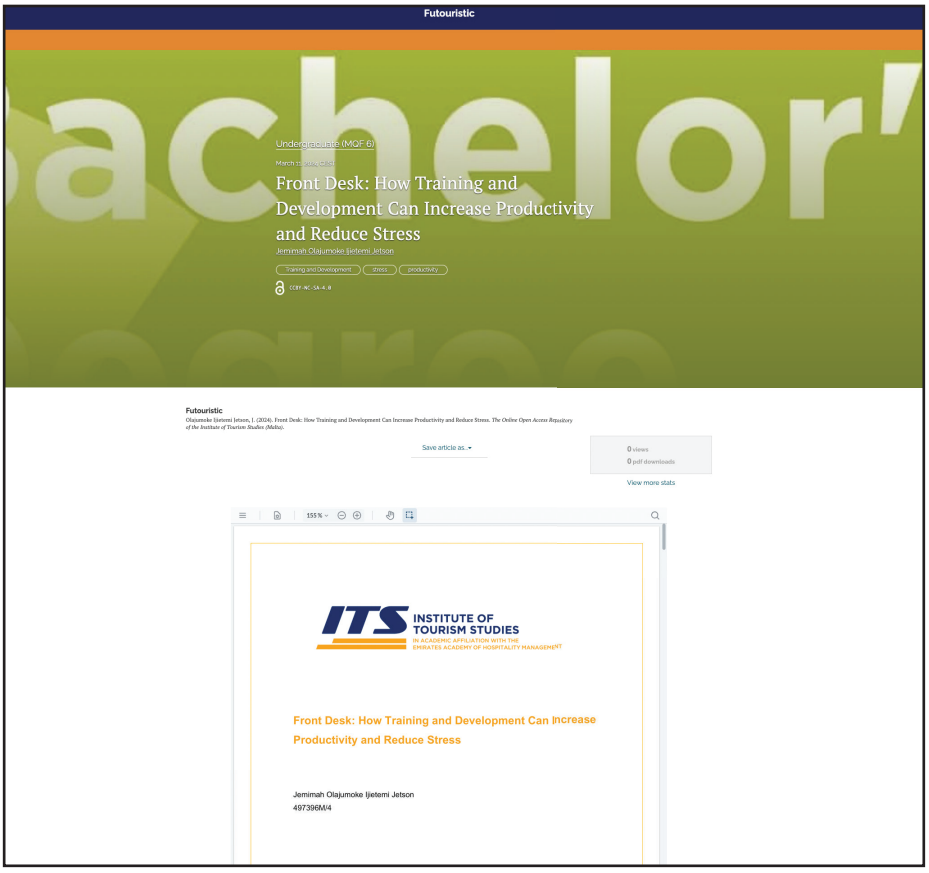
ITS Library Manager Christopher Cilia working on the new online research repository. This repository is a joint project between the ITS Library and the ITS Academic Research and Publications Board (ARPB).

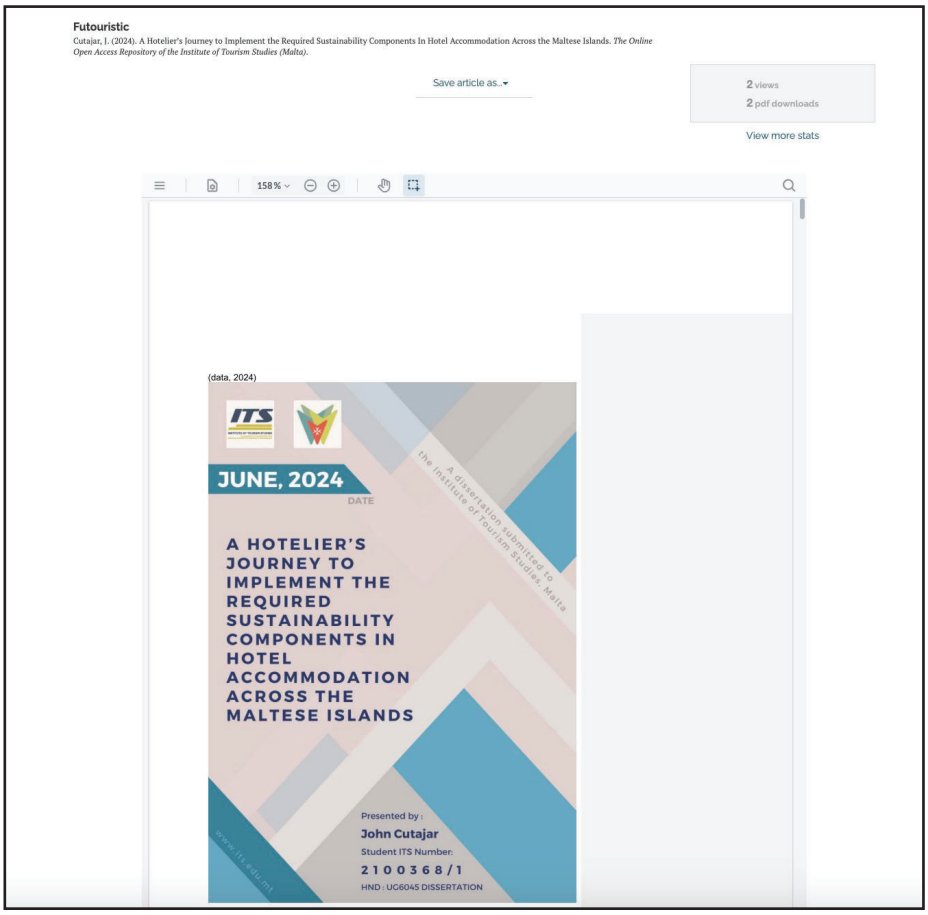


Scholastica also aims to provide an optimal reading experience, offering options to publish articles in issues or on a rolling basis. The sites have easy navigation, visually appealing article display, PDF search functionality, easy access to supplemental files and citation downloads in BibTex format. Scholastica also caters to arXiv overlay journals by integrating with arXiv, enabling submissions directly from arXiv with article pages linking to final versions.

Integrations with other services include Crossref DOI registration, DOAJ indexing, Portico archiving, PMC and PubMed indexing, Altmetric badge display, and ROR institutional ID integration.

The platform can be used independently or integrated with Scholastica's peer review and production services for a streamlined workflow. The peer review system simplifies manuscript submission and tracking. Integration enables the direct transfer of manuscripts and metadata, eliminating manual data entry. Scholastica automatically generates comprehensive machine-readable metadata for journals using their production or hosting platform. The platform enables flexible publishing, with options to publish content as soon as ready or compile rolling articles into issues at any time. Scholastica says it is committed to supporting journals in meeting open access mandates like Plan S.





> **The platform is optimised for online reading, discoverability and search engine indexing.**