

Title: Supporting OA Collections in the Open: Community Requirements and Principles for a Tool of Practice

Summary: The project team, led by James Madison University (JMU) Libraries Data Services Coordinator Yasmeen Shorish and Open Educational Resources (OER) librarian Liz Thompson, in collaboration with the Association of Research Libraries (ARL), is requesting \$78,815 for a one-year National Forum Grant to convene experts and stakeholders to address key opportunities and challenges in building an open access (OA) collection development platform. The outcome of a series of fora will be a white paper of findings and recommendations, which we intend to be used to generate an RFP for platform development.

Statement of Need: Academic collection development and acquisitions librarians use subscription jobbers, book aggregators, and approval plans to create efficiency by reducing the number of relationships and transactions necessary to purchase and license collections. Library consortia leverage these networked tools to make smart, collaborative collections decisions aligned with regional priorities, resource sharing, and shared print arrangements. This National Forum proposal is the first step in collectively designing a crowd-funded exchange for OA content in libraries. Similar to the way patreon.com connects independent musicians, podcasters, and other artists with pledges from their fans, the Forum will envision a collective funding exchange for libraries to contribute money to OA content providers. In the absence of such an exchange, OA content providers typically devise memberships in order to collect sustaining fees. This Forum will engage participants in creative thinking around how a Patreon-like system could be designed (1) to minimize membership arrangements, which often come with governance responsibilities that do not scale; (2) to catalog OA content providers; and (3) to be a source of systemwide data on library investment in open content. While David Lewis's "2.5% Commitment," the associated Scholarly Commons initiative, and the European coalition SCOSS¹ address vetting and collectively funding open *infrastructure*, this project focuses on OA *content*.² The project team is requesting \$78,815 for a one-year National Forum Grant through the National Digital Platform to convene experts and stakeholders to address key opportunities and challenges in building an OA collection development platform.

Project Design: The project team includes representatives from national organizations whose work will inform the structure of and participation in the proposed Forum, including the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL), ARL, the Open Access Network (OAN), and SPARC. The team will convene a diverse array of experts and stakeholders to develop community requirements for a platform and service (henceforth referred to as "the service") for librarians to discover and commit funds to OA content. A National Forum, opportunistically convened at Charleston 2018, ALA Midwinter 2019, and ACRL 2019 in a progressive fashion, will aim to bring as many representative voices into the conversation as possible. Three travel scholarships per conference will be made available to encourage participation from those for whom conference attendance is a financial hardship. The team is positioned to invoke a wide network to identify participants who will collectively envisage and address key challenges and opportunities of the service.

The Forum will include librarians, editors, representatives from scholarly societies, preprint service providers, publishers, and procurement officers. At each conference, two sessions will be held to gather information. One session will focus on the OA content providers, such as publishers and societies; the other session will focus on the consumers of OA content, such as librarians and procurement officers.

A facilitator will structure the meetings to solicit input on key areas of importance, including values, sustainability, and practical implementation. Conducting the meetings over time gives us the opportunity to iterate the structure somewhat, allowing for new directions that the project team might not have anticipated. At the conclusion of the Forum meetings, the data gathered by the facilitator will be shared with K|N

¹ David W. Lewis, "[The 2.5% Commitment](https://scholarlycommons.net/)," September 11, 2017; "Toward a Scholarly Commons: Moving to Open since 2017" <https://scholarlycommons.net/>, accessed 1/23/18; The Global Sustainability Coalition for Open Science Services, <http://scoss.org/>

² The Open Access Network (OAN) is also designed to encourage institutional support of the infrastructure for scholarly communication as well as the content enabled by that infrastructure. <http://openaccessnetwork.org/>

Consultants, who will analyze and compile the findings and author the white paper for distribution. The white paper will be widely disseminated via email listservs, on a project website, and at conferences.

The National Forum will engage participants in issues vital to the success of the envisioned service, including:

- What are library (and, perhaps, university administration) attitudes and behavior toward collective funding of open resources, including motivations and inducements to participate in such actions (exploring, for example, the limits of altruism and expectations for local benefit)?
- Are there differences in collective behavior and expectations by institution type, size, and budget?
- What are the workflow needs across a variety of potential library units, including acquisitions, collections, liaison, and scholarly communication?
- What operational elements (e.g., transparency in operating costs, adherence to Fair OA Principles) do OA content providers need to display to garner sustained investment by a library without (necessarily) a role in governance?
- How can a crowdsourced platform that includes reviews or ratings be designed to mitigate biases known to undermine participation and the consequent value of such platforms?
- Will data generated by the system be made available for potential third-party use and, if so, how will user data be protected?
- What organization or entity, or what criteria for such, is best positioned to administer the service?

Through the Forum meetings, the project team will synthesize and share with participants existing data on open content collections behaviors and desires,³ collective funding models,⁴ and library–researcher/scholar partner endeavors,⁵ and will structure meetings to bootstrap and build upon that existing knowledge. The result would be a recitation of community needs, requirements, challenges and their proposed solutions for the proposed service, ideally resulting in an RFP for platform development.

National Impact: Communities within libraries (such as membership organizations) can begin to build norms around levels of expected commitment to OA (per Lewis’s recommendation) and thus accelerate its growth as a percentage of library budgets. Libraries of different types and collections budgets — from small community colleges to large research-intensive institutions — can have a collective conversation about what levels of contribution to OA content (if any) are expected and appropriate for different kinds of academic and research institutions.

Examining these issues would inform the design of a collective funding exchange by providing a detailed understanding of the expectations and behavior of libraries, and of the open resource providers themselves, toward such a resource. The successive meetings format will also socialize the idea in the academic library community. In collectively imagining the service, the project team anticipates that participants will become stakeholders supporting its implementation in future phases of this project beyond the Forum, providing fertile ground for those stakeholders to generate an RFP based on the white paper findings and recommendations.

Budget Summary: ARL will coordinate the meeting space, facilitator, and scholarship logistics (\$38,295). We will use a consulting group to handle the data transcription and white paper (\$15,000). JMU will support a website for the Forum. Representatives from ARL, SPARC, OAN, and JMU will contribute their time and expertise. Travel is requested for the PIs to each of the conference fora and a final meeting with the partners (\$12,000). Total, including indirect costs (\$13,520, 26% of total modified costs) = \$78,815.

³ Open Access Network 2017 Librarian Survey, unpublished data.

⁴ SPARC senior consultant Raym Crow is working on collective funding design principles for an open resource investment fund

⁵ “Accelerating Academy-Owned Publishing” (2017) <http://intheopen.net/2017/11/accelerating-academy-owned-publishing/>