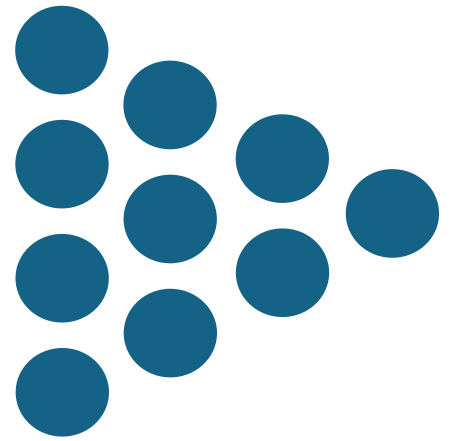# Infrastructures for open access books

2023

stakeholder report

OAPEN and DOAB
Infrastructures for open access books
2023 Stakeholder Report

Contents

OAPEN and DOAB 2023 Stakeholder Report

Open access to academic books is a fast-developing area. This creates an exciting but also challenging environment in which to operate key infrastructures supporting open book publishing. We need to ensure that we are available across the ecosystem to support the needs of libraries, funders, and publishers as well as engage and partner with fellow organisations in projects and community-based activities. This is our *raison d'etre*, but the diversity and sheer volume of tasks and activities requires human capital. Therefore, it's been such a privilege to welcome four new staff members to OAPEN in 2023. As a team, we turn our mission into action on a daily basis.

An expanding staff requires a robust organisation with appropriate administrative and financial systems, archiving and documentation guidelines, policies for human resources and so on. While establishing these is often invisible work to the outside world, it is essential to ensure an efficient and resilient organisation. During 2023 we managed to put into place many of these organisational building blocks that will enable us to expand our organisation, operations, and engagements in the years to come. Moreover, we have shared publicly how we operate by performing a self-audit against the Principles of Open Scholarly Infrastructure (POSI) – discussed later in this report.

All of this would not be possible without the financial support we receive from over 225 libraries around the world. We want to thank all our supporting libraries for their continued financial contributions to our operations! We are truly grateful for the trust that you put in our work and for enabling us to perform it well. Likewise, we are sincerely appreciative of our collaboration with funders and publishers, providing them with services including hosting, distribution, and preservation of open access books. We also want to extend our thanks to our private donors and DOAB sponsors. Finally, we would like to emphasise the importance of our engagement with organisations across the globe where we co-create projects to advance and support open access book publishing. These collaborations enable us to design and innovate solutions beyond state-of-the-art.

In this report you will learn about our many achievements in 2023. These have led us to enter 2024 more hopeful and excited than we left 2022. Difficult and interesting challenges lie ahead of us, but through steady operation, innovation, and partnerships we will provide solutions in close dialogue with all our relevant stakeholders.

OAPEN and DOAB team at the 2023 annual staff meeting in Denmark.
Back row left to right: Niels Stern (Managing Director OAPEN, co-director DOAB), Ronald Snijder (CTO and Head of Research), Jordy Findanis (Project Manager), Danny Kingsley (Community Manager, Southern Hemisphere), Lotte van Aalten (Publisher Relations Manager)
Front row left to right: Sînziana Păltineanu (Project Manager), Silke Davison (Community Manager, Europe and the Americas), Dorien van der Giessen (Collection Manager), Laura Bandura-Morgan (Funder Relations Manager), Laura J. Wilkinson (Product Manager), Pierre Mounier (co-director DOAB).

OAPEN Foundation

The OAPEN Foundation is an independent Dutch 'Stichting' (not-for-profit organisation) based in the Netherlands, with its registered office at the National Library (Koninklijke Bibliotheek) in The Hague. OAPEN's mission is to increase the discoverability and visibility of peer-reviewed open access (OA) books and help build trust in open access book publishing.

OAPEN operates these three platforms:

- OAPEN Library: a central repository for hosting and disseminating OA books; free, full-text downloads directly available on the platform
- Directory of Open Access Books (DOAB): a free and global discovery service indexing OA books (in partnership with OpenEdition)
- OAPEN Open Access Books Toolkit: a free resource offering information on OA book publishing for authors

Governance

The governance structure and management of OAPEN went through several changes in 2023. One of these changes saw the Board of Directors become a Supervisory Board, placing Niels Stern as the Managing Director of the Foundation.

Parallel to this, after serving as the Chair of the Board of Directors from its beginning, Bas Savenije was succeeded by Kimmo Tuominen, Director General of the National Library of Finland (Kansalliskirjasto) in June, to become the Chair of the new OAPEN Supervisory Board.

OAPEN Supervisory Board

The current members of the OAPEN Supervisory Board as of June 2023 are:

- Kimmo Tuominen (Chair), The National Library of Finland
- Kurt De Belder (Vice-Chair), Leiden University
- Reinier Groen (audit committee), Independent
- Lidia Borrell-Damián, Science Europe
- Charles Watkinson, University of Michigan
- Antia Wiersma (audit committee), Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW)

Advisory Board

The Advisory Board, established in 2021, continues to provide the new Supervisory Board with solicited and unsolicited advice on the business matters of OAPEN, as it did previously for the Board of Directors.

The current members of the Advisory Board, comprising different stakeholder groups and geographical regions, and their terms of service, are:

- Dirk Pieper (until the end of 2024), Deputy Director, Bielefeld University Library
- Natalia Grygierczyk (until the end of 2025), Director, Radboud University Press
- Claire Redhead (until the end of 2025), Director, OASPA
- Regula Graf (until the end of 2025), Scientific Officer, Swiss National Science Foundation
- Wendy Queen (until the end of 2025), Director, Project MUSE
- Marin Dacos (until the end of 2025), National Open Science Coordinator, French Ministry of Science
- Brian Hole (until the end of 2024), Founder and CEO, Ubiquity Press
- Agnès Ponsati (until the end of 2024), Director, Unit of Information Resources for Research, Spanish National Research Council (CSIC)
- Cameron Neylon (until the end of 2025), Professor of Research Communications, Curtin University, Co-lead COKI
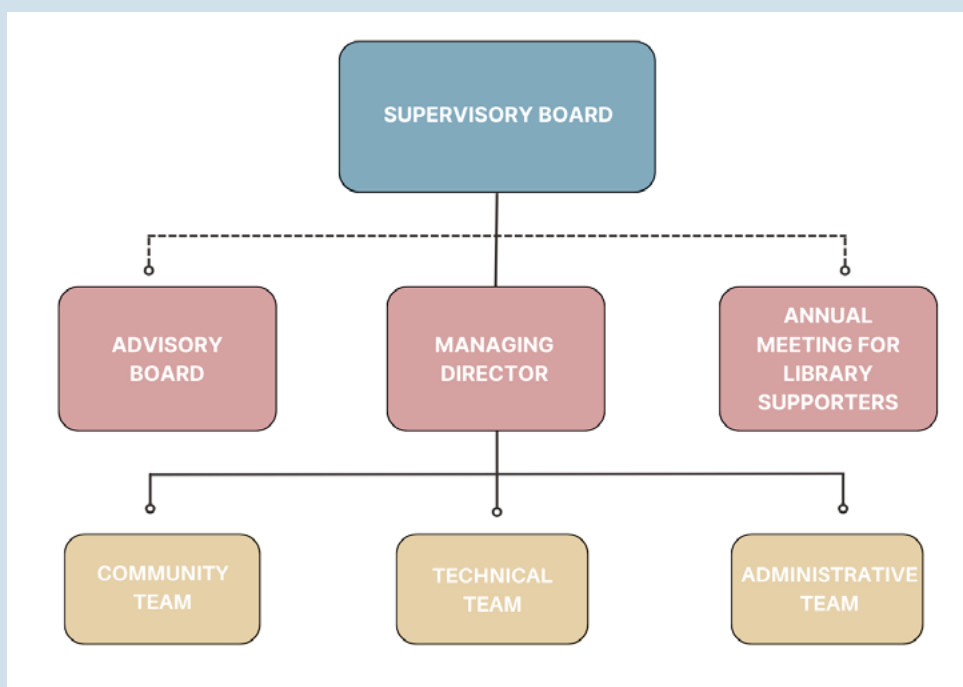
POSI self-audit

The [Principles of Open Scholarly Infrastructure](#) (POSI) are a set of best practice guidelines aimed at open infrastructures to enable them to be governed sustainably and serve the needs of their communities. As OAPEN and DOAB are governed separately, self-audits were conducted for each that were shared internally and with their governing bodies.

