

Opening books collectively: Working together for a fairer future for books

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Copim's 'Open Book Futures' project is funded by

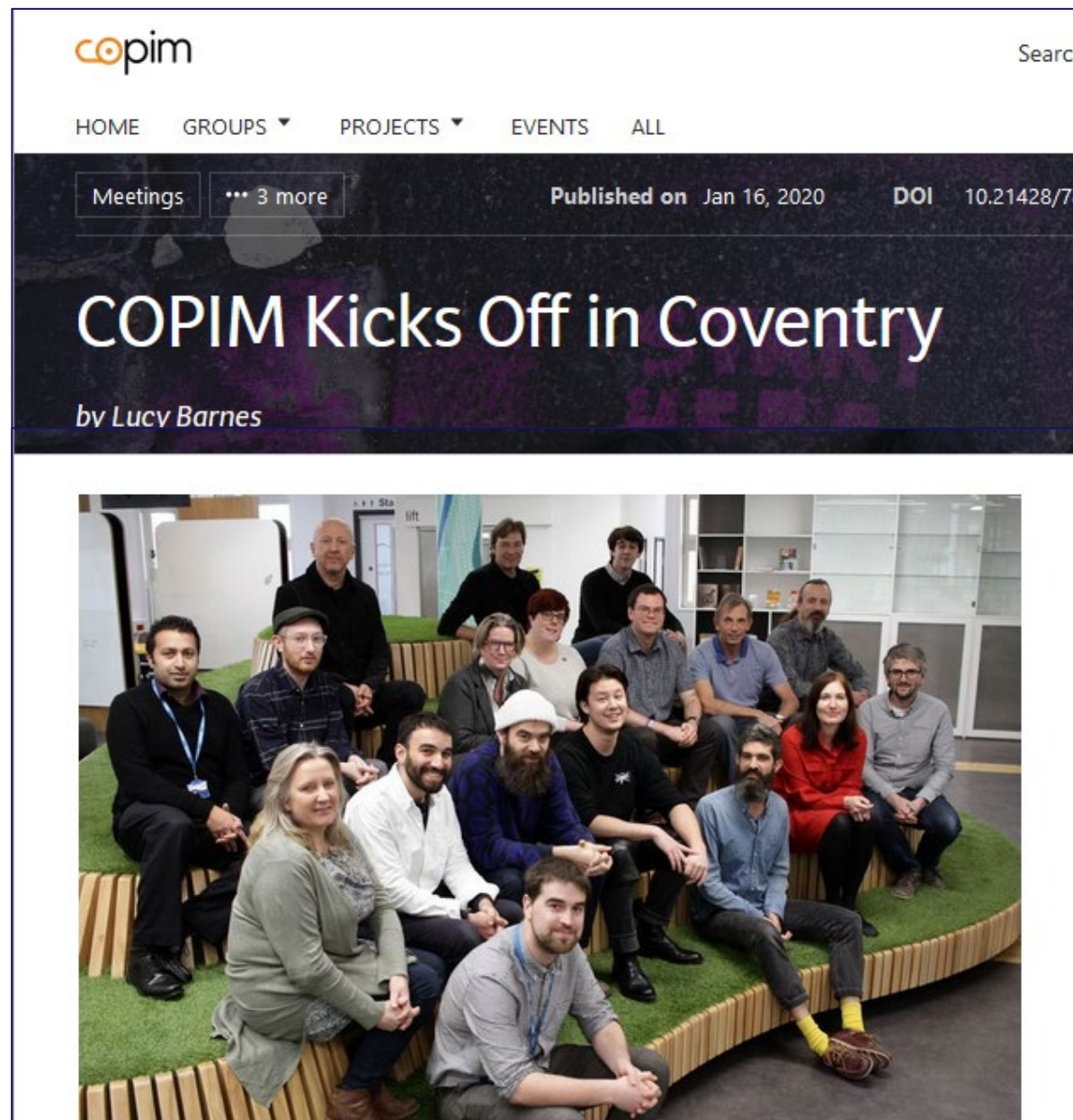




Community-led Open Publication
Infrastructures for Monographs

3.5 year project, funded by Research England &
Arcadia; Nov 2019 – 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”



