2021 SPARC EUROPE annual report
*making open the default*

www.sparceurope.org
Introduction

Screens instead of actual meeting rooms, virtual panel discussions instead of conferences, emoticons instead of warm handshakes: 2021, the second year of the global pandemic, made us reimagine and reluctantly accept the new reality of scholarly communications. Yet again, it showed the importance of open access to knowledge and exposed vulnerabilities of the current system. In 2021, SPARC Europe was perhaps more than ever determined to fulfill its mission of making Open the default.

It was the year of self-reflection and looking into the future. With three strategies published in 2021, one for SPARC Europe and two for initiatives under our umbrella: the Global Sustainability Coalition for Open Science Services (SCOSS) and the European Network of Open Education Librarians (ENOEL), we set clear goals for the coming years and planned activities to help us achieve them.

We continued our work on Open Science (OS) policies, engaging with this critical topic in different ways, including monitoring the latest developments and informing the community about them in our reports. We also facilitated projects that aim to bring together national OS leaders to engage in an international dialogue and share good practice for a stronger and more unified workable Open Science policy framework. We raised our voice where we saw danger in a consolidation of power over research processes. We joined projects investigating copyright for the 21st century, advocating for accelerating the uptake of author rights retention activities and open licensing in Europe. We engaged in a direct dialogue with the community to hear how they picture sustainable policies for Open Access (OA) books.

We also investigated the questions of sustainability of Open, shining light on the potential and the challenges of the diamond OA publishing model. We tried to understand the mechanisms behind national and regional OA publishing platforms to facilitate knowledge exchange around non-APC/BPC models, and build capacity around emerging alternative models. We served on the European Open Science Cloud (EOSC) Financial Sustainability Task Force, advocating for solutions that embrace diversity, equity, and inclusion when considering how to fund EOSC going forward.

For the second time, we surveyed the Higher Education library community to understand its involvement in Open Education (OE). Based on these findings, we created a set of recommendations to help institutions implement the UNESCO Recommendation on OER.

What came out of this challenging year allowed us to look into the future with hope. In the world of distance and enforced lack of contact, communities tightened and grew stronger around the shared goal of openness. We saw the growth of the Open Access Books Network, which, even if just barely over one-year-old, succeeded in bringing together various stakeholders — from publishers to policymakers — who came together to work on a sustainable future for OA books. We saw the European Network of Open Education Librarians with its enthusiastic crowd creating toolkits that the community can reuse to advocate for OE benefits from 27 countries. We saw libraries coming together to support SCOSS-endorsed OS infrastructure, adding more than 3.5 million EUR in total pledges.

SPARC Europe is thrilled to see these developments and proud to be supporting initiatives that help us make Open the default. We thank all of you who contributed to and supported SPARC Europe and this effort, even in the slightest way, for the work you are doing to advance the vision of a thriving, open and sustainable scholarly communications ecosystem.

Vanessa Proudman
Director, SPARC Europe
Into the Future: SPARC Europe Strategy 2021-2024

We started 2021 with a splash: in January 2021 we published SPARC Europe’s strategy for the coming four years. The SPARC Europe Board developed the document in consultation with key partners and SPARC Europe’s libraries.

Our vision for the coming years is a more equitable, diverse, sustainable, and Open Science and Education ecosystem.

The strategy has six major goals:

1. Strengthen Open Access, Open Scholarship/Open Science, and Open Education policy in Europe, and align where possible.
2. Advocate for Open in research and education.
3. Strive to enable more equity in Open so that all those who wish to publish and share research and education resources openly are better enabled to do so.
4. Promote diversity in publishing Open research and education.
5. Raise the impact of publicly-funded research by reimagining the way that Open research is rewarded and incentivised.
6. Help sustain the Open infrastructure/service ecosystem.

The strategy gives us a clear direction for the future. This Annual Report is organised around the six strategic goals, showing projects and events that SPARC Europe engaged in over the past year to achieve the ambitious objectives outlined at the outset of 2021.