The self-audits identified three main areas that need to be addressed in more detail: Governance, Sustainability, and Insurance. One area we immediately addressed was the goal to generate a surplus, and a contingency fund that would cover twelve months of operational costs, for both OAPEN and DOAB, enabling them to become more resilient organisations. We also announced OAPEN's [guarantee of independence](#), confirming that we can't be sold or acquired.

Full details of the results of the audits can be found on our website. Please see our OAPEN & DOAB [POSI self-audit](#) from May 2023 and our contributions to Principles of Open Scholarly Infrastructure (POSI) [version 1.1](#): Reflections from adopters.
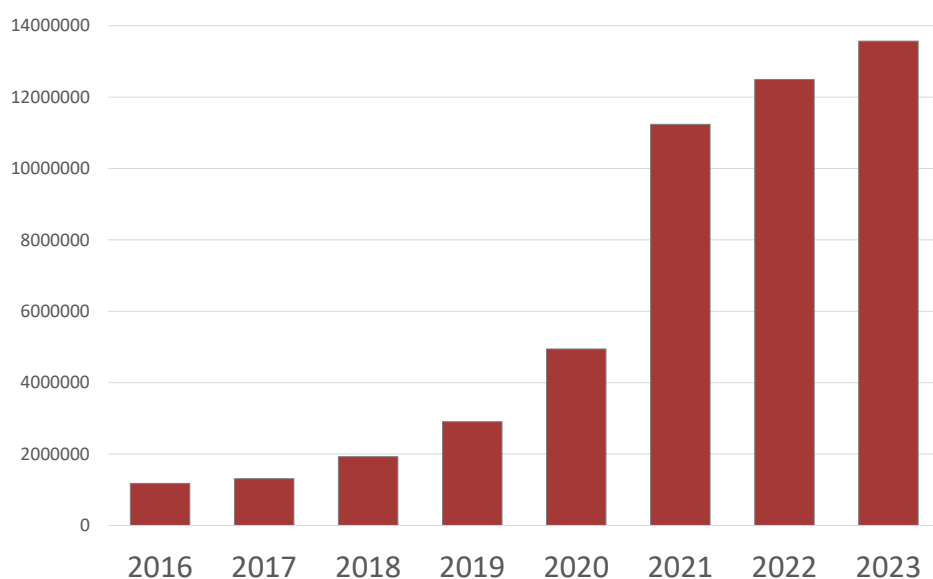
OAPEN Library

All books and chapters in the OAPEN Library are available for direct download without any cost or registration requirements for the user. In 2023, we added over 5,000 publications to the OAPEN Library, increasing the size of the complete collection to almost 32,000 OA books. As of December 2023, the OAPEN Library publisher community included almost 440 publishers.
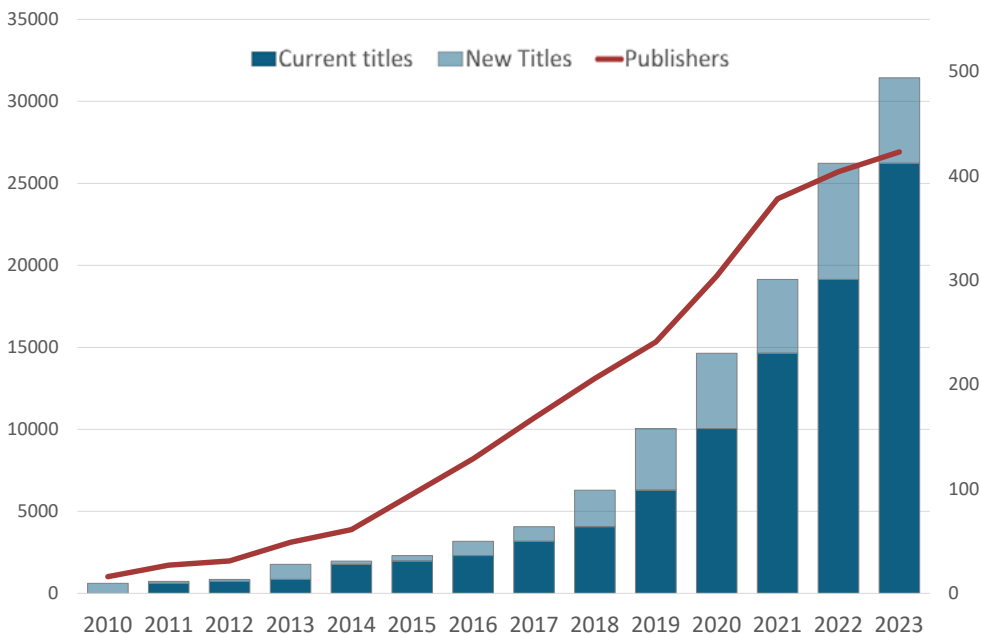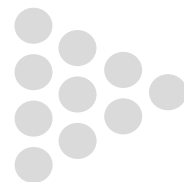
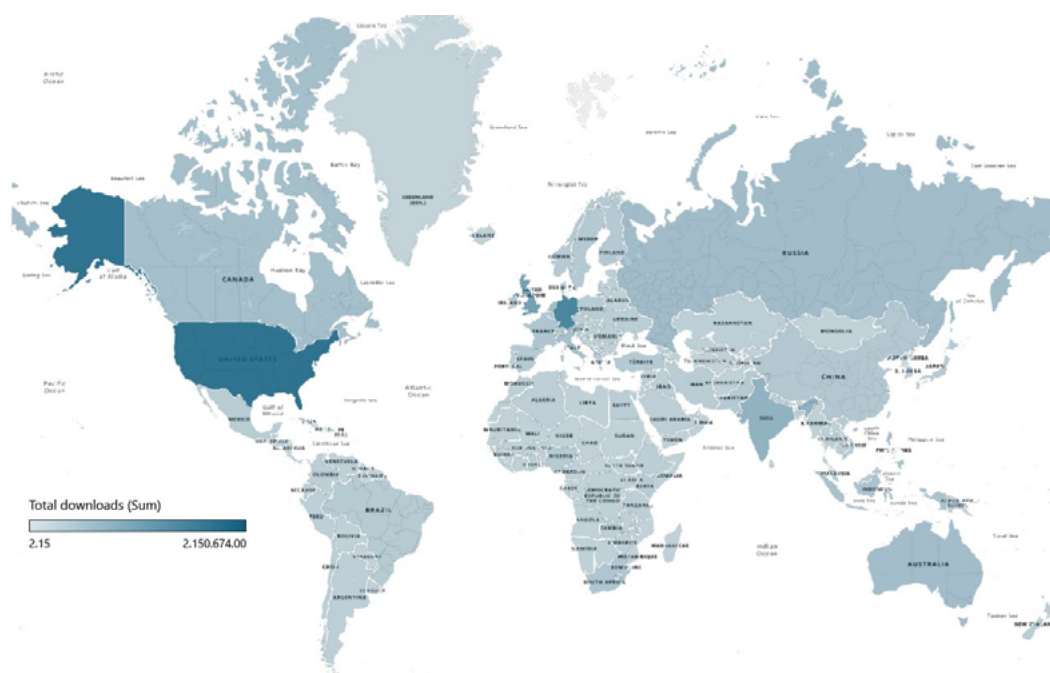## Number of downloads

