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Application letter for the membership in the SPARC Europe Board

As I believe that being on the SPARC Europe Board requires certain skills, knowledge and experience in the domain of scholarly communication, combined with a great deal of enthusiasm and dedication for the goals of open science, I will try to show my capacities concerning them.

I have been working, as a librarian, in the University of Zagreb, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences (FHSS) Library, the largest Croatian academic library in humanities and social sciences. My responsibilities in the library are related to a wide array of issues concerning scholarly communication: institutional repository management, e-resources acquisition, information literacy teaching, support for digital publishing, and bibliometric monitoring of research output. Such a broad range of activities provided me with an excellent learning space about the needs and behaviours of scholars in humanities and social sciences, especially in an environment that could be described as a scientific periphery. Within such a landscape, it is easy to recognise the relevance of concepts of multilingualism, bibliodiversity, alternative publishing business models and the importance of building sustainable, open and community-led infrastructure for open science.

Before joining FHSS, I used to work in the Library of the Ruđer Bošković Institute, the leading Croatian institution for the natural and biomedical disciplines. Both FHSS and RBI libraries and their parent institutions are leading the way in Croatia in promotion and realization of open access and open science, according to distinctive characteristics of the scholarly disciplines that they belong to. At FHSS Library, I had the opportunity to initiate the development of the institutional repository that has become one of the earliest and most successful in Croatia. Last year we have successfully transitioned the repository to a new system. I have also initiated the development of the institutional platform for publishing open access books - *FF Open Press*. The Library represents the institution in the international infrastructures DARIAH, CESSDA and OPERAS (with me as a contact point for DARIAH and OPERAS). Participating in this infrastructures presents an opportunity to exchange experiences and share insights into challenges that are specific for humanities and social sciences and for smaller, non-english-speaking countries. I believe that those challenges, if not addressed properly, will hinder the widespread adoption of principles and practices of Open Science. The most urgent among those challenges are surely the discovery of multilingual and non-standard-publication scholarly content (including the wide and non-rigid notion of 'research data' in humanities) and the development of innovative business models for publishing in a non-commercial setting. Looking forward, I hope to be able to apply some internationally developed solutions and best practices to our local, institutional or national landscape, but also to contribute to the international debates with some locally derived recommendations. Recently, I have been engaged in the projects OPERAS-P (Preparing open access in the European research area

through scholarly communication) and TRIPLE (Transforming Research through Innovative Practices for Linked Interdisciplinary Exploration), as an associate of the University of Zadar. I would also like to mention my activities at the national level, as I was very happy to be a member of the teams that initiated the two most important elements of the open science infrastructure in Croatia: Hrčak - Portal of Scientific Journals of Croatia Project team (from 2004) and Dabar - Digital Academic Archives and Repositories (from 2015). I was a member of the Hrčak Advisory Board until 2019, and I am still a member of the Dabar Steering Committee. I am also a PhD candidate at the University of Zagreb, where my research is focusing on the effects of scientific policies on the editorial practices, in humanities, with regards to specific epistemic cultures.

I firmly believe that each of my three roles: a professional librarian, activist promoting open science principles, and a researcher, benefit one from another. I hope they could also be of benefit to SPARC Europe goals and plans. Above all, I would appreciate the opportunity to contribute to the development of the international infrastructures that could accommodate and embrace all of the distinctive features of otherwise underrepresented languages, content types, business models or scholarly disciplines.

Sincerely,
Iva Melinščak Zlodi

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