

# Telling DSpace Stories at Izmir Institute of Technology with Gultekin Gurdal

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*The Izmir Institute of Technology Library team.*

*“Telling DSpace Stories” is a community-led initiative aimed at introducing project leaders and their ideas to one another while providing details about DSpace implementations for the community and beyond. The following interview includes personal observations that may not represent the opinions and views of the [Izmir Institute of Technology](#) or the DSpace Project.*

*Michele Mennielli from the Italian University Consortium [Cineca](#) interviewed Gultekin Gurdal, Library Director at the Izmir Institute of Technology and Coordinator of the ANKOS Open Access and Institutional Repositories Working Group in Turkey.*

## **What’s your role with DSpace at your organization or institution?**

I graduated from the Library Science Program at Hacettepe University in 1990 and completed my MBA degree from Kocaeli University. I have been the Library Director at Izmir Institute of Technology (IYTE) located in Izmir, Turkey since 2005. I have served as the Chairman of the Anatolian University Libraries Consortium (ANKOS) Currently, I serve as the Coordinator of the ANKOS Open Access and Institutional Repositories Working Group. I am an OpenAIRE 2020 project partner and also, last year was elected as one of the members of the "Open Science Committee" which was founded by The Turkish Scientific and Technological Research Council.

Due to all of these tasks, institutional repositories and Open Access are very important to me and to my institution. We are doing this work with DSpace which is the best solution for us. We started to work for our institutional repository in 2007 with software written by a national technology firm. However because of our requirements, we started to use DSpace in 2012.

## **Tell us a little about your organization or institution.**

Izmir Institute of Technology (IZTECH) is a state university established in 1992 as one of two institutes of technology in Turkey in order to provide a high quality education and put emphasis on carrying out research in technological fields within our faculties.

IZTECH consists of Faculties of Science, Engineering, Architecture, and the Graduate School of Engineering and Sciences.

IZTECH created its institutional repository – [DSpace@IZTECH](#) – in 2013. The [Izmir Institute of Technology](#) has become the first institution in Turkey to adopt a “mandate policy” on Open Access.

## **Why did you decide on DSpace?**

When I was Chairman of the [Anatolian University Libraries Consortium](#) (ANKOS), Open Access was one of my priorities. Therefore, I have been closely following all work in this area both domestically and abroad. As a consortium, we were looking for an initiative at a national level and suggested to all institutions that they use software that was used by one Turkish institution as the National Open Access Repository software. The reason for this was that we had difficulty in finding a technical person at our universities that could provide enough open source software support. We could not get enough support from a firm.

The number of archives increased from 2 to 14 in our country. Because of problems we encountered we started looking for a new solution with friends of the ANKOS Open Access and Institutional Repositories Working Group. Our research showed that the use of DSpace would be the best solution for us. I was OpenAIREPlus Project partner and the guidance and support from my friends at this project were extremely important in making this decision. With this decision we began to use DSpace as IZTECH institutional repository software. At that time, 1 or 2 institutions were already using DSpace in our country. We wanted to promote this software at national level. As a result of our initiatives by YOK (The Council of Higher Education), the National Academic Repository Project came to life. Currently, the number of universities that have established DSpace repositories is 132. We provide them all kinds of support as the ANKOS Open Access and Institutional Repositories Working Group. Especially my colleague who is one of the group members, Sonmez Celik, Dogus University's library director, who has a lot of technical information. His expertise has been very important advantage for us. I would like to also especially thank Eloy, Jose and Pedro from University of Minho who are our OpenAIRE Project partners who have helped us while we have provided this support to other universities.

**What were your requirements going in?**

Our most important need is for Research information system (CRIS) integration with the institutional repository. If this can be provided the repository will achieve significant success—with Open Access as well.

**What strategic organizational or institutional goals did DSpace help you meet?**

IZTECH is a research-intensive institution. The number of publications and projects has grown quite a lot. International visibility and internationalization are very important for us. In recent years, innovation and entrepreneurship are our top priorities. In considering all of these, Open Access and Institutional Repository remain very important for us.

**What are your plans for your DSpace repository in the future?**

Our most important plan is to establish an academic information system integrated with our institutional repository at IZTECH. Also, We want to get the new version of DSpace running as soon as possible. ORCID and Sherpa / Romeo integration are important features of the new version.

**What is at the top of your DSpace “wish list?”**

ORCID integration is extremely important. I hope that we will get ORCID IDs in the first quarter of 2016 country-wide. As I mentioned before, Integration of DSpace with CRIS is very important. In addition being able to measure the impact of the publications in the institutional repository it is another extremely important issue.

**What advice would you give to other organizations that are planning to establish a DSpace repository?**

I think that DSpace is the best choice for organizations that aim to establish an institutional repository. DSpace has very good discussion list, technical documentation and a community of great people who answer all our questions. Most importantly, It's software produced by common sense and is continuously innovating.

We selected DSpace as the National Institutional Repository software in Turkey where there are 182 universities—132 of them have established their institutional repository systems with DSpace. We hope that the other universities will begin development in 2016. After than we plan to harvest all our archives with a national harvesting system. Also, we will try to make all institutional repositories compliant with OpenAIRE which means that that Turkish academic output will be international and discoverable all over the world.

DSpace and other open access systems and softwares are solutions that accelerate science and remove barriers to science and scholarship. Open Access is a way to make life better.