The OAPEN Library is widely accessed by users globally. In 2023, we saw an increase in the number of COUNTER-conformant downloads, reaching to well over 13 million during this 12-month period. COUNTER usage is based on the COUNTER Code of Practice which provides users with comparable, authoritative, standards-based data.
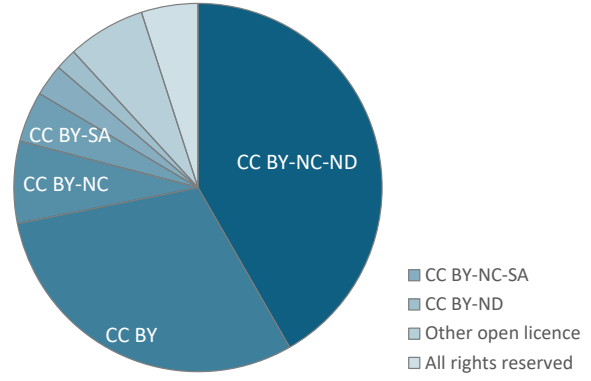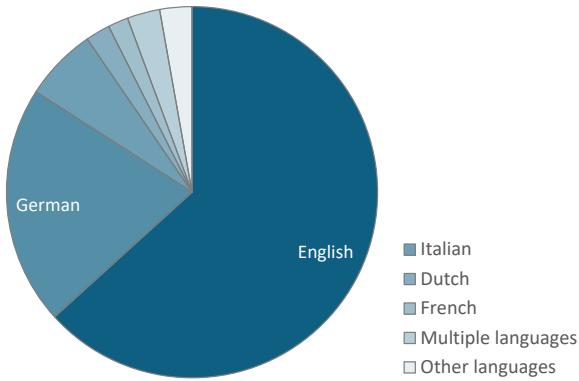

Global reach of downloads

Languages and licences

Languages pie chart: English, German, Italian, Dutch, French, Multiple languages, Other languages

Licences pie chart: CC BY-NC-ND, CC BY, CC BY-NC, CC BY-SA, CC BY-NC-SA, CC BY-ND, Other open licence, All rights reserved

Library interaction

Analysing data we receive from Clarivate, one of the discovery systems that enables libraries to activate the OAPEN Library collection in their catalogues, over 1,300 libraries accessed the OAPEN Library in 2023. Additionally, we saw full-text and abstract downloads from the OAPEN Library by over 1,000 libraries totaling more than 500,000 downloads throughout 2023. While this does not capture all the download and access information from every library and system that uses the OAPEN Library, it demonstrates a continued, strong engagement by our primary stakeholders and the value that OAPEN provides for increasing the discoverability and accessibility of OA books.

Most downloaded books

The OAPEN Library continues to see impressive COUNTER-conformant download statistics for similar books to 2022, but it's also fantastic to see new books make the list in 2023, as well as a variety of publishers and presses. A list of the top 10 most downloaded books is available on the next page.

Research funders and collections

The OAPEN Library hosts various collections on behalf of research funders, helping them manage their compliance and providing bespoke information to assess the value of their policy. In 2023, the number of books included in research funder OA book collections managed by the OAPEN Library grew significantly, now including well over 3,000 OA books.

At the beginning of 2023, we started a new collaboration with the German Research Foundation DFG (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft) and we are including their OA books in a dedicated funder collection in the OAPEN Library.

DFG Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft
German Research Foundation

Top 10 most downloaded books

89,358 — Russkij jazyk konca XX stoletija
https://library.oapen.org/handle/20.500.12657/26277

42,529 — Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) Using R
https://library.oapen.org/handle/20.500.12657/51463

30,908 — The Malleus Maleficarum and the construction of witchcraft: Theology and popular belief
https://library.oapen.org/handle/20.500.12657/35002

30,382 — Systematic Reviews in Educational Research
https://library.oapen.org/handle/20.500.12657/23142

29,564 — International Relations
https://library.oapen.org/handle/20.500.12657/22471

26,380 — The Palgrave Handbook of Critical Menstruation Studies
https://library.oapen.org/handle/20.500.12657/41299

26,258 — Frankenstein
https://library.oapen.org/handle/20.500.12657/31387

23,947 — How the World Changed Social Media
https://library.oapen.org/handle/20.500.12657/32834

20,297 — Primary and Secondary Education During Covid-19
https://library.oapen.org/handle/20.500.12657/50965

18,856 — Structural Health Monitoring Damage Detection Systems for Aerospace
https://library.oapen.org/handle/20.500.12657/50942

Directory of Open Access Books

Since 2012, the OAPEN Foundation has operated the global indexing service the Directory of Open Access Books (DOAB). In 2019, the DOAB Foundation was established, also as a Dutch 'Stichting,' co-governed by OAPEN and OpenEdition through Aix-Marseille University and Centre national de la recherche scientifique (CNRS). DOAB is free for libraries, publishers, and the public to use without registering and they can explore the richness of the catalogue with ease.

Publishers need to comply with basic requirements for peer review and open licensing to have their books indexed in DOAB. All metadata in DOAB is distributed fully open (CC0) from its open-source DSpace 6 platform in several formats including MARCXML, CSV, RIS, and ONIX. It's also possible to search the directory using the REST API, and the directory can be harvested using OAI-PMH.

Libraries and other institutions (including research funders) can support the operation and development of DOAB through our library support programme and publishers can support DOAB through our sponsorship programme. We wish to thank all our supporters and sponsors immensely for their 2023 contributions. 2023 also marked the 10-year anniversary of DOAB. The

milestones are highlighted in the infographic below, including DOAB's selection for the second SCOSS funding round together with OAPEN and developing the DOAB Trusted Platform Network.

Governance

The DOAB Foundation is managed by an Executive Board consisting of Pierre Mounier (Associate Director of OpenEdition and co-coordinator of OPERAS) and Niels Stern (Managing Director of the OAPEN Foundation) and is steered by a Supervisory Board. In 2023 Bas Savenije was replaced by Antia Wiersma from the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW).

The current members of the DOAB Supervisory Board as of June 2023 are:

- Neil Jacobs (Chair), UKRN
- Antia Wiersma, KNAW
- Lionel Maurel, CNRS
- Charles Watkinson, University of Michigan
- Marlène Delhaye, Aix-Marseille University
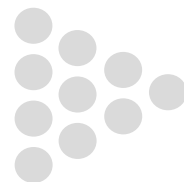
doab
directory of open access books

2013
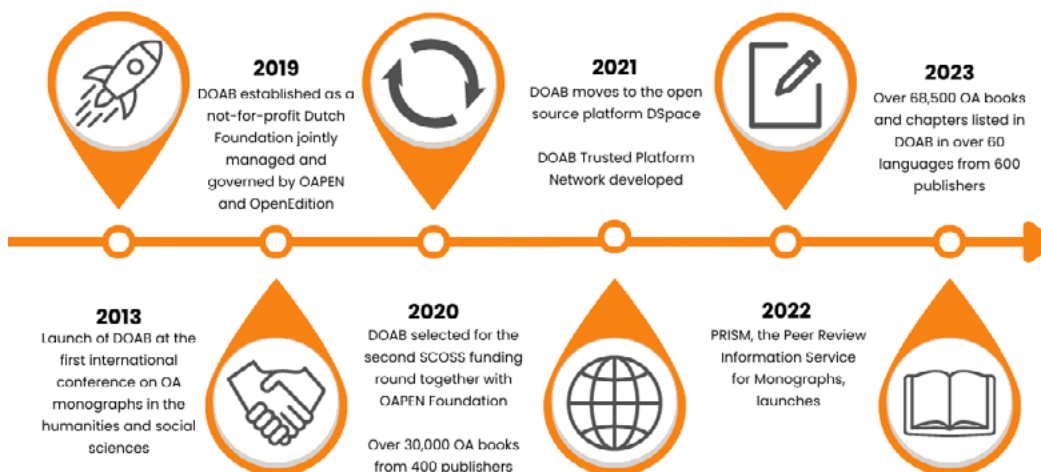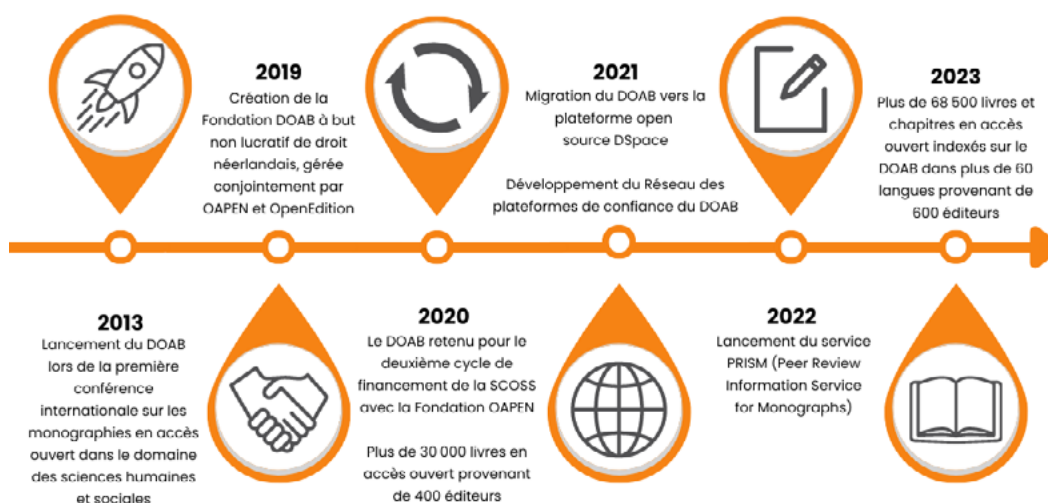Launch of DOAB at the first international conference on OA monographs in the humanities and social sciences

