Library Publishing Workflows

Educopia Institute, the Library Publishing Coalition (LPC) and 12 partner libraries request $230,005 (with an additional $23,000 in cost share) for a two-year National Leadership Grant (Project Grant category) to investigate, synchronize, and model a range of workflows to increase the capacity of libraries to publish open access, peer-reviewed scholarly journals. This project will build on the acclaimed model developed in Educopia's OSSArcFlow project (2017-2019), which documents curation workflows for archival content to help institutions quickly compare, adopt, and adapt each other's processes. The project extends the OSSArcFlow model into publishing, a demonstrated high-need area for academic libraries. Our diverse 12 partner library cohort includes flagship, land grant, and public research universities (Wayne State and the Universities of Michigan, Pittsburgh, and Alberta); private research and liberal arts universities (Columbia, Illinois Wesleyan, Pacific, and University of Redlands); and consortia representing public research universities (California Digital Library), private liberal arts colleges (Claremont Colleges), and historically black colleges and universities (Atlanta University Center). These partners utilize a wide range of approaches to publishing (from service-oriented journal hosting to full-service publishing) and various staffing strategies and tools (including Vega, Fulcrum, and PubSweet, in development by project partners). Documented journal publishing workflows will transform this quickly growing area of librarianship, helping both existing and aspiring programs to streamline their processes and follow best practices in journal publishing.

Statement of national need: Library publishing programs provide an increasingly important alternative to commercial publishers, especially for scholars and disciplines that are underrepresented in scholarly publishing. Journal workflows are complex and often collaborative (including library staff, publishing partners, and vendors), and the way they are managed has long-term implications for discoverability and preservability. This area shows steady growth and expansion, as seen in the dramatic rise in journals published by libraries in recent years. Between the 2014 and 2019 editions of the *Library Publishing Directory*[1], library production of journals almost doubled (from 565 to 1,067 titles).

While library publishers work closely with university presses in many areas, the lean, open access journal publishing model favored by libraries has little in common with full-service press journal publishing, making press workflows difficult to adapt for libraries. Most library publishers lack formal training in publishing and have developed services in response to local needs. As a result, initial workflows generally have been home-grown, varied, and idiosyncratic. This represents both a missed opportunity for peer learning, and the frequent omission of crucial workflow steps, such as contributing metadata to aggregators (essential for discovery and impact) and depositing content in preservation repositories (necessary for a stable scholarly record). The workflow improvements envisioned in this project will help libraries provide a strong alternative to commercial publishing for a wider range of journals, representing a significant advance in the development of open and academy-owned scholarship.

Project design: This project will address IMLS strategic goal 2, "Build Capacity" and the corresponding objective 2, "Encourage library and museum professionals and institutions to share and adopt best practices and innovations." The LPC community has demonstrated high demand for documented workflows, procedures, and policies. However, the development of that documentation has been hampered by a lack of examples, templates,

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[1] The 2014-2018 editions of the *Library Publishing Directory* can be found at https://librarypublishing.org/resources/#directory. The 2019 *Directory* is currently in production and will be released in fall of 2018.

and dedicated attention, all of which this project will provide. The resulting set of standard, documented journal publishing workflows will be adoptable and adaptable by libraries to support local publishing needs. The cohort model will allow the partner institutions to consult with each other and the project team to refine their existing workflows. It will also include applied research components, overseen by an advisory board (Dr. Cheryl Ball, Rachel Frick, and and Kari Smith), that will inform the workflow development and cohort formation, while identifying pain points and gaps to support new resources and standards in this area. The project's findings will be made available in a variety of ways, including 1) project publications, presentations and reports; 2) detailed documentation of partner institutions' workflows, including in house and outsourced steps; and 3) a replicable model template. Based on the quick adoption of the OSSArcFlow template and the remarkable number of workflows now being produced and shared by non-OSSArcFlow project-partners across the world, we fully expect additional journal workflows to be created using the tools developed by this project.

In the first year, we will 1) engage in planning, scheduling, and hire staff; 2) conduct interviews with partners about their existing journal publishing workflows, including refinement opportunities; 3) begin to document workflows and to analyze data to identify similarities/differences, pain points, and gaps; 4) form a peer-learning cohort where partners learn about each other's workflows; and 5) conduct formative project evaluation. In year two, we will 1) adapt the OSSArcFlow project's visual template to address journal workflows; 2) assemble partners for an in-person meeting with a mix of panel discussions (to be recorded and shared) and work sessions; 3) visually represent partner journal workflows and refine them based on peer feedback and lessons learned throughout the project period; 4) disseminate results through publications and presentations, highlighting opportunities and gaps in journal publishing workflows, including what workflow types work well in specific situations; 5) conduct summative project evaluation.

Estimated budget: The project budget requested is $230,005, with an additional $23,000 as cost share. This includes an in-person meeting in Detroit, MI ($19,072), personnel salary and benefits ($188,633, including cost share), equipment ($2,300), evaluation consultant ($20,000), and IDC (10% or $19,427).

Diversity plan: Library publishing has received attention for its potential to address persistent inequities in scholarly publishing. This work includes a focus on open access publishing, an emphasis on publishing by and for more diverse voices, and support for publishing underrepresented disciplines and groups. Rather than seeking to develop a single, 'perfect' workflow that every library should use, this project draws on variety of partner institutions to document publishing workflows that respond to local needs. The resulting documentation will support publishing activities in a wide range of academic and research libraries.

National impact: This project will increase the number, quality, and impact of publications produced in libraries by modeling effective journal workflows in a variety of settings. This cohort-oriented research will broaden field-wide understanding of best practices in library journal publishing and highlight areas where new resources are needed. More broadly, the resources that will allow libraries to more quickly learn from each other will also benefit other types of academy-owned publishing, including new-model journal publishing emerging within university presses and independent, scholar-led journals. At a time when commercial publishers are seeking control of the entire research lifecycle, this scaffolding for open publishing is increasingly important and potentially transformative.