Towards an Open and Equitable Future

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SPARC Africa Open Access Symposium
Cape Town, South Africa
December 5, 2019
SPARC’s mission is to set the default to open in research and education.
Our ultimate goal is to create a global research and education ecosystem that is truly open and equitable for all.
Access to knowledge is a fundamental human right.
United National Sustainable Development Goals 16, Target 10:

“Striving to ensure public access to information, and to protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements...”
And yet the materials we most need the freedom to work with in research and education remain laden with restrictive access, pricing and reuse barriers.
2 in 3 Students say they have decided against buying a textbook because cost was too high.

Source: USPiRG
Who's downloading pirated papers?

EVERYONE

In rich and poor countries, researchers turn to the Sci-Hub website.
“In a world where the law and the system is skewed in favor of one group and against another, theft is legitimised...”

- Prof. Thuli Madonsela
“An old tradition and a new technology have converged to make possible an unprecedented public good...”

- BOAI, 2002
“The public good they make possible is the world-wide electronic distribution of the peer-reviewed journal literature and completely free and unrestricted access to it by all.”

- BOAI, 2002
Open Access is not the end goal. It is an enabling strategy.
“Open Access will accelerate research, enrich education, share the learning of the rich with the poor and the poor with the rich, make this literature as useful as it can be, and lay the foundation for uniting humanity in a common intellectual conversation and quest for knowledge.”

- BOAI, 2002
Because barriers to access are not the only problems we are trying to correct in the current scholarly communications ecosystem.
“The golden thread is the need for unhindered, multidirectional participation in knowledge production and dissemination...”

- Jaya Raju, 12/4/2019
Whose voices are represented in Our “global intellectual conversation?”
And whose are left out?
The Geographically Uneven Coverage of Wikipedia

While it is an invaluable resource of knowledge for numerous users, Wikipedia’s articles have a strong bias in their geographic distribution. Below map is based on 3,336,473 geotagged articles in November 2012 data dumps of 44 language versions. Each article is represented by an orange dot.

There are more Wikipedia articles inside this circle than outside of it.
We need to carefully and deliberately consider the implications on equity when we are deciding:
• What business models we choose
• What technology we choose to build or buy
• What rights we choose to empower users & producers with
• What outputs and behaviors we choose to incentivize and reward
• How we construct leadership/governance bodies
One example: Libraries now have opportunity for libraries to move money out of journal subscription bundles and reinvest it strategically in a new ecosystem.
But what to reinvest it in?
Increasing pressure to get to Open by supporting “flipping” journal system from subscription model to article processing charge (APC) model.
OA2020: A Global Initiative to Drive Large-Scale Transformation of the Subscription System
Plan S is an initiative for Open Access publishing that was launched in September 2018. The plan is supported by cOAlition S, an international consortium of research funders. Plan S requires that, from 2021, scientific publications that result from research funded by public grants must be
Is it really enough to increase number of Open Access articles if we fail to address fundamental inequities in the publishing system?
Equity must be deliberately built into the ecosystem at critical choice points...not bolted on later as an afterthought.
This is just one decision point.
Let’s consider *infrastructure*.
When you are building infrastructure, start by remembering that:
Infrastructure is the product of very human decisions about how infrastructure should be...
...So it matters deeply who is making decisions about its functionality.
When we are buying infrastructure, we should consider...
...using community principles to help guide purchase of infrastructure and services to make sure they fully support our missions and values.
COAR and SPARC have developed seven good practice principles to ensure that scholarly communication services are transparent, open, and support the aims of scholarship. These principles can be used by users to make decisions about which services they will contract with, and by service providers to improve their practices and governance.

**GOOD GOVERNANCE**

The service has strategic governance that allows community input on the direction of the service and operational governance with community representation and decision making power.

**OPEN STANDARDS**

The service uses open APIs to enable interoperability, and adheres to open standards. Ideally, the platform is based on open-source software, but in cases where it is not, user-owned content is managed according to well-established, international standards.

**FAIR DATA COLLECTION**

Only data necessary for the service’s provision are collected from users and the type of the data collected and how they are used is clearly and publicly articulated.

**TRANSPARENT PRICING AND CONTRACTS**

The service’s contract conditions and pricing are transparent and equitable, with no non-disclosure agreements included.

**EASY MIGRATION**

User-owned or generated content can be easily migrated to another platform or service upon termination of contract, without any additional fee from the service provider.

**SUCCESSION PLANNING**

If the service is a nonprofit, the organization’s bylaws state the conditions and terms governing how the organization may be transferred or wind down. If the service is provided by a for-profit entity, the contract/agreement should not be assignable to another entity without the client’s express permission.

**OPEN CONTENT**

Content, metadata and usage data are immediately, openly and freely available in machine-readable format via open standards, and using licenses (like CC0 or similar) which facilitate reuse.

These principles are informed by Principles for Open Scholarly Infrastructure-v1 by Bilder G, Lin J, Neylon C (2015) © 2019 COAR and SPARC, subject to a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.
Community *culture* and *norms* matter, too.
i. Peer Reviewed Contributions

List all works reviewed prior to publication by peers / editorial boards in the field, such as journal articles in refereed journals, juried presentations, books, etc. Indicate up to five of the most important contributions with a double asterisk and briefly explain why these choices have been made. Include a description of the stature of journals and other scholarly venues and how this is known (e.g., impact factors, percentage of submitted work that is accepted, together with an explanation of the interpretation of these measures).
And finally, governance matters.
This means radically **rethinking** our relationships to commercial vendors.
Is “customer” the role we really want to be consigned to?
OPEN ACCESS WEEK 2019
¿ABIERTO PARA QUIÉN? EQUIDAD EN EL CONOCIMIENTO ABIERTO मुक्त प्रवेश किसके लिए खुला?
खुले ज्ञान में समानता
OPEN FOR WHOM? EQUITY IN OPEN KNOWLEDGE حر لمن؟ الإنصاف في المعرفة المفتوحة
OUVERT POUR QUI? ÉQUITÉ DANS LE SAVOIR OUVERT

openaccessweek.org
Creating a research and education ecosystem that is truly open and equitable for all.
Looking forward to our discussion!
Thank You.

Particular thanks to Leslie Chan, Cameron Neylon, Claudio Aspesi, Nicole Allen, Nick Shockey, and the OpenCon Whose Knowledge Is it? Communities, for slides and thoughts.

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