2019
DOAB established as a not-for-profit Dutch Foundation jointly managed and governed by OAPEN and OpenEdition

2020
DOAB selected for the second SCOSS funding round together with OAPEN Foundation

Over 30,000 OA books from 400 publishers

2021
DOAB moves to the open source platform DSpace

DOAB Trusted Platform Network developed

2022
PRISM, the Peer Review Information Service for Monographs, launches

2023
Over 68,500 OA books and chapters listed in DOAB in over 60 languages from 600 publishers

2013 – 2023: CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF DOAB!

2013
Lancement du DOAB lors de la première conférence internationale sur les monographies en accès ouvert dans le domaine des sciences humaines et sociales

2019
Création de la Fondation DOAB à but non lucratif de droit néerlandais, gérée conjointement par OAPEN et OpenEdition

2020
Le DOAB retenu pour le deuxième cycle de financement de la SCOSS avec la Fondation OAPEN

Plus de 30 000 livres en accès ouvert provenant de 400 éditeurs

2021
Migration du DOAB vers la plateforme open source DSpace

Développement du Réseau des plateformes de confiance du DOAB

2022
Lancement du service PRISM (Peer Review Information Service for Monographs)

2023
Plus de 68 500 livres et chapitres en accès ouvert indexés sur le DOAB dans plus de 60 langues provenant de 600 éditeurs

2013 – 2023: LE DOAB FÊTE SES 10 ANS !

DOAB Scientific Committee

The DOAB Scientific Committee (SC), consisting of members with experience or knowledge in Social Sciences and Humanities scholarship and the editorial side of OA book publishing, advises the DOAB Executive Board and the Supervisory Board on scientific matters and monitors the development and implementation of the Peer Review Information Service for Monographs (PRISM). The members are appointed for a period of four years and can be reappointed for new terms. The Chair is appointed by the members of the SC and acts as advisor to the Executive Board.

The Chair and Committee members are:
- Lucy Montgomery (Chair), Curtin University

- Abrizah Abdullah, Universiti Malaya
- Anne Baillot, Le Mans Université
- Cherifa Boukacem, Claude Bernard University Lyon 1
- Didier Torny, CNRS
- Eelco Ferwerda, Independent
- Enrico Pasini, Università degli Studi di Torino
- Gilberto Hochman, Fundação Oswaldo Cruz (Rio de Janeiro)
- Janneke Adema, Coventry University
- Kamel Belhamel, University of Bejaia
- Kathleen Fitzpatrick, Michigan State University
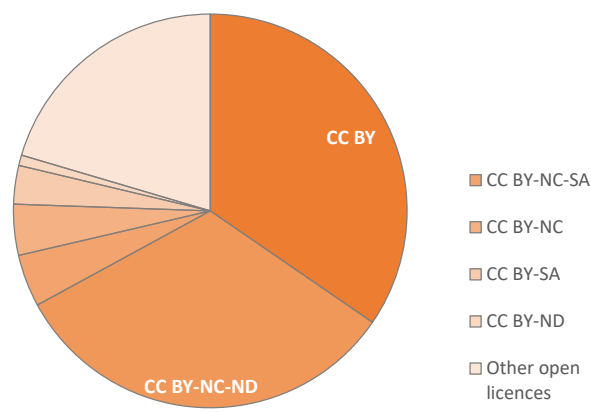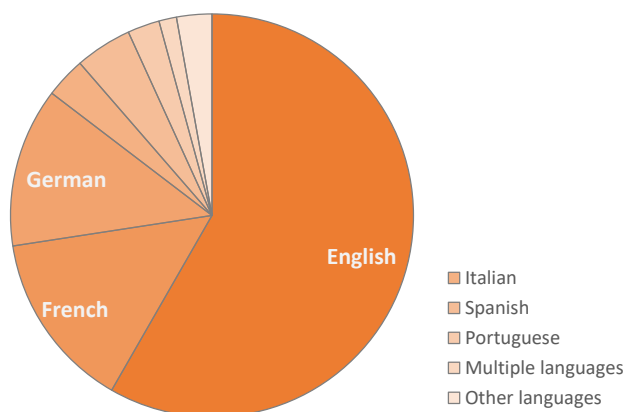- Joanna Ball, DOAJ

Growth of titles and publishers

In 2023, approximately 14,300 new titles and over 95 new publishers were added to DOAB. This meant that, by the end of December, over 76,500 OA books and chapters were indexed from around 700 publishers.
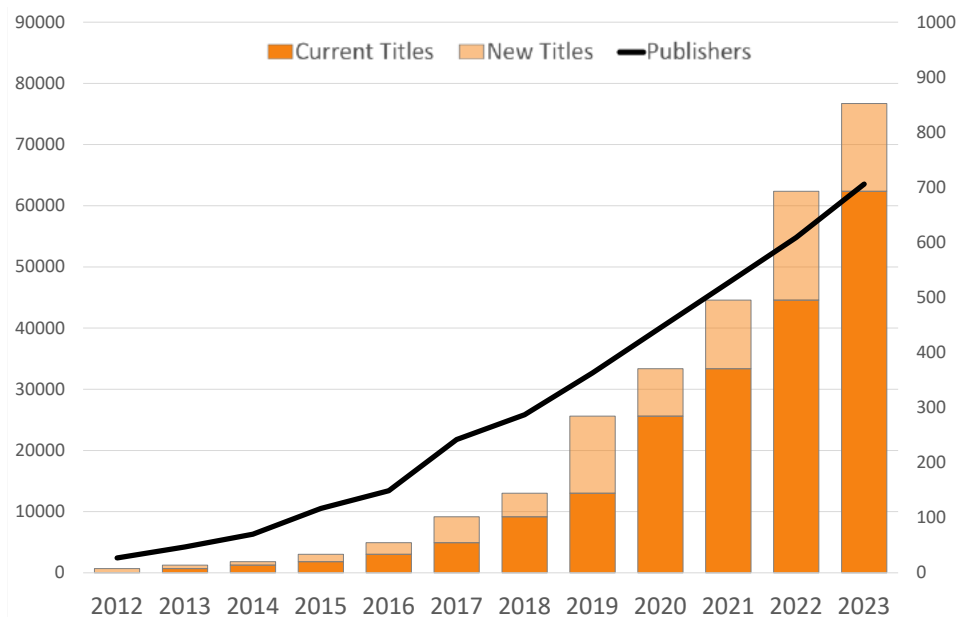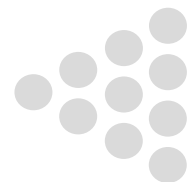
Languages and licenses

Progress for PRISM

The Peer Review Information Service for Monographs (PRISM) is a standardised way for academic publishers to display information about their peer review processes across their entire catalogue on both a publisher level and an individual title level. In the 12+ months since PRISM launched in November 2022, provided by DOAB as part of the OPERAS service catalogue, over 5,000 PRISM records were added to the directory. Significant contributions came from KIT Scientific Publishers and Taylor & Francis, who added almost 2,000 and 3,000 PRISM records respectively.

The OAPEN technical team developed a PRISM widget for publishers to enable them to display PRISM peer review information on their websites and further increase the trust in peer review and open access book publishing.

We continued to run PRISM webinars and to speak about PRISM at special events such as the OPERAS-GER event in Bonn in March 2023, and a dedicated webinar for OPERAS-PL in October 2023.