Read the strategy
STRATEGIC GOAL 1:
Strengthen Open Access, Open Scholarship/Open Science and Open Education policy in Europe and align where possible.

SPARC Europe to facilitate high-level European OS policymaker group CoNOSC

In 2021 we were thrilled to have been asked to support the Council for National Open Science Coordination (CoNOSC) in their efforts to advance national European Open Science policies in the UN-European region. The CoNOSC mission is to help countries create, update and coordinate their national Open Science policies by sharing valuable insights from the network. SPARC Europe is looking forward to facilitating and growing the CoNOSC group. We will investigate the needs of today’s national Open Science policymakers and organise strategic OS policy meetings with high-level national OS coordinators and ministry representatives to determine priorities moving forward for the coming year. We will facilitate discussion around important OS policy topics and showcase policy developments and outcomes to help resolve common challenges and stimulate synergies. We will also help build and expand the CoNOSC network.

Read more about CoNOSC here.

SPARC Europe serving on the EOSC Financial Sustainability Task Force

SPARC Europe has been selected to serve on the EOSC Financial Sustainability Task Force. Vanessa Proudman will draw on her experience with and knowledge of sustainable issues and solutions for OS and will feed this into the Taskforce. She will strive to find solutions that embrace diversity, equity and inclusion when considering how to fund EOSC going forward. SPARC Europe will aim for all key stakeholders to have financial models to enable them to contribute to the sustainability of EOSC and that these are promoted with the view to acquire more longer term commitments to EOSC by a wide range of actors.

For information on the TF charter see here.

How to align your Open Science policy with the FAIR principles

Whilst continuing to follow national and research funder OS policymaking progress, SPARC Europe worked with FAIRSFAIR on a series of recommendations for policy enhancement to support the realisation of a FAIR ecosystem.
We invited expressions of interest from policymakers at all levels to work with us to compare their current policies with these recommendations and to consider how the policies might be adapted to better support the emergence of a FAIR ecosystem.

**An Analysis of Open Science Policies in Europe, v.7**

First published in 2017, this analysis, prepared together with the Digital Curation Centre, examines activity across Europe, reporting on types of Open Science policies in place or under development. Version 7 of the report provides updates on OS policy progress in several countries across Europe, covering the time period between September 2020 and April 2021. In addition, this version also contains a new section on international OS policy developments, together with updates on policy-related activities among European Commission-supported INFRAEOSC 5b projects.

[Download the report]

**Digital Services Act and Data Act**

Over summer 2021, behind the scenes, SPARC Europe talked to research and OS infrastructure providers in the context of the new Digital Services Act and Data Act and the amended rules on the legal protection of databases, which was out for consultation from June to September 2021. We have been working on your behalf to see how we can protect OS interests in new European legislation.

**KEY EVENTS**

**The Voices series: community discussion on policies for OA books**

Over the span of several months in 2021, the Open Access Books Network (OABN) organised a series of workshops that focused on discussions with the community about aspects of OA book policies. Under the banner Voices from the OA Books Community, different stakeholders, from publishers, librarians, to policymakers and researchers, expressed their views and showed the true diversity of this sector. More than 400 voices came together for the series.

SPARC Europe summarised all voices in the series. We spent eight weeks rigorously analysing notes, videos, and automated transcripts. Our priority was to produce a concise summary that would reflect all the various points of view as accurately as possible. The result of our efforts was “A Plan S for Books? Voices from the OA Books Community: Sessions Summary” document. After an open consultation with the community, it was shared with cOAlition S.

This experience has shown the value of community investment and engagement in a process of developing sustainable policies based on constructive discussions. We embrace this approach and are looking forward to helping accelerate Open Access to academic books together with the whole research funding community and all those who practice OA, including book publishers, authors, researchers, libraries, infrastructure providers, and others. In its statement on OA books, cOAlition S recognized the work done by the Open Access Books Network, saying: “The OA books network will serve as an open forum for community input during that implementation process.”