First in person COPIM meeting, 10th January 2020

Open Book Futures

A copim community project

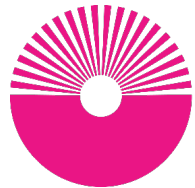
3 year project, funded by Arcadia & Research England; ending April 2026

Deeping the impact of COPIM and demonstrating how open access books can be more **fairly and sustainably funded**, **widely distributed**, more **durably archived**, more **accessible**, and more **experimental** in both form and content than other kinds of scholarly books



In person OBF meeting, 20th March 2024

<https://copim.pub>



**OpenBook
Collective**

Creating a fairer, more
sustainable future for OA books

OPENING
THE FUTURE

A revenue model for established
publishers transitioning to OA

THOTH
Open Metadata.

An open metadata management
and dissemination platform



Delivering more accessible
OA ebooks



New archiving & preservation
solutions for OA books

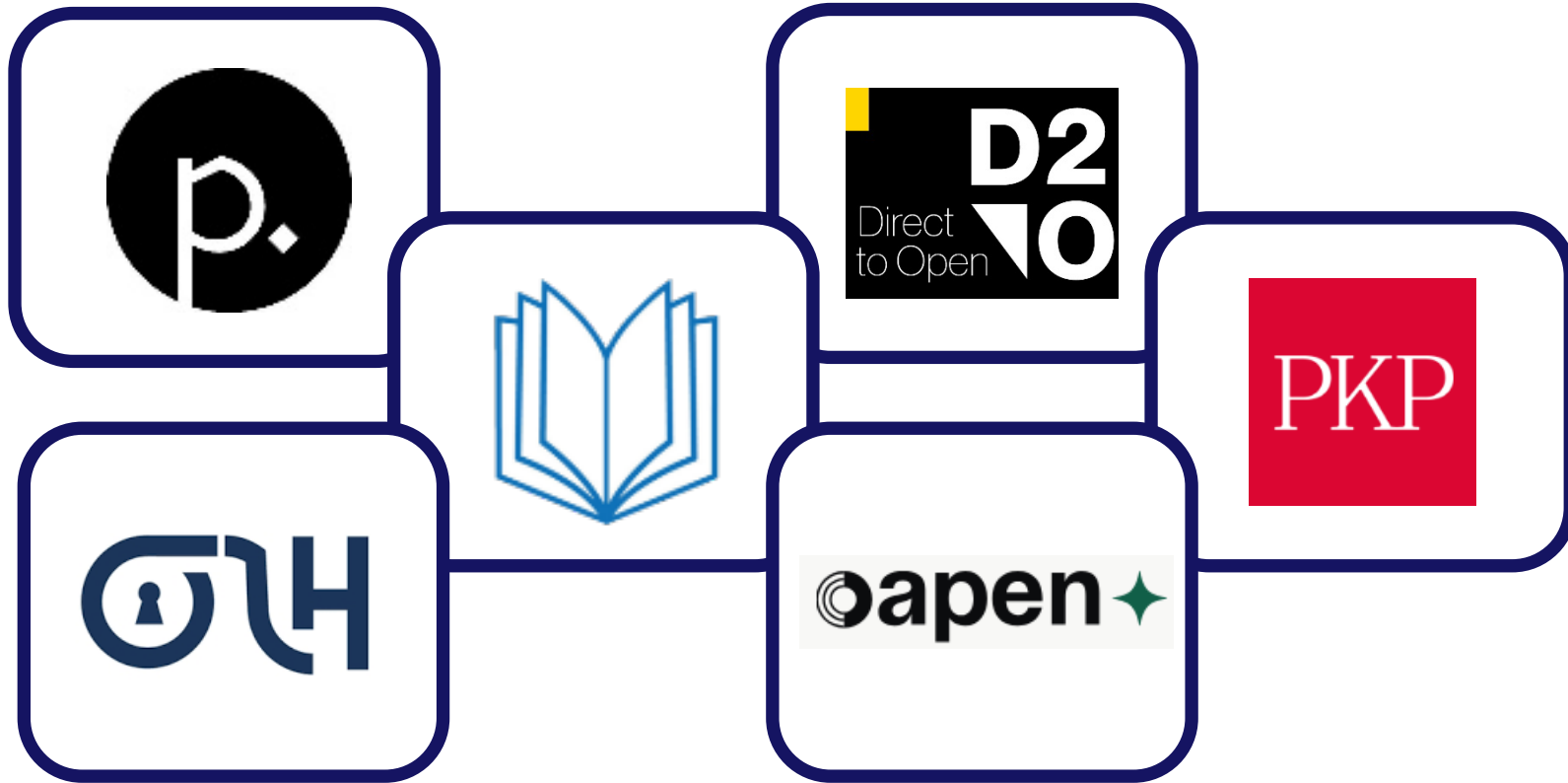
Experimental
Publishing

Expanding the possibilities
of OA academic books



**OpenBook
Collective**

Builds on principles of existing Diamond OA funding models



Securing sustainable funding via renewable support from dozens of universities

Making it easier for libraries to assess and fund multiple Diamond OA book publishers & infrastructure providers



University Presses | €3,200 – €6,800



ScholarLed Presses | €2,120 – €5,080



Independent Presses | €1,420 – €5,675



Service Providers | €1,830 – €10,400

Building a new and trusted open infrastructure

Non profit

A UK registered **charity**. We **retain circa 10% of revenue** to fund operational costs, **5% goes into collective grant giving fund**

Community governed

Our library, publisher, and service provider **members have direct control** over the future of the organisation

Stringent membership criteria

Ensuring we support only **trusted OA infrastructures & publishers** producing peer reviewed scholarship of the highest quality

Sustainable

90 supporting members in 13 countries, circa **€1.3million** in commitments so far. Currently grant funded but expect to **be financially self-sufficient by 2026**

Transparent reporting