DOAB Link Checker

In partnership with the Free Ebook Foundation, we created DOAB Check, another useful tool for publishers and service providers to ensure seamless access to their OA books. Every month, this tool checks all the links in DOAB, looking for any that are broken or misconfigured. As a result, we identified over 175 publishers and service providers who had broken links. It also meant that going forward we can identify our own links that have errors and seek to resolve the issues to ensure unfettered access to our services for all stakeholders.
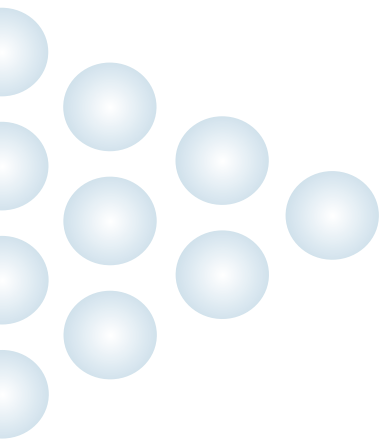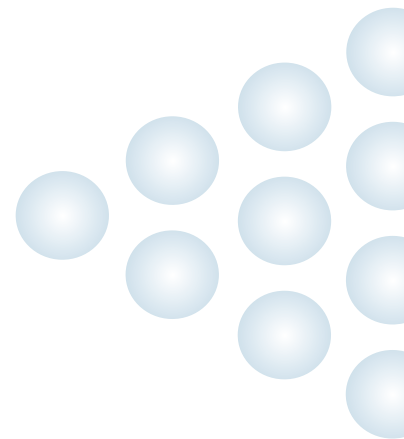
OAPEN
Open Access Books Toolkit

The OAPEN Open Access Books Toolkit is a free-to-access resource that aims to help authors better understand OA for books, increase trust in OA book publishing, provide reliable and easy-to-find answers to questions from authors, and to give support on the process of publishing an OA book. It is guided by a global, multi-stakeholder Editorial Advisory Board. The academic community and scholarly communications organisations helped us create this public resource for academic book authors and researchers.

In Q2 and Q3 of 2023 the Editorial Advisory Board reviewed the content and updated 17 articles, including re-writing a few articles so that they no longer fall under copyright. Consequently, the entire content of the Toolkit has been made available under a CC-BY license.

OAPEN
OA Books
Toolkit

Stakeholder Engagement and Communication

Communication activities

OAPEN and DOAB zealously engage with their publisher, library, and funder stakeholder groups and the wider scholarly community to promote their services, activities, projects, and OA books and book publishing. We attend many external events and conferences (online and in person), post blogs, send newsletters, and are active on social media.

Last year, we published a total of twelve blogs, including our first blog in French to celebrate the 10-year anniversary of DOAB. We sent eight newsletters: three OAPEN newsletters (1,650+ subscribers), two DOAB newsletters (2,150+ subscribers), two Library Supporter newsletters, and one Publisher newsletter. OAPEN X (formerly Twitter) followers reach over 7,250 and DOAB X followers reach over 5,725.

12 Blogs

8 Newsletters

23 Events

Conferences and events

OAPEN team members participated in a total of 23 events last year: 12 online and 11 in-person. This included panel discussions, seminars, webinars, annual meetings, and conferences. Prevalent themes encompassed: increasing the visibility of OA books, improving equity and bibliodiversity in OA book publishing, services for libraries, the OAPEN OA Books Toolkit, and the different projects we're involved in.

OAPEN and DOAB view presence at conferences and events, often presenting or speaking at them, as an integral part of supporting the shared mission to increase the discoverability of OA books and continue building trust in OA book publishing. Additionally, it allows us to connect with our different stakeholder groups, in particular those who support us financially, as well as providing us with the opportunity to create new relationships and collaborations.

You can find a complete list of conferences and events attended in 2023 by the team in the , with links to recordings or materials from the sessions.

Library community

While enjoying continued support from across North America, Europe, and Australasia, our supporting library community largely expanded through growth from consortia in 2023. We partner with several organisations that enable us to receive more support from libraries to strengthen and develop our infrastructure services for all our stakeholders. One such organisation is the Open Book Collective (OBC), of which Niels Stern serves as the Vice-Chair for the Board of Stewards and represents service providers on the membership committee. Through our collaboration with the OBC,

we welcomed new supporting libraries into the fold, stretching from the United States of America (US) to New Zealand. Additionally, we often receive support from institutions in the United Kingdom (UK) through our partnership with Jisc, and from institutions and consortia in the US through Lyrasis. In total, we have 17 library consortia and two library collaborations supporting us, including:

- Bayerische Staatsbibliothek (BSB, Germany)
- Bibsam (Sweden)
- Big Ten Academic Alliance (BTAA, US)
- California Digital Library (CDL)
- Canadian Research Knowledge Network (CRKN)
- Council of Australian University Librarians (CAUL)
- Det Kgl. Bibliotek (Denmark)
- Elektron (Belgium)
- FinELib (Finland)
- Friedrich-Althoff-Konsortium (FAK, Germany)
- Irish Research Library Consortium (IReL)
- Konsortium Baden-Württemberg (KBW, Germany)
- Niedersachsen Konsortium (Germany)
- Orbis Cascade Alliance (US)
- Sachsen-Konsortium (Germany)
- Sikt consortium (Norway)
- Spanish National Research Council (CISC)
- Swiss Library Service Platform (SLSP, Konsortium der Schweizer Hochschulbibliotheke)
- Virginia Academic Library Consortium (VIVA)

Our third Annual Meeting for Supporting Libraries was held at the beginning of December and the modest group of participants allowed for a higher level of engagement, providing us with considerable insight into the use of social media, how libraries prefer to engage with us, what they want to see more of, and how we could be more global.

The Library Working Group on Metadata established in 2022 as an outcome of the 2021 Annual Meeting for Supporting Libraries, met twice in 2023. The group enables us to collaborate with experts from the library community to identify and address challenges for OA books and our services. One such challenge addressed in 2023 was OAPEN MARC records. We were fortunate to collaborate with Jeff Edmunds (Digital Access Coordinator, Penn State University Libraries), on MARC21 records for libraries. Jeff wrote a blog about the collaboration which is available on our website.

We heartily acknowledge and send our thanks to all our supporting libraries and are grateful for their new or continued contributions to our work, facilitating the dissemination of OA books and building trust in OA book publishing.

Expanding our communities

In 2023 OAPEN continued to accelerate its library and publisher outreach activities. A vital component of increasing engagement on a global scale is through DOAB's Trusted Platform Network, which allows the directory to benefit from the quality assurance activities of these platforms to enhance the range, discoverability, and usage of OA books. Current platforms include OAPEN Library, OpenEdition, Project MUSE, and SciELO Books. JSTOR joined as a Trusted Platform partner in 2023 and MOUs have recently been signed with the African Platform for Open Scholarship (APOS), Fulcrum (University of Michigan Press) and Thoth Open Metadata.

In addition to maintaining existing networks, we continuously seek to grow partnerships beyond the European and North American contexts. The expansion of our team to include Jordy Findanis and Danny Kingsley supports OAPEN's commitment to engage more actively with publishers, libraries, universities, and infrastructure providers beyond Europe and North America, such as the Middle East, Asia, and Africa.

Participation in groups and forums

In 2023, OAPEN participated in the following groups and forums:

- CERN/NASA Accelerating the Adoption of Open Science Working Group on Sustainable & Interoperable Open Infrastructure
- Crossref books interest group
- Netherlands Enterprise Agency Stakeholder Board
- OA Switchboard Books Working Group
- OABN (OPERAS SIG)
- OAeBU Advisory Board
- OAeBU Technical Advisory Committee
- OASPA OA books interest group
- Open Book Collective Board of Stewards
- Open Book Collective membership committee
- OPERAS Common Standards SIG
- OPERAS Executive Assembly
- OPERAS national node for the Netherlands
- OPERAS STB (Services and Technology Board)
- OPERAS-PLUS
- OMP-DOAB/OAPEN Integrations Working Group
- POSI Posse
- SCOSS Family
- Think.Check.Submit committee
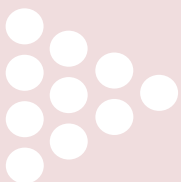
Niels Stern, Laura J. Wilkinson and Jordy Findanis at the 75ᵗʰ Frankfurt Book Fair.

