Threats from Freedom of Information Laws

James Wilsdon (Royal Society) spoke about the links between debates over FOI and the Royal Society's project on 'Science as a Public Enterprise'. Reservations within the science community about the FOIA are not about the principle of opening up access to scientific information, but about whether this is the right mechanism. There is a concern that it creates an unnecessarily combative relationship between requester and researcher. Proper publication of datasets would obviate many claims for access under FOIA. The Royal Society is keen to work out how to improve approaches to open science and data disclosure.