[Read the summary document]
STRATEGIC GOAL 2: Advocate for Open in research and education.

Position paper: Investing in the Open Access Book infrastructure - A call for action

SPARC Europe contributed to the “Investing in the Open Access Book Infrastructure” position paper. The paper resulted from a one-day virtual workshop that gathered stakeholders from a number of European countries, all sharing the view that open access for academic books needs further attention and support from the community. The paper discusses prerequisites for implementing a well-functioning and sustainable open access book infrastructure, calling for investment in 1. OA book community engagement and capacity-building (with the Open Access Books Network as a key actor), 2. Technical services (with a focus on sustainability and interoperability), 3. Open Book Watch (setting up OBW to monitor the development of OA books using a variety of agreed metrics).

Read the paper here.

Open Education in European Libraries of Higher Education 2021 report

In November 2021, SPARC Europe, together with the European Network of Open Education Librarians (ENOEL) published a long-awaited report entitled Open Education in European Libraries of Higher Education. This report is the 2021 version of the 2020 report under the same title, which was the first of its kind. The 2021 report was framed by the UNESCO Recommendation on OER.

The report, authored by Gema Santos-Hermosa, Vanessa Proudman and Paola Corti, is a result of research conducted earlier in 2021. The authors analysed responses to a survey of European libraries of Higher Education on Open Education and Open Educational Resources. The survey focused specifically on the work being carried out by academic libraries in Europe to implement the UNESCO Recommendation on OER. It received more than 230 responses from 28 European countries.

The report outlines the challenges, opportunities, and needs of European academic libraries in their efforts to implement and accelerate the Open Education roadmap. It highlights the pivotal role that they play in advancing Open Education in Europe.

Read the SKIM (a two-page document with key takeaways and recommendations from the report) here.

Read the full report here.
The year 2021 was one of growth for the European Network of Open Education Librarians (ENOEL). This is a community of academics from across Europe who share educational values and advocate for OE. Established in 2018, ENOEL encourages and facilitates the exchange of ideas and learning between peers to drive Open Education possibilities forward. The network currently has representatives from 27 countries.

In Spring 2021, ENOEL published its three-year strategy, outlining goals for the future using the UNESCO OER Recommendation and ENOEL member needs as a basis. The network helped develop the strategy; and they will help deliver on it.

Download the strategy document here.

The European Network of Open Education Librarians has worked on numerous outputs in 2021

An ENOEL Toolkit: Open Education Benefits

In October the network launched An ENOEL Toolkit: Open Education Benefits. The toolkit aims to raise awareness of the importance of Open Education, and it points out benefits for four stakeholder groups: students, teachers, institutions, and society at large. It features reusable and adaptable templates for Twitter cards, slides, and leaflets/posters.

All templates are under a CC BY licence, enabling the community to use and adapt them to their specific needs. Depending on specific circumstances, one may choose to use Twitter cards in a campaign, or add one of the slides to a presentation, or even print out one or more leaflets/posters and hang them on a library wall.
By the end of 2021, we translated the toolkit into ten languages (Dutch, French, Greek, Italian, Latvian, Montenegrin, Polish, Russian, Serbian and Ukrainian). Seven more translations are to come soon: Albanian, Catalan, Danish, German, Macedonian, Spanish, and Turkish.

Explore the toolkit [here](#).

**Open Education Champions**

In this interview series, key advocates of OE discuss the importance of Open Education and share their experiences creating and facilitating Open Educational Resources. ENOEL interviewed thirteen OA advocates from nine countries: France, Italy, Ireland, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and the UK. They came from different backgrounds and were at various stages of their careers. Students, professors, and research directors came together to advocate for Open Education and share their personal stories. The series will be released in February 2022.