Open Access Books Network

Once again, OAPEN provided one of the three coordinators for the Open Access Books Network (OABN). Our mailing list grew to 340+ members, Humanities Commons members grew to 440+, and X (formerly Twitter) now has 1,400+ followers. Furthermore, we published 17 blogs, including our successful 'Publisher Spotlight' series of deep dives into OA book publishing platforms.

The first half of 2023 saw the PALOMERA series launch, followed by three engagement sessions with publishers, libraries, and infrastructure providers. We heard from the Open Book Collective (OBC) and what it aims to achieve and teamed up with Jisc to run a three part series of webinars, 'Collective funding models for Open Access books', in the lead-up to the implementation of the new UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) policy for OA books in 2024.

Over the summer, the OABN took some time to learn more about its community, what works well, and what could be improved by conducting a '(not a) survey' of its members and are using this to inform its development and future activities. Shortly after the European summer, the OABN also celebrated three years of operations.

Publications

- Ferwerda, Eelco, Ronald Snijder, and Niels Stern. 2023. 'Open Access to Books – the Perspective of a Non-Profit Infrastructure Provider'. *Journal of Electronic Publication* 26(1). doi: 10.3998/jep.3303. – An overview of the development and activities of OAPEN in the first ten years; the underlying technical approach behind the platforms; the current role of OAPEN and DOAB and outlook.

- Snijder, Ronald. 2023. 'Books in a Bubble: Assessing the OAPEN Library Collection'. *JLIS.It* 14(2):75–92. doi: 10.36253/jlis.it-498. – Three-dimensional visualisations tell a complicated story in a simple way: how well does the collection of the OAPEN Library meet the needs of its stakeholders: readers, libraries, funders and publishers?

- Snijder, Ronald. 2023. 'Measured in a Context: Making Sense of Open Access Book Data'. *UKSG Insights* 36(1):20. doi: 10.1629/uksg.627. – Open access book platforms have been available for over a decade, each with their own usage data. To provide context, a new metric – the Transparent Open Access Normalized Index (TOANI) score – aims to provide a simple answer to the question of how well an individual open access book or chapter is performing.

- Stern, N. and J. Rooryck. 2023. 'PALOMERA 1st Policy Brief: Alignment beyond PALOMERA (1.5). Zenodo. doi: 10.5281/zenodo.8402385. – Both at the national and institutional levels, a coherent approach to open access for academic books is lacking. PALOMERA has established a Funder Forum as an informal community of practice for funders to address OA books.

- Stern, Niels and Ronald Snijder. 2023. 'Guest Post – Towards Global Equity for Open Access Books'. The Scholarly Kitchen. (https://scholarlykitchen.sspnet.org/2023/06/14/guest-post-to-wards-global-equity-for-open-access-books/). – DOAB celebrated its tenth anniversary and has grown substantially. The next challenge is being more globally inclusive, something DOAB will continue to prioritise in the coming years.
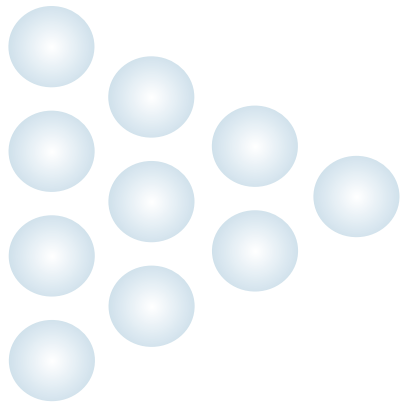
The OAPEN Lab / OAPEN Research

Apart from an infrastructure providing services, OAPEN is also a place to do research on OA books and to experiment. We have started several research projects, which will – hopefully – lead to interesting results.

Wellcome deposit service

We started to explore the possibility of OAPEN being the deposit point for researchers and publishers associated with Wellcome, a global charitable foundation for health research. The deposit service will be working with the National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI) Bookshelf. This would enable Wellcome and UKRI to benefit from OAPEN as a well-known service provider, while using NCBI for their XML expertise.

Affiliation data

We will be looking into providing affiliation data based on VIAF (Virtual International Authority File). This service combines multiple name authority files into a single OCLC-hosted name authority service. It matches and links widely used authority files maintained by national libraries, and thus is a reliable source of finding affiliations of our authors and editors.

Metadata integration: Thoth, Open Monograph Press

To further enhance the ingestion of OA books into OAPEN and DOAB, we are discussing ways to make this more efficient. With the support of Public Knowledge Project (PKP), an 'OMP-DOAB/OAPEN Integrations Working Group' was formed to seamlessly integrate the Open Monograph Press platform with OAPEN and DOAB using ONIX. Furthermore, together with the technical team of the Thoth platform, we are investigating a similar process, based on the SWORD protocol.

Edited volumes and chapter information

Lastly, we have started to investigate possible ways to make chapter metadata for edited volumes available. However, we must consider acquiring the metadata and understanding the best ways to make it available to libraries, aggregators, and search engines.

New Technical Features and Functionalities

BIC to Thema

Both OAPEN and DOAB use the BIC subject category scheme – launched originally in 1997 – which, at the time of writing this report, was officially deprecated in February 2024. Therefore, we needed to change to its successor: Thema. This new classification aims to be global in scope and is managed by EDItEUR. The consequences for us are twofold: an update of our infrastructure and the updating of all our book and chapter descriptions in the OAPEN Library and DOAB: over 110,000 records. After the preparations in 2023, the new classification will be available in the first half of 2024.

MEMO – Metadata Export Module for Open access books

We see an increasing demand for selections of titles based on many different criteria. Furthermore, the users of these titles might have specific metadata requirements. For instance, EBSCO requires a bespoke XML output, while the SCELC project uses MARC and KBART. To cater to these needs, we developed a flexible export module and will deploy it in 2024.

Recommender service

The large collection of the OAPEN Library allows us to use text mining techniques to create a privacy-friendly recommendation service. In cooperation with students at the Stevens Institute of Technology and Eric Hellman of the Free Ebook Foundation we have been working on a recommendation service that does not rely on privacy violation but instead uses the contents of the publications, and like MEMO, we will be implementing this new service in 2024.

Adding a wing to the Palace Project

The Palace Project is a platform that provides equitable access to digital knowledge, while bolstering the relationship between libraries and patrons, protecting patron privacy, and enabling libraries to serve all their digital content in a single app. OAPEN supports this project by providing titles. In 2023, we selected 10,000 recent OA books from the OAPEN Library written in English or Spanish and made them available through the Palace platform in 2023. The next step is to work on a process to deliver all of the OAPEN titles to the Palace Project.

Projects

PALOMERA

PALOMERA (Policy Alignment of Open Access Monographs in the European Research Area (ERA)) is a two-year project funded within the framework of Horizon Europe. OAPEN actively participates in the PALOMERA project as scientific coordinator, member of the project management team, and as WP4 lead. In 2023, OAPEN led the partner work on the structure and implementation of the PALOMERA Knowledge Base, which gathers hundreds of OA book policy related documents across the ERA. In the long term, the Knowledge Base (a DSpace 7 instance, hosted by Lyrasis) will be managed by OAPEN. The Knowledge Base will be further enriched with research carried out in the context of the PALOMERA project. Towards the end of the project in 2024, essential research findings will be published in the OAPEN OA Books Toolkit, which will serve as the public interface of the Knowledge Base.

During the first year of the PALOMERA project, OAPEN was also responsible for establishing the Funder Forum, a trusted forum for representatives of funding agencies in ERA countries, where they can freely share their perspectives, plans, but also challenges while developing or implementing OA policies for academic books.

The two Funder Forum meetings organised in 2023 (May and November) gathered more than 40 representatives from Research Funding Organisations (RFOs) in 20 countries. The meetings were considered successful and fruitful and served as a foundation for future meetings, the next one already planned for May 2024. This also encouraged the project partners to formulate the recommendations of the first policy brief, suggesting that research funders would agree on a support mechanism for the continuation and future coordination of the Funder Forum.

