Promise and peril for Open Access in a global context & the role of Open Book Futures

Joe Deville

Lancaster University / Open Book Collective

All slides CC BY
Bringing discussions in sociology / science & technology studies to the study and practice of open access publishing

... & exploring collaborative potentials
Promise and peril for open access book publishing
Book Processing Charges the dominant funding model

Expensive
- R230,000+ for larger commercial presses
- R80,000 – R110,000 for smaller, non-profit presses

Unequal
- **Global inequalities**
  Likely affordable by academics in wealthier national contexts, inhibiting publishing diversity
- **Local inequalities**
  Even if funding/state subsidy is available, likely only accessible by later-career / more secure academics

Business as usual
- Reproduces a ‘thin’ version of Open Access – universal access as a benefit not a necessity
- Entrenches commercial publishing monopolies
- A failure of imagination, including of infrastructural possibilities
The rise of Diamond OA book publishing

OpenBook Publishers

meson press

punctum books

ScholarLed

African Minds

media studies press

MATTERING PRESS

UNIVERSITY OF WESTMINSTER PRESS

UCT PRESS

SciELO Books

ABERDEEN UNIVERSITY PRESS

mayfly

language science press

OPEN HUMANITIES PRESS

OpenEdition books
Increasing calls for increased diversity, equity and social justice in the open access movement

Scholarly publishing model entrenching global inequalities ...

“Through systemic inequalities embedded in the scholarly ecosystem, the publishing landscape has been northernised, with research from the global north sitting at the very top of the knowledge hierarchy to the exclusion of Africa and other parts of the global south

Reggie Raju & Auliya Badrudeen (2022), Social justice driving open access publishing: an African perspective

… including dominant OA publishing models

“The promise of open access for the global South has not been fully met. Publishing is dominated by Northern publishers who disadvantage Southern authors through platform capitalism and [OA] models requiring article [or book] processing charges to publish”

Monica Berger (2021), Bibliodiversity at the Center: Decolonising Open Access

A need for greater bibliodiversity

“Bibliodiversity calls for an inclusive and diverse scholarly communication landscape [...] Without bibliodiversity, we are restricting our imaginations and limiting ourselves to the understanding constructed by a minority of prestigious publications and publishers”

Lai Ma et al. (2023), Open access at a crossroads: library publishing and bibliodiversity
The COPIM and Open Book Futures projects
3.5 year project, funded by Research England & the Arcadia Fund (£3.5million); ended April 2023

Addressing “the key technological, structural, and organisational hurdles—around funding, production, dissemination, discovery, reuse, and archiving—which are standing in the way of the wider adoption and impact of Open Access books”

“Everything we have gained by opening content and data will be under threat if we allow the enclosure of scholarly infrastructures”  
(Bilder et al, 2015)
OBF addresses the following problem: how to **scale and deepen the impact of initiatives working to deliver a sustainable, community-led, equitable and bibliodiverse future for OA book publishing?**
Delivering more accessible OA ebooks

A charity raising new funds for OA publishing

A revenue model for established publishers transitioning to OA

An open metadata management and dissemination platform

Experimental Publishing

New archiving & preservation solutions for OA books

Expanding the possibilities of OA academic books
Generate new revenue streams for OA publishers & SPs
Support a model of OA book publishing not reliant on BPCs
Make it easier for librarians to support OA membership schemes
Build a new community of publishers, service providers, librarians

Open infrastructure
Not for profit
Community led
Supporting bibliodiversity
Builds on & extends membership programme funding model
Collective, Connected, Sustainable

We bring together publishers, publishing service providers, and scholarly libraries to secure the diversity and financial futures of open access book production and dissemination.

Watch Video

Prosperous OA Communities
- Creating a space for publishers, service providers, libraries and others to learn, network and support each other

Sustainable Funding
- Delivering new, more reliable revenue streams to small to medium-sized publishers, helping them

Robust Infrastructures
- Delivering new financial resources to the vital infrastructures of OA book publishing and making it easier

Diversity in OA
- Supporting a variety of approaches to OA publishing, while making OA for books more accessible to a wider range of

A look at the OBC site
Workflow
OBC manages invoicing, contracting, payment flows, making offering membership programmes possible for even small publishers.

Outreach
OBC undertakes outreach work on their behalf, to global community of potential supporters.

Reducing BPCs
A new income stream for publishers, helping address financial precarity / reliance on BPCs.

Sustainable OA infrastructures
Via new income streams for service providers.
Collective, Connected, Sustainable

We bring together publishers, publishing service providers, and scholarly libraries to secure the diversity and financial futures of open access book production and dissemination.

Watch Video

Prosperous OA Communities
Creating a space for publishers, service providers, libraries and others to learn, network and support each other

Sustainable Funding
Delivering new, more reliable revenue streams to small to medium-sized publishers, helping them

Robust Infrastructures
Delivering new financial resources to the vital infrastructures of OA book publishing and making it easier

Diversity in OA
Supporting a variety of approaches to OA publishing, while making OA for books more accessible to a wider range of

For libraries / institutions

Aggregation
Acting as a membership package aggregator & discovery portal

Relevance
Quick & consistent information about values / priorities / subject focus of initiatives (including full book catalogue)

Due diligence
Expert scrutiny of peer review practices, governance procedures, business models

Workflow
Simple procurement process
OBC running costs shared between publishers/SPs & libraries

Members also contribute to the **Collective Development Fund**: Issuing grants to build OA capacity

See our latest update for draft eligibility criteria and complete our survey asking for views on what the fund should prioritise and how it should work

https://doi.org/10.21428/41ca814e.495490c0

One of the key aims of the Open Book Collective (OBC) is to support publishers, infrastructure providers and other organisations to build capacity to increase the quantity, quality and diversity of Open Access (OA) books. One way it does this is by awarding grants from its **Collective Development Fund**. Its first two calls will be funded by Arcadia and the Research England Development Fund, as part of the COPIM