**Open Mic Podcast**

Following its mission to support Europe’s Higher Education librarians, ambassadors, and facilitators of Open Education, in alignment with The UNESCO OER Recommendation, ENOEL launched a series of short podcasts. The Open Mic series aims at diving deeper into each recommendation. The introductory episode, released in November 2021, gives a general view of the key elements of the UNESCO document. In 2022 we will go in deeper into each area of action.

Watch [here](#).

**Video series**

The OE Drops series offers a series of short videos explaining the basics of Open Education to newcomers. The audience is invited to plug in while enjoying a morning coffee, on a walk, or anywhere, to get acquainted with Open Education concepts in videos.

Watch [here](#).
In the two videos of the series premiered in 2021, ENOEL further explores the benefits and challenges of Open Education. In the Under the Spotlight: ENOEL members sharing their experience webinar series, ENOEL members guide us through their personal journeys with OE, providing a space for network members to share ideas, ask questions, and learn from one another. Watch here.

ENOEL recently started these series. The network is working on adding more episodes in 2022.

Resources for librarians & Open Education enthusiasts

In 2021, ENOEL also put a lot of energy into gathering resources for librarians and OE enthusiasts. Members of the ENOEL community collaboratively created resources and collected links to key documents that can support librarians and OE advocates. The Wakelet page, curated by ENOEL members, gathers meticulously selected content related to OER, OE policies, OE support, and OE research results. Our librarians are constantly updating the resources and adding new links. We hope that this will be useful to the OE community.

Choosing from the resources available on the Wakelet, the network is working on curating a collection entitled “Open Education Librarianship: a learning path.” It will provide a helpful guide for those who want to learn more about Open Education and identify available resources for educators, researchers, and students.

KEY EVENTS

IATUL conference
The International Association of University Libraries (IATUL) 41st Annual Conference took place (virtually) in Porto in July. Vanessa Proudman of SPARC Europe joined forces with Heather Joseph, the executive Director of SPARC, to deliver an inspiring keynote entitled “Libraries as Catalysts for an Open Future”. In this unique conversation the two directors offered their distinctive views on the role of libraries in fostering Open, and how their efforts are shaped in Europe and the US. Watch the recording here

OASPA 2021
During the OASPA Conference Agata Morka of SPARC Europe presented a poster entitled “The Open Access Books Network: Growing a community.” See the poster here
OE Global
The OE Global Conference 2021 took place during the last week of September 2021, with each day focusing on a different UNESCO OER Recommendation action area. Paola Corti of the SPARC Europe team gave a presentation entitled “European Academic Libraries at work: Let’s build capacity. Together.”

Watch all session recordings here.

VI International Conference “University Library at a New Stage of Social Communications Development”
This event took place in October 2021. Together with ENOEL members Monique Schoutsen, Kinga Zajac, Kris Meen, Celine Peignen, Paola talked about ENOEL activities.

Watch the recordings here.

OpenEd21
During the OpenEd21 Conference Paola Corti and ENOEL members Marta Bustillo, Monique Schoutsen, Kristopher Meen and Celine Peignen gave a presentation entitled “Open Education Academic Librarians at Work in Europe: Building Capacity with Peers”.

Watch the recording here.

Gema Santos-Hermosa and Paola Corti held a discussion about "The UNESCO OER Recommendation and Europe’s Academic Libraries on the recent SPARC Europe OE survey".

Watch the recording here.
STRATEGIC GOAL 3:
Strive to enable more equity in Open so that all those who wish to publish and share research and education resources openly are better enabled to do so.

Toward a 21st-century copyright environment across Europe. Knowledge Rights 21 project launched in 2021

In September 2021, SPARC Europe and LIBER joined the long-awaited Knowledge Rights 21 (KR21) project. Stichting IFLA Foundation signed an agreement for a 3 million EUR Arcadia grant to launch this new programme to promote access to knowledge for study, research and culture in Europe.