Based on the evidence collected in the Knowledge Base and information provided by the funders by the end of the project (December 2024) two types of recommendations will be developed: (1) high-level and actionable, SMART-guided recommendations offering a shared vision for OA to a typology of academic books and book publication processes, aligned across disciplinary and national contexts; (2) recommendations tailored to the diversity of the academic book stakeholders: Research Performing Organisations (RPOs), Research Funding Organisations

Funded by the European Union

(RFOs), national open science policymakers, libraries, research institutes, academic researchers, learned societies, private foundations offering book subsidies, infrastructure providers, as well as commercial and institutional publishers.

OA Book Usage Analytics for Diverse Communities – a demonstration project

2023 was a busy year for the Book Analytics Dashboard (BAD) project. In February, we began a series of focus groups which gave publishers the opportunity to view, use, and give suggestions and feedback on the template demo dashboard directly to the project team. We reported our top findings from the BAD focus groups in April, and then set to work on the feature requests that we discovered, as well as directly applying our findings into our work around sustainability and modelling different pricing possibilities.

At the Frankfurt Book Fair in October, we officially launched the Book Analytics Service (as the specific service offered by the BAD project). We began conversations with many different publishers interested in participating, and these exchanges continue today with some publishers now at the onboarding stage. In preparation for Frankfurt, we completely refreshed the supporting documentation and launched the service's key information page (including service levels and pricing structure). We've published a blog, 'Everything you need to know to get started with the Book Analytics Service' which brings together many key points and links we shared with publishers during our meetings at the Fair.

Open Book Futures (OBF)

OAPEN and DOAB are part of Open Book Futures (OBF), a project funded by Research England and the Arcadia Fund, that aims to promote community-led and bibliodiverse initiatives within open access book publishing. This three-year project – a continuation of the COPIM project (2020-2023) – gathers an international community of researchers, librarians, universities, OA book publishers, and infrastructure providers. OBF will continue to build on the pioneering outputs of COPIM and significantly accelerate and expand the work of the Open Book Collective (OBC), which makes it easier for academic libraries to financially support small- and medium-sized OA publishing and infrastructure initiatives (including OAPEN and DOAB); the Thoth metadata management and dissemination platform; the Opening the Future revenue model; the Experimental Publishing Compendium; and the Thoth Archiving Network.

By supporting these important initiatives and particularly through our collaboration with the OBC and Thoth, we are collectively engaging with OA publishing in new and innovative ways. Workshops were held in 2023 to scope two key project deliverables, the Collective Development Fund, which will be issuing grant funding to support publishers, infrastructure providers, and other relevant entities to build capacity within OA publishing, and the OBC Information Hub, which will offer key resources on funding models, accessibility, copyright and licensing, metadata management, preservation and archiving, governance best practices, and much besides.

While striving to underpin and strengthen existing networks, we are also, importantly,
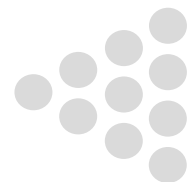
committed to accelerating our outreach efforts further with publishers, libraries, universities, and infrastructure providers in national and linguistic contexts beyond Europe and North America. To address local and global inequalities, DOAB and OBF are aligned in efforts to ensure 'a fairer, more sustainable future for Open Access book publishing', in the words of the project's principal investigator Joe Deville.

OPERAS-PLUS

OAPEN is taking an active part in OPERAS-PLUS, a 36-month project funded by the Horizon Europe framework Infra-Dev that runs from September 2022 to July 2025. Since OPERAS entered the ESFRI Roadmap in 2021, this grant supports OPERAS in its preparatory phase to become operational as a European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ERIC) in 2028. Specifically, OPERAS-PLUS aims to strengthen the OPERAS governance structure, to develop OPERAS national nodes, as well as OPERAS' portfolio of services. It further aims to maximise OPERAS' impact in the European Research Area (ERA) and beyond. OPERAS-PLUS brings together a consortium of 13 partners from 12 countries and is coordinated by Michael Kaiser from the Max Weber Stiftung (Bonn, Germany).

SCELC & OAPEN Pilot Project

The SCELC & OAPEN Pilot Project working group has completed the 3rd reporting observations document. This pilot is a collaborative effort to amplify the usage of open access resources in SCELC member libraries. The goal of the project is to jumpstart the integration of open access ebooks and provide a data driven analysis for the expansion and continual investment by SCELC. It will be accomplished by customising feeds of OAPEN's OA books to participating SCELC libraries, analysing the usage statistics and trends, and using feedback from participants. The project will conclude in July 2024.

DOAB in Africa

In July 2023, the DOAB in Africa project kicked off with some of it's first activities occurring a couple of months later. In August, a webinar was given to Nigerian publishers where DOAB was presented as an indexing service that would increase the visibility of books from Nigeria. In September, DOAB co-sponsored the LIBSENSE open science conference in Abuja, Nigeria and participated in a session about its role as a critical infrastructure for open science. The DOAB in Africa project is a small-scale DOAB internal initiative that aims to address African publishers' equitable access to the OA distribution channels and provide equitable access to the discoverability services for all publishers that fulfil its requirements. The project will be continued in 2024.

A Message from Our Partner: CERN

The Sponsoring Consortium for Open Access in Particle Physics (SCOAP3) is the world's largest diamond open access initiative and covers almost 90% of the journal publications in particle physics thanks to the support of its 3000+ members from 45 countries. Hosted at CERN, the European Organisation for Nuclear Research, SCOAP3 commenced in 2014 and, in the decade since, has supported the open access publishing of 62,500 research papers and articles from authors across more than 110 countries worldwide. Thanks to the collaboration, open access publishing in particle physics has not only become the norm but has also delivered a truly equitable global publishing infrastructure, as there are no financial barriers to reading or publishing in the participating journals.

In 2021, the collaboration decided to expand its scope by launching a pilot program also to finance open access to key books and monographs in high-energy physics and related fields. Right from the start of this pilot, the SCOAP3 collaboration chose OAPEN as its partner to host and disseminate the SCOAP3 for Books collection. Thanks to OAPEN's usage statistics, it quickly became apparent that open access books lead to a tremendous increase in readership, particularly regarding geographical reach. Driven by this initial success, SCOAP3 has decided to establish an ongoing SCOAP3 for Books program, which supports new titles relevant to the discipline.

Over the last three years of collaboration, it has become increasingly obvious that there is potential for even deeper collaboration between OAPEN and SCOAP3, and in particular with CERN as its host organisation. Both OAPEN and CERN are deeply committed to openness and transparency in scholarly communication. Since the very beginning of both organisations, open research has been at the centre of their respective missions, particularly remarkable considering the creation of CERN dates back 70 years. CERN has already successfully supported other communities in establishing or expanding open science principles and collaborates with organisations like UNESCO, the European Commission, and NASA to further accelerate the global transition to Open Science. Building on this successful track record and the aligned values and goals, OAPEN and CERN signed an expanded collaboration agreement at the end of 2023.

From 2024 onwards, CERN will use its extensive technical infrastructure to host both OAPEN and the Directory of Open Access Books (DOAB), together with its other scholarly communication services such as INSPIREhep and Zenodo. This mutually beneficial arrangement will help increase the operational efficiency and reliability of OAPEN and DOAB as vital services for the research community spanning all scholarly disciplines. For CERN, this further amplifies our efforts to support and promote open science principles and enables researchers worldwide to easily apply them. CERN is delighted that it can support the important mission of OAPEN and DOAB with our expertise and infrastructure, and it is my personal pleasure to further intensify the wonderful collaboration with the OAPEN team.

Alexander Kohls,
Group Leader, CERN Scientific Information Service

Finances

Thanks to all our supporters

At the end of 2023 OAPEN and DOAB were supported by over 225 libraries and consortia. The full list of supporters can be found on our websites. We want to extend our sincere thanks to all the libraries supporting us. Without their support we could not sustain and develop our services. We also want to thank those private funders and donors who supported us in 2023 and the DOAB sponsors for their continued support. OAPEN also relies on fees charged to publishers and funders for the services we provide, and we want to thank them for their excellent partnerships.

