
OAPEN Foundation, Annual Report 2011

1. Introduction

OAPEN (Open Access Publishing in European Networks) was developed as a 30 month targeted project co-funded by the EU in its *eContentplus*-program. The goal of the project was to achieve a sustainable publication model for academic books in Humanities and Social Sciences and to improve the visibility and usability of high quality academic research in Europe. The project was conducted by a consortium of six University Presses in Europe and two Universities in the Netherlands, coordinated by Amsterdam University Press (AUP).

Towards the close of the project AUP approached the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO) and various academic institutes in the Netherlands to explore continuation of OAPEN's activities. This resulted in the establishment of the OAPEN foundation, which started to operate from AUP's offices on the 1st of April and was formally established on July 8, 2011, with its registered office at the National Library in The Hague.

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2. OAPEN Foundation

Governance

OAPEN Foundation was founded by the University of Amsterdam (UvA), the University of Leiden (UL), the University library of Utrecht University (UU), the Netherlands Academy of Sciences (KNAW), the National Library of the Netherlands (KB) and Amsterdam University Press (AUP). These institutes act as Participants in the foundation and are committed to provide financial support. The Participants form a Council that meets once every year. The Council elects the members of the OAPEN Board from its circle. The OAPEN Board can appoint one person from outside the Council in the board. In addition, the Board can establish an Advisory Board.

OAPEN Organisation

The OAPEN Board consists of the following members:

- Bas Savenije (president) – KB
- Henk Wals (treasurer) – KNAW
- Saskia de Vries – AUP
- Kurt de Belder – UL

In its meeting in September the Board appointed Margo Bargheer of the University Library of Göttingen University as member of the Board. The remaining Participants are represented by Anja Smit (UU) and Frank Huysmans (UvA).

Eelco Ferwerda was appointed director of OAPEN Foundation. OAPEN also makes use of Ronald Snijder as technical coordinator. Both Ferwerda and Snijder are hired from AUP.

Funding

OAPEN Foundation is funded by the Participants and by NWO. NWO decided to provide a subsidy to match the financial support from the Participants in its letter of July 4th, 2011. This subsidy is transferred through the University Library of the UvA, which acts as official recipient of the subsidy from NWO. The funding of OAPEN Foundation amounts to 240.000 euro yearly, for a period of three years, from April 1, 2011 until March 31, 2014.

Objectives

The objectives of OAPEN Foundation as stated in the bylaws are:

- To stimulate Open Access publishing of academic books
- To further develop OAPEN as a platform for Open Access books
- To develop a sustainable business model for OAPEN

3. Activities in 2011

Stimulating Open Access Books through Pilot projects

During its project phase OAPEN initiated a number of pilot projects dedicated to Open Access monograph publishing. These ongoing projects will provide valuable insights into Open Access Book publishing and the effects of OA dissemination on usage and sales of monographs. OAPEN-NL is a pilot in the Netherlands with support from NWO and the Ministry of Education and Science. OAPEN-UK is run by JISC Collections with support from the Arts and Humanities Research Council. The first Open Access books were published in July, and together these pilot projects will result in up to 90 Open Access books involving around 15 academic publishers.

Promoting OAPEN

OAPEN was present at the London International Book Fair in April and the Frankfurt Book Fair in October. Eelco Ferwerda was invited to speak about Open Access publishing and OAPEN's activities at various conferences, such as the LIBER/Sparc Europe (July, Barcelona), PKP conference (September, Berlin), 6th Munin conference (November, Tromsø).

Developing the OAPEN Library

OAPEN aims to grow the collection of Open Access books, increase the number of participating publishers, improve discoverability, increase usage and develop OAPEN into a quality brand for OA monographs. By the end of 2011, there were more than 30 publishers taking part in the OAPEN Library, with a total of more than 900 books.

Content aggregation

OAPEN developed data feeds of the Library collection to enable Libraries to integrate the Open Access collection into their online catalogues. There are now data feeds in four different formats. OAPEN reached agreements with a number of content aggregators, such as OCLC (WorldCat), Serial Solutions (Summon) and ExLibris (PrimoCentral). In addition, OAPEN will act as content aggregator for Europeana.

Usage of the OAPEN Library

The OAPEN Library received more than 30.000 visits from over 20.000 unique visitors, resulting in over 25.000 downloads of OA books in the period 1 April – 31 December 2011. These figures are still quite low, which is partly due to the recent establishment of the platform, and partly due to delayed integration of the data feeds with content aggregators. However if we look at 'external' downloads (direct downloads of OAPEN books through links at other websites) the usage figures are much higher and quite promising. Although the necessary software to provide full figures is not yet operational, estimations are that actual downloads over 2011 are between 6 to 10 times higher, between 150.000 and 200.000.

Advisory Board

In September the Board established the OAPEN Advisory board. The Advisory board consists of members of the former OAPEN consortium and representatives from stakeholders in scholarly communication, such as publishers, libraries, research councils and scholars. The Advisory board is chaired by Caroline Sutton, director of Co-Action Publishing and current president of the Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association (OASPA).

The first meeting of the Advisory Board took place on November 22 in Amsterdam. The meeting focussed on new projects and possible collaborations and on the business model to sustain OAPEN in the future.

New projects

OAPEN is involved in a number of new projects. There are ongoing discussions to establish new pilot projects in Norway and Sweden. A round table of publishers and other stakeholders is being prepared by the German Research Council (DFG).

In addition, OAPEN developed a new project proposal for the EU, to stimulate the transition to Open Access models by setting up an Incentive Fund for Open Access monographs and developing OAPEN into a deposit service for Open Access books, providing services to Research Councils.

Directory of Open Access Books

Following discussions with the Advisory Board, it was decided that OAPEN should move forward on its plan to develop a Directory of Open Access Books (DOAB). DOAB will provide a searchable index to Open Access, peer-reviewed monographs and edited volumes, with links to the full texts of the publications at the publisher's website or repository. The primary aim of DOAB is to increase discoverability of Open Access books. The service is modelled after the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) and will be developed in cooperation with the people who were responsible for this service. OAPEN aims to launch a beta version of the service containing publications of a selected number of academic publishers in early spring 2012.