KR21 focuses on the following key areas:

- Facilitating fair access to e-books for users of public, national, educational and research libraries;
- Protecting users’ rights under copyright legislation from contract override and technological protection measures that undermine statutory exceptions to copyright;
- Promoting the case for the introduction of open and flexible copyright norms in Europe to aid research, teaching and learning;
- Advocating for a legislated scholarly publication / secondary publishing right in laws;
- Accelerating the uptake of author rights retention activities and open licensing in Europe.

Read the KR21 press release for details here.

Webinar: International and national copyright policy action for Open Access

In this joint SPARC Europe and EIFL webinar, experts from several institutions and organisations addressed issues related to national and international copyright policy action for Open Access, giving different angles and perspectives. The panel discussion, which followed speakers’ presentations, facilitated by Vanessa Proudman and Iryna Kuchma, EIFL Open Access Programme Manager, focused on the question: Where does policy need to align? This webinar somewhat prepared for the KR21 Project.

See the slides
STRATEGIC GOAL 4: Promote diversity in publishing Open research and education.

The OA Diamond Journals Study

In March we were pleased to announce the completion of a study on diamond Open Access journals. It was the first study of its kind, and the report shone light on a publishing model — diamond OA — that makes OA publishing truly accessible to all. Diamond OA journals publish without charging authors or readers.

The study was commissioned by cOAlition S and funded by Science Europe in order to gain a better understanding of the diamond OA landscape. It is the culmination of work undertaken from June 2020 to February 2021 by SPARC Europe, together with nine partnering organisations: OPERAS, Utrecht University, DOAJ, UIT The Arctic University of Norway, LIBER, OASPA, ENRESSH, Redalyc-AmeliCA, and CSI, with OPERAS at the helm.

SPARC Europe looked at the financial sustainability of diamond OA journals in particular. We also focused on developing recommendations that relate to building global diamond OA capacity and making diamond OA journals more financially sustainable. We look forward to taking this work further in the coming years.

Read the report
Read the recommendations

NETWORK BUILDING

In September the Open Access Books Network (OABN) celebrated its first birthday. Although only one-year-old, the network has already established itself as an important actor in the OA books community, with more than 300 members. SPARC Europe, alongside OPERAS, OAPEN and ScholarLed, is one of the founding organisations behind the network. OABN has its virtual home on the Humanities Commons platform. There you can join discussion threads, read blog posts, find OA books-related job ads, and contribute to the event calendar and a library of sources concerning OA books.

Developing the OABN and its activities is one of SPARC Europe’s priorities and we look forward to more action in 2022.

In 2021, OABN ran numerous events focused on OA Books, including hosting guest speakers to talk
about funding possibilities, innovative business models, and experimental publishing. In a statement on OA books issued by cOAlition S, the Open Access Books Network was recognised as an "open forum for community input" during the implementation process of their recommendations.

Watch the OABN Youtube channel to explore all the series of events here
Follow OABN on Twitter: @oabooksnetwork
If you are not yet a member, join OABN here.

KEY EVENTS

All you ever wanted to know about diamond OA: SPARC Europe’s Q&A webinar
In April 2021, following the publication of The OA Diamond Journals Study, and an accompanying set of recommendations, SPARC Europe organised a Q&A webinar, in which participants had a chance to ask the report’s authors questions and discuss the community’s needs. This was first in a series of events SPARC Europe will run to highlight the importance of OA diamond publishing.

Watch the webinar
Access the slides

Equity and diversity in Open Access: National and regional publishing platforms
In December we put together the second event in the series: a webinar on national and regional OA publishing platforms. The webinar brought together voices from Croatia, France, Finland, the Netherlands, and Spain. Experts from these countries talked us through their initial influences and motivations for establishing national and regional publishing platforms. They shared their perspectives on building and running national and regional OA publishing platforms and spoke to how they have evolved over time through presentations.

Watch the webinar recording here.