Generating a surplus in 2023

As not-for-profit organisations, OAPEN and DOAB still have a goal to generate financial surplus. This goal is supported by the Principles of Open Scholarly Infrastructure (POSI). As mentioned earlier in the report, OAPEN and DOAB are guided by these principles and we conducted a POSI self-audit in 2023. So, each year we strive to make a surplus to ensure that we have funds for innovation and development of the organisations. The surplus never leaves the organisation but is always re-invested. It is also important to remember that a Dutch foundation ('stichting') by law cannot be sold or acquired (as explained in a blog post on our website).

The surplus is used for different activities, such as building our contingency fund, new technical developments, and upgrading our existing technical infrastructures; as well as employing new colleagues to support our expanding operations and increased engagement with the community. OAPEN and DOAB have been considerably under-staffed for years, and it has long been an explicit goal to create surplus to enable us to add more staff, thus ensuring a resilient and dynamic organisation. For those supporting our infrastructures, it is important that OAPEN and DOAB are open and transparent organisations following generally accepted principles on governance, sustainability, and insurance, which are the headlines of our POSI self-audit.

The OAPEN Foundation closed the 2023 financial year with a positive result of €166,875 of which €160,000 has been earmarked to the OAPEN contingency fund.

The DOAB Foundation closed the 2023 financial year with a positive result of €4,010.

Outlook for 2024
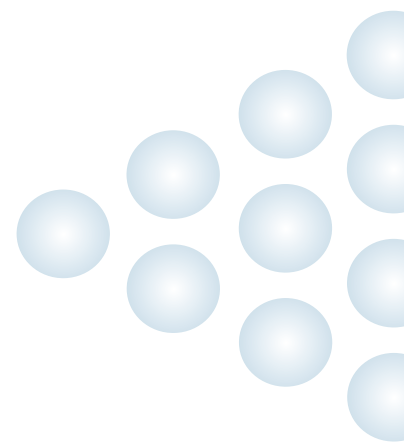
OAPEN and DOAB have been legal entities with mature governance structures and service offerings for quite some years. We are no longer just projects but established organisations operating open infrastructure services for academic books. We are still relatively small organisations which makes us vulnerable in a competitive environment, but it also ensures that we are agile and adaptable, for instance when it comes to collaboration with other organisations.

One of the advantages of open infrastructures is their ability to interoperate seamlessly in an open scholarly communication landscape. To deliver on our mission, we should always seek opportunities of engagement and collaboration with like-minded organisations. This calls for exploration of technical interoperability, people coming together, and new ways of collaboration among organisations. It is our ambition for 2024 to explore such collaborations more concretely in support of our mission to ensure efficient and resilient infrastructures for open book publishing.

As an example, we will actively investigate closer and deeper collaboration with organisations providing services that could expand our existing service provision to research funders. Another example is the development of the DOAB Trusted Platform Network. It is part of the DOAB strategy to globalise this network and to deepen the community-led nature of DOAB.

2024 will be the year for both OAPEN and DOAB to update their strategies. We will set the direction for the next few years by ensuring a continued focus on bibliodiversity, equity, and inclusion and based on trust, transparency, and operational strength. On the operational side, a big step forward for us will be our new collaboration with CERN, which will secure

a strong and reliable hosting environment for both OAPEN and DOAB. We are both thankful and excited about this new collaboration which shows CERN's commitment to open science.

Our engagement with the fast-growing community around OA book publishing will continue in 2024. We will participate in conversations and discussions at conferences and webinars, we will share developments in blog posts and articles, and we will invite stakeholders to give us feedback and ideas for development. We will continue to co-coordinate the OA Books Network where we look forward to engaging more in conversations around diamond OA publishing for books, such as co-hosting a workshop on the topic at the OPERAS conference in Zadar in April. 2024 will also be the year where we redesign the OAPEN OA Books Toolkit which is widely used across the community. We will further enrich it with new, research-based content stemming from the PALOMERA project. Together with COKI (Curtin Open Knowledge Initiative) and Katherine Skinner we will expand and optimise the Book Analytics Service (BAS) and seek ways to make it financially sustainable, while at the same time affordable to publishers of all sizes.

We look forward to another year full of engagement, innovation, and collaboration in support of OA book publishing.

Niels Stern
Managing Director OAPEN Foundation

Appendix

List of Webinars, Conferences, and Events Attended

DOAB & OPERAS	6 March	Online	Overview of the Peer Review Information Service for Monographs (PRISM)	Laura J. Wilkinson Lotte van Aalten
OPERAS-GER OA Books Day with OAPEN & DOAB	7 March	Bonn, Germany	Unlocking Monographs: The Way to Openness	Laura J. Wilkinson Lotte van Aalten
DFG online seminar	23 March	Online	Kooperation zwischen DFG und OAPEN Library (Cooperations between DFG and the OAPEN Library)	Niels Stern Ronald Snijder
OABN PALOMERA Series	28 March	Online	Launch Event	Niels Stern
De Gruyter webinar series: 'Challenging the Status Quo: Taking Libraries into the Future'	30 March	Online	Free the Books! The Path towards Open Access Monographs	Niels Stern
Coalition of Networked Information (CNI) Spring 2023 Membership Meeting	3–4 April	Denver, CO, United States of America	Workshop Report Out: National Infrastructure for Public Access Usage and Impact Reporting (panel)	Niels Stern
The UKSG 46th Annual Conference and Exhibition	14 April	Glasgow, United Kingdom	Leveraging an open infrastructure and tapping into an open service: examples of established workflows and approaches for open access books	Tom Mosterd
The UKSG 46th Annual Conference and Exhibition	14 April	Glasgow, United Kingdom	The [in]discoverability of open access books, taking action to improve the OA ebook supply chain (paper)	Tom Mosterd
Fiesole Retreat	2–4 May	Basel, Switzerland	Research funders and the transition to open access books	Niels Stern
DIAMAS Project	20 June	Online	Creating Community-Driven Pathways to Equitable Open Scholarly Publishing (slides)	Niels Stern
AUPresses Virtual Annual Meeting	13 June	Online	Opportunities and Challenges for Transitioning Books to Open Access	Niels Stern
52nd LIBER Annual Conference	6 July	Budapest, Hungary	SCOSS: Open science infrastructures speak about sustainability challenges (panel discussion)	Niels Stern
IFLA ARL Satellite Conference	18–19 August	Erasmus University, Rotterdam, The Netherlands	Challenges of Equity in Open Scholarly Book Publishing	Niels Stern
IFLA Library Publishing SIG Satellite Conference	19 August	Royal Library, The Hague, The Netherlands	Concluding Panel Discussion	Niels Stern Danny Kingsley

UKSG Practical Routes to OA Monographs – Collaboration, Innovation and Support	24 August	Online	The role of OAPEN and DOAB in supporting OA monographs	Silke Davison
The Netherlands National Open Science Festival	31 August	Rotterdam, The Netherlands	OAPEN Open Access Books Toolkit – updates and future developments	Niels Stern Danny Kingsley
Tampere University, Seminar on Infrastructure and Technologies in Scholarly Publishing	31 August	Online	On the visibility of Open Access books	Ronald Snijder
ALPSP Conference	13–15 September	Manchester, United Kingdom	Making Open Access Monographs Work: Moving from Vision to Implementation	Niels Stern
OABN & Jisc webinar series	4 October	Online	Collective funding models for open access books	Silke Davison
75th Frankfurt Book Fair	18–22 October	Frankfurt, Germany	Promotion of the Books Analytics Service (BAS)	Niels Stern Laura J. Wilkinson Jordy Findanis
SirsiDynix Connections Conference	24 October	Online	The Middleman: Community-led Open Infrastructures and Diversifying the Research Landscape	Silke Davison
DOAB & OPERAS-PL	25 October	Online	Overview of the Peer Review Information Service for Monographs (PRISM)	Laura J. Wilkinson Ronald Snijder
Forum for Open Research in MENA	25 October	Online	2023 Annual Forum - Forum for Open Research in MENA	Danny Kingsley
Danish Open Access Week	26 October	Online	Agency in Author Choice: How Think. Check. Submit. Can Help Researchers Make Sound Publishing Choices	Niels Stern
The Charleston Library Conference	6–10 November	Charleston, SC, United States of America	Open access books collection as a Swiss army knife – let's find new ways to serve our patrons'	Ronald Snijder
The Canadian Australian Partnership for Open Science	28–29 November	Sydney, Australia	Attendance only	Danny Kingsley

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