



# Open Access Button Interlibrary Loan Service

## Interlibrary Loan

We want to collaborate with librarians to enhance the vital service of interlibrary loan (ILL) by reducing delivery times, bringing the service into patrons' workflows, improving discovery and creation of open access materials, and saving libraries money and time. With the Button we instantly find legal, open access research, and make more research articles freely accessible through requests to the author. We're currently seeking institutional partners to provide feedback, and co-develop stronger document delivery systems and open infrastructure for the library community.

## The "Three Flavors" of a Library Service

The Open Access Button is a suite of open source services that help users find, request, and share research articles and data. We're developing a set of apps (e.g Chrome plugins and mobile apps), and API integrations with library discovery systems and ILL systems to instantly provide open access, legal copies of articles to patrons and library staff. Our library service is designed to create a streamlined process for both the user and library staff, and to bring ILL closer to patrons' workflows with apps.

While the service has generally been described as the first, other models are currently being designed and tested. We expect these could be used independently, or in conjunction. However, as they're still being designed this could change. Conceptually, each approach will work as a wrapper "around" ILL and current library systems rather than replace these critical systems.

### 1. Button on Campus: Open Access Button as a discovery and delivery tool

This [service option would utilize apps](#) deployed on campus computers or a user's personal machine. When the app is clicked on a paywalled article, the app instantly searches for a legal, archived copy of an article through integrations with large repository aggregators and/or the campus catalog. If a copy is available through either of those sources, the Button can serve it immediately to the user. If not, the search is turned into an ILL request and an Open Access Button request to the author. The ILL request can proceed normally with the Button sending all required metadata to the library management system through an API integration. The received ILL request would have checks for the article in the catalog and repositories completed, saving ILL staff time. The Button would also send a request to the author informing them that someone is trying to build on their work, and encouraging them to make the article publicly available through a repository. Once archived the paper is then accessible to anyone, and the link can be sent to the original user and any subsequent people who search for that work. The library user will later receive the ILL copy, and may receive an archived version that they have rights to use and share freely. [View mock-ups and further descriptions of this workflow.](#)

The ILL service is in co-development with libraries. A pilot of the full service as described above is underway at Imperial College London with Ex Libris Primo and Alma, but we expect the service is able to integrate with most library catalog, discovery, and ILL system.

## 2. Integration into existing library discovery systems (e.g search & link resolver)

By integrating the Open Access Button API, which comprehensively identifies legal, archived versions of articles, libraries can expand the results shown by a link resolver or in catalog search. We expect this integration option to increase patrons' instant access to materials and reduce requests made where open alternatives exist. Through this service option, the Button would also email the author when a patron submits an ILL request, which would potentially reduce ILL fulfillment times, increase the amount of open access materials, and provide patrons with a copy of the article with more use and sharing rights.

This system has currently not been feasibility tested, however the API that would power it is free, open and documented.

## 3. Staff-only tools

This service option has no patron-facing features, but integrates the Button's ability to instantly find open access materials into a library's ILL system. A purely ILL system integration for staff only use would systematically check if requested research is available open access. An ILL staff member would be able to start the search and quickly know if there is an open access copy available instead of attempting to search multiple avenues in the hopes there is an accessible version. This service option automates the process of finding open access content that can be freely used, saving ILL staff time and potentially the loan cost if a user is satisfied with the open access copy.

This service option has currently not been feasibility tested. However, the API that would power it is free, open and documented.

## Benefits for libraries, patrons

1. A route to access the ILL system that better suits user workflows and saves staff time.
2. Patrons may immediately receive a version with more use rights.
3. ILL requests require less library staff time to manage and unnecessary requests are prevented.
4. ILL requests can be fulfilled at a significantly lower per transaction cost.
5. Data from increased usage of ILL and open access materials can be used to drive collections development.
6. A "freemium" service can be provided using requests to authors and self-archived versions.
7. Patrons get educated about and exposed to open access resources.
8. Help patrons get access off-campus.

## Cost Savings

During a two year period Indiana University-Purdue University filled 1,557 requests with Open Access materials, saving a potential cost of \$27,247.50 ([Baich 2015](#)). Although IUPUI did not utilize the Button for their open access fulfillment, the Open Access Button library service presents a similar or greater cost saving opportunity to libraries by automating discovery of open access materials for both patrons and staff.