Universities and the promises of scholar-led publishing
The European University Association organised a series of events under the theme "Universities and the future of scholarly publishing," discussing the role that universities might play in shaping the future of academic publishing. Vanessa Proudman was invited to speak at the second webinar of the series, entitled “Universities and the promises of scholar-led publishing”. In her presentation, Vanessa focused on how important and significant the diamond OA publishing sector is by outlining some of its strengths and challenges based on results of the cOAlition commissioned study.

Watch the EUA webinar here.

Research and Scholarly Publishers Forum
The Research and Scholarly Publishers Forum took place in June as part of the London Book Fair. SPARC Europe was invited to speak about diamond OA models.

European Symposium of SSH journals
In November, during the European Symposium of SSH journals Vanessa gave a keynote on the importance of collaboration between SSH diamond OA journals entitled "Sustaining a more equitable journal publishing system: Community action is vital".

LIBER 2021
In summer 2021 we participated in the LIBER conference. This conference was of particular importance for SPARC Europe since we received the LIBER Award for Library Innovation. Vanessa Proudman presented the paper as a part of the session devoted to powering Sustainable Publishing Platforms. Her talk painted a nuanced picture of the diamond OA landscape, with its current practices and challenges. Vanessa also suggested a possible way forward, introducing the idea of the new OA publishing Commons, aiming at bringing together the world’s community-driven/governed journals and platforms, and coordinating their efforts towards making the diamond OA model sustainable.
STRATEGIC GOAL 5:
Raise the impact of publicly-funded research by reimagining the way that Open research is rewarded and incentivised.

Reimagining Academic Career Assessment: Stories of innovation and change

SPARC Europe, the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA) and the European University Association (EUA) have worked on highlighting examples of universities and national initiatives that are embracing change in their academic career assessment practices. We hope that these case studies will inspire universities and other research institutions who consider doing the same.

Ten case studies shared their stories on why they revised their research evaluation systems and how. National and institutional approaches were part of the mix from Belgium, China, Finland, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, the UK.

The report compares and contrasts the cases looking at the main findings such as motivations for change, cultural contexts, processes and dynamics for managing change.

Download the report
Read the case studies online

KEY EVENTS

Webinar Reimagining Academic Career Assessment: Stories of innovation and change
EUA, DORA and SPARC Europe joined forces to organise a webinar to discuss practical steps in reimagining academic career assessment. The webinar presented the main findings from case studies that have been collected in an online repository and published in the report “Reimagining Academic Career Assessment: Stories of innovation and change”.

Access the webinar presentation here.
Watch the webinar recording here.
STRATEGIC GOAL 6:
Help sustain the Open infrastructure/service ecosystem.

SCOSS UPDATES

Strategy

Over the last several years, SCOSS – a SPARC Europe initiative dedicated to raising funds to sustain Open Science Infrastructures – has successfully supported three pledging rounds helping raise over 3.5 million EUR to sustain Open Science Infrastructure. In 2021, SCOSS found itself in the position of both looking back at what it has achieved and thinking forward about SCOSS’s future. SCOSS’s team spent several months working on a strategy for the coming three years.

The strategy was based on a consultation with the community conducted in summer 2021 through a survey, which attracted over 200 responses, one-to-one interviews, and focus groups. The community recognised the need for SCOSS’s existence as a source of support for Open Science Infrastructure for many years to come. The consultation also affirmed that the SCOSS model continues to be viable, which is why SCOSS decided to pursue its previous goals, defining three primary goals for the coming three years:

1. Promoting the sustainability of Open Science Infrastructure through funding and support;
2. Raising global awareness about the value of non-commercial Open Science Infrastructure through advocacy and connection building;
3. Building and maintaining trust in Open Science Infrastructure through vetting and selection.

While the goals might sound familiar, SCOSS is planning several new high-level activities. SCOSS will firstly continue to manage the application and decision-making process by supporting the applicants, infrastructures already under its umbrella, and other SCOSS community members. It will also look into making the annual application process even more efficient. SCOSS will also maintain its presence by speaking at conferences and encouraging dialogue and capacity-building between different stakeholders in various areas such as good governance, open infrastructure, or business models. Whilst primarily engaging with academic libraries, SCOSS is also looking forward to seeking new partnerships from currently under-represented regions and stakeholders such as government and research funders.