Members & OBC report annually – e.g. how funds are used & their impact, governance

Issuing annual grants to support global OA publishing

OBC members contribute to the **Collective Development Fund**: A grant giving fund to build OA capacity

7 grants awarded (**total c€100,000**) inc. founding Zimbabwe's 1st OA UP, new Nigerian OA book platform, new CLASCO initiative in Latin America

Helping build a **global ecosystem** for OA book publishing

Announcing OBC's First Collective Development Fund award: Fostering Academic Self-Reliance in Nigeria through Open Access Books

Establishing a sustainable platform to empower Nigerian scholars and educators to create, produce, and disseminate high-quality open access books, as well as fostering new collaborations across Academic

Announcing OBC's Second Collective Development Fund Award: Enhancing Open Access Book Publishing at Chinhoyi University of Technology Library

Establishing a new sustainable infrastructure for open access book publishing at the Chinhoyi University of Technology, building open access publishing capacity and publishing a series of new high-quality open

Announcing OBC's Third Collective Development Fund Award: The Community Publishing Garden

Creating a model of participatory exchange for publishing practitioners and community members to better serve the forms of knowledge emerging from grassroots communities

by Judith Fathallah

Published on Jan 13, 2025

Collective funding models for open access books

Librarians' experiences and barriers to
participation across six European contexts

Judith Fathallah, Joe Deville, Izabella Penier, Francesca Corazza

October 2025

v1.0



- Published last month. Based on research conducted between February and July 2025
- **20 in depth interviews** with librarians (mostly) & OA advocates (a few) in 6 countries: France, Netherlands, Germany, Poland, Finland, and Sweden (3-4 interviews per country)
- Combined with **analysis of existing literature + profiles for each of the six countries**
- Primary aim was to understand the **experiences** of librarians with collective funding models and especially their **barriers** to joining organizations like the OBC