Download the strategy document here.
Pledging updates

COVID-19 has adversely affected pledging for SCOSS OS infrastructures. Despite this, in 2021 we were very grateful to receive support from the following countries: Australia, Austria, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the US. We are particularly grateful to library consortia committing to SCOSS infrastructure including Australia, Canada, Finland, France, Ireland, New Zealand, Norway, Switzerland and the US. The support added up to more than 3.5 million EUR at the end of 2021 in total pledges.

Milestones

2021 was a year of achieving important milestones for SCOSS.

DOAB/OAPEN reaches its target

Following in the footsteps of the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) in 2020, DOAB/OAPEN became the second SCOSS-endorsed Open Science Infrastructure (OSI) to successfully reach its target. This milestone exemplifies the staunch will and commitment of a growing number of institutions worldwide to create a viable pathway for OSI to remain non-profit, community-driven and truly open.

While DOAB and OAPEN can now proudly call themselves SCOSS campaign successful graduates, reaching this milestone is just a first step on a long journey of building meaningful, long-lasting relationships with their supporting institutions.

Ready, steady, pledge! SCOSS’s third pledging round launched in September

To highlight the need to fund OS infrastructure, SCOSS regularly selects essential infrastructures that are in need of funding to encourage collective funding. After a rigorous evaluation process, in 2021 SCOSS chose organisations for its third pledging round welcoming arXiv, Redalyc/AmeliCA, and DSpace on board.

All infrastructures prepared two-minute pitches to help the community learn more about each organisation:

- arXiv
- Redalyc/AmeliCA
- DSpace

Read more about how to pledge here.
It's your call! SC OSS published the 2022 Expression of Interest call

In November, the Global Sustainability Coalition for Open Science Services (SC OSS) announced its search for new potential candidate organisations to fund during the 2022 to 2024 SC OSS funding cycle. SC OSS encouraged applications from across the world, particularly from South America, Asia and Africa.

Based on the results of the SC OSS consultation run in summer 2021, the community identified three types of Open Science Infrastructure to prioritise for funding:

1. Open publishing services, tools and platforms
2. FAIR Open Access repository services
3. Open research data infrastructure and services

The SC OSS Board recognised these types as priorities in the 2022 expression of interest, while at the same time welcoming applications coming from other types of services that address other themes.

Applications are due by the end of February 2022 here.

INTERVIEWS

To highlight the importance of sustaining the Open Science Infrastructure (OSI), we invited renowned OS advocates for open infrastructure to share their views on this important topic. We interviewed Peter Suber, Kaitlin Thaney, and Marin Dacos. The three experts shed light on the risks of funders not supporting OSIs and called for immediate action.

Peter Suber, Director of the Harvard Office for Scholarly Communication, Director of the Harvard Open Access Project, and Senior Researcher at the Berkman Klein Center for Internet & Society talked about the role of OSIs in the scholarly communication ecosystem and the lessons we learnt about Open Science and Scholarship in general in times of the global pandemic. When asked about the risks of funders not contributing to supporting OSIs, Peter described the current situation as “a fork in the road” moment, where the lack of support means that “infrastructures we depend on might die or might be acquired by a corporation that is really more interested in profits than in science”.

Kaitlin Thaney, a passionate Open Access advocate and the Executive Director of Invest in Open Infrastructure, talked about how her experiences working in the world of Open Science helped her gain a more nuanced vision of what “Open” means and realise that there are different shades to it. She discussed a complex balance of power between commercial and non-commercial players supporting OSI. “There needs to be options... not just one group controlling a space that forces behaviour... and forces the way in which scholarship evolves,” Kaitlin concluded.
We also heard from Marin Dacos, who gave us a French perspective on the question of OSIs. Dacos, French Coordinator for Open Science of the French Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, commented on how the research community can best support OSIs. When asked about the very definition of the Open Science Infrastructure, Marin stated, “You absolutely need it, but you don’t see it unless it’s broken”.