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17339945>

Support for Diamond OA exists in a space of tension

Strong ideological commitment to OA among many librarians and researchers; desire to advance the scholarly knowledge commons



Trust in new OA initiatives has been eroded by corporate buyouts; continual pressure to meet institutional needs

Interest in dedicated Diamond OA budgets within libraries



Hard to implement + for some transformative agreements have eaten up OA budget

National consortia can succeed in mobilising national level support for Diamond OA



Libraries can be reluctant to support individually vs. consortia can be reluctant to support without evidence of individual support

Frequent references to local and national OA policies in interviews



Formal policies influence shape librarians' OA decisions less than expected

Concerns about UK/US-centric initiatives



National language publishing often seen as under-supported

Diamond OA publishers & infrastructures funded by the 6 Finnish & Swedish institutions in the study

Finland

Finland + Sweden

Sweden

SciPost

SCOSS

OLH

Jisc Open policy finder
Formerly Sherpa services

OSF

oapen

doab
directory of
open access
books

DOAJ

OpenBook
Collective

PKP

p. OpenBook
Publishers

The Open Commons
of Phenomenology

CEU PRESS

SCOAP³

DSPACE

Knowledge
Unlatched

* Open Book Collective members

Insights on the Finnish & Swedish national contexts

Finland

- **National policy on OA**, but how this is implemented varies by institution. Currently excludes books
- Most Finnish based **journals already publish Diamond OA**
- **A large number of small learned society publishers** represent the majority share of the scholarly publishing market
- Ongoing work over past decade to create a **collective funding model for journals**, however none has yet emerged that satisfies all central stakeholders

Sweden

- There is a **national policy in Sweden** recommending full OA for all publicly funded research by 2026
- **Additional local policies**, some also mandating OA for books
- **A comparatively high rate of OA publication**, with transformative agreements playing a key role historically
- **Increasing momentum towards DOA**, including new Bibsam action plan, committing to promote new pathways to open publishing and to develop alternative business models

Barriers/criteria for Diamond OA support

Finland

- Barriers include perceived **complexity of DOA contracts, shrinking budgets**, some **quality concerns** about OA in general
- The **Ministry of Education's ranking system for publishers (JUFO)** can play a major role in decisions about support
- Other **assessment criteria can be quite ad hoc** ('I thought the simple answer is there are no criteria, it's really ad hoc, but the truth is obviously there are criteria')
- Some such criteria include **values linked to the scholarly commons** (e.g. scholar-led, not-for-profit), **but also pragmatism** ('the main criterion is probably whether we're actually going to get something out of it or not')

Sweden

- Barriers include **costs, challenges of understanding different models, complexity of DOA** vs simplicity of TAs
- Work to be done by new DOA initiatives to **build reputation and credibility**
- However, **generally stronger support from Swedish librarians** for collective DOA models & OBC than in some other contexts
- **Assessment criteria vary from being led by researchers to future potential impacts on the scholarly system** ("the most relevant is how you can contribute to the change for the future, how sustainable it will be")

Some recommendations for collective funding initiatives

Combine **quantitative data** (metadata, stats, authorship) with **qualitative narratives** (bibliodiversity, ethics, sustainability) to help librarians build a case

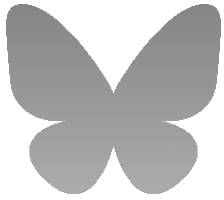
Build credibility through **transparent operations & governance**. Having charitable status (e.g. OBC) can be a key differentiator

When support via consortia isn't an option, **make workflows and contracts simple** and efficient

Ensure package models **signal quality and standards** with clear, simple membership criteria

Avoid US/UK-centric bias—**diversify portfolios** by region, language, and subject & partner with local publishers

Stay in touch



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