Watch the interview with Peter Suber here.
Watch the interview with Kaitlin here.
Watch the interview with Marin Dacos here.

KEY EVENTS

In a locked down world at the German Open Science Conference
In February, Vanessa Proudman gave a keynote at the German Open Science Conference: “In a locked-down-world: How can we continue to support OS to ensure immediate digital access to research to those who need it?” She talked about how COVID-19 has highlighted the dependence on Open Science Infrastructure, pointing to examples of how a range of essential infrastructures are adopting good governance and a range of funding models to support community needs.

“How Can Libraries Help Keep Open Science Infrastructure Free and Independent?” SPARC Europe and LIBER webinar
In the same month, SPARC Europe joined forces with LIBER to organise a webinar entitled “How Can Libraries Help Keep Open Science Infrastructure Free and Independent?” This webinar brought together voices from the library community who had committed to funding OSIs from all regions of Europe. They offered their own perspectives on why funding remained so important to them and their organisations.

National French event on Scientific Publications
In March we took part in the national French event which looked into scholarly publishing mechanisms and possibilities of creating models encouraging exchanges between different stakeholders: libraries, universities and publishers. Vanessa presented a talk “Scoping the Open Science Infrastructure Landscape in Europe: What does it mean to be sustainable?” She discussed ways of creating a more sustainable open scholarly infrastructure, based on the findings of our European OA infrastructure survey.

Open Science Spring in Finland
In May, Vanessa Proudman gave a keynote at the Finnish online Open Science Spring Conference 2021 which focused on the price of openness. In her talk "Securing Open and Free Infrastructure: Community Action," she touched on the questions of open governance and discussed the ways of ensuring that open infrastructure remains open and free.

Watch all session recordings here

Open Science Fair
In September, SPARC Europe presented a session at the The Open Science Fair, focusing on the issue of invisible infrastructure, entitled “The Perils of Being Invisible: Collective funding models for Open Science Infrastructure”.

Watch recordings here.

CNI virtual meeting
We presented the SCOSS 2022-2024 strategy during two events: first in our own SCOSS webinar in November, then in December in a pre-recorded session for the Fall 2021 CNI virtual meeting.

Watch recordings here.
Faces behind SPARC Europe

This work could not have been done without the following in particular:

Vanessa Proudman, Director of SPARC Europe, is working to make Open the default in Europe. Vanessa tries to make sure that there is a true spark in every SPARC Europe project.

Paola Corti, Open Education Community Manager, who joined the SPARC Europe team in February 2021, manages the Hewlett Foundation-funded project, which helps implement the UNESCO OER Recommendation. Paola is the always-energetic engine behind the European Network of Open Education Librarians.

Agata Morka, Communications Officer, who joined SPARC Europe in March 2021, divides her time between SPARC Europe’s communication strategy and implementation and coordinating and supporting SCOSS. Agata likes it when the communicated content is beautiful: when it reads well and looks stunning. When it touches people.
Regular contributors to SPARC Europe:

Jon Treadway, the Founder and Director of Great North Wood Consulting, helped SPARC Europe develop the SCOSS strategy for 2022-2024. He will contribute his analytical skills to more SPARC Europe research projects in 2022.

Mariël Lam designed the current logo of SPARC Europe, SCOSS and ENOEL. She likes the idea of sharing in Open Education and ENOEL to create better opportunities for everyone.

Mieke Grooten has been supporting the SPARC Europe team since 2017. Mieke built the SPARC Europe, SCOSS and OpenScholarChampions websites and continues to maintain them and help SPARC with new website needs. Making and designing things makes Mieke happy, and she enjoys a result in which everything naturally falls into place.

Els Snoek is SPARC Europe’s financial administrator. She has been working with us for 10 years.
Thank you for supporting our work!

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