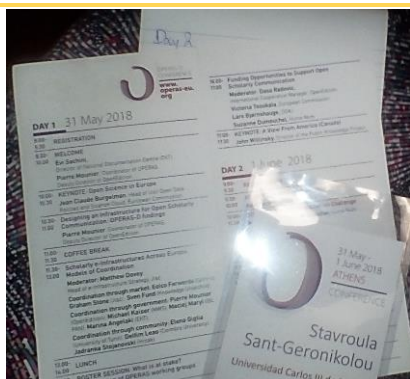


# REPORTING ON 1<sup>ST</sup> OPERAS CONFERENCE, 31 MAY-1 JUNE 2018, ATHENS



As the scholarly communication frameworks are currently being reshaped under the Open Science paradigm, and the coordination of research activities between countries and disciplines becomes even more challenging, OPERAS-D design project has prepared a study around scientific and technical services the OPERAS European research infrastructure envisions providing in the future.

Following OPERAS Core Group Meeting and OPERAS-D (Design for Open Access Publications in European Research Areas for Social Sciences and Humanities) validation workshops in Bonn and Amsterdam (June 2017-April 2018) aiming to support its partners in the development of a European e-infrastructure for OA publications in the Social Sciences and Humanities by establishing a long-term strategy, business and governance models and by engaging members to strengthen the community, the group held its final project meeting during OPERAS first conference at the Greek National Documentation Centre (EKT) operating at the National Hellenic Research Foundation in Athens on May 31<sup>st</sup> and June 1<sup>st</sup> 2018.

The conference dedicated to the European Open Scholarly Communication Coordination Challenge, attracted a multidisciplinary audience of information professionals, educators, publishers and IT experts of more than 25 countries who were looking forward to receiving updates on OA initiatives around the globe, especially focusing but not necessarily limited to OA monographs and the SSH. The conference was opened on behalf of the EKT by Dr. Marina Angelaki with a quick overview of topics to be discussed during sessions, a brief presentation of EKT's scope and activities, their efforts to supporting the design of a coherent OA infrastructure, technology transfer and the capitalization of Greek scientific knowledge, and partnerships with various European project teams framed within the overarching goal to help the community address the major

## **The OA Question is over.**

John Willinsky, Director  
of the Public Knowledge  
Project

## **OA is both a matter of publicity and public awareness.**

Pierre Mounier,  
OPERAS

cultural shift towards Open Access. Before giving the floor to keynote speakers, Pierre Mounier, Coordinator of OPERAS and Victoria Tsoukala, EOSC national Expert, policy officer at the EC, she concluded her welcome speech with a reference to the EKT's future endeavors.

In the presentations that followed, the audience were given the opportunity of a content-rich update on OA progress achieved so far, the revision of OPSI directive, the FP9 program, successor of Horizon 2020 and the increasingly broadened and stricter OA requirements. Dr. Tsoukala made particular reference to latest council conclusions endorsing EOSC implementation roadmap (May 2018) and stressed the bottom-up, co-design approach to formulating the new set of Open Science Policy Platform prioritized recommendations addressing among others research data management, altmetrics, rewards, research integrity, education and citizen science. She also stressed the importance of

- reaching members agreement on EOSC (European Open Science Cloud) infrastructure for research data in Europe and beyond
- the proposal for a PSI revision of the original recommendation aiming to overcome barriers that still prevent the full re-use of public sector information
- securing a minimum level of coherence and building upon inspiration and knowledge of existing services

Next, Pierre Mounier outlined OPERAS-D project's scope, work packages, current working groups' activities, drafted white papers, and landmark publications among which [The Visibility of Open Access Monographs in a European Context](#), [Landscape Study on Open Access publishing](#), and [Usage surveys on Open Access - May-June 2017](#). He also announced OPERAS application for the [ESFRI 2018 Roadmap](#) (European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures) and shared the group's vision to create a

- consortium of players
- a cluster of content and
- a platform of services useful to the community with the utmost goal of providing a coherent ecosystem to support the OA cycle.

In between keynote speeches, a series of roundtables gave participants a comprehensive idea of OA landscape in Europe, research infrastructures mixed packages, the UK OA mandate and the pressing need to speed up processes. As to the way sustainability challenges can be best addressed, Eelco Ferwerda (OAPEN) proposed the sector should team up to work together, co-fund and collaborate while all panel participants consider

**Base Services have to be FREE, but it will ultimately be decided by members.**

Victoria Tsoukala (EC)

**It's not a question of whether university presses are profitable but whether they are sustainable.**

Graham Stone (JISC).

Open Source extremely important in principle but as content grows, difficult to manage in the long run.

During the *Coordination through Government and Community* panel discussions, participants acknowledged that although there are as yet no OA policies in many European countries, little uptake from the community, fragmentation, strong reactions against OA, national frameworks not recognizing existing research infrastructures, a lack of synergies, coordination and specific guidelines and the situation being made even more complicated by national educational ecosystems and an ongoing strong ideological debate losing focus from the real problem, there are currently efforts to form OA national committees aiming to engage all stakeholders, align and converge and associations are taking steps to raising awareness around the topic and convince universities to move up the OA ladder. To the question of how to coordinate dispersed initiatives with EOSC, panelists agreed on inclusivity being the key component to overcoming the coordination problems, however acknowledging that 'there is no common model' and insisted on taking advantage of the timely opportunity for universities and libraries to take up their new roles as publishers.

The Poster pitch presentations gave us all the chance to appreciate OPERAS working groups' activity progress so far, especially that of the **Advocacy working group** answering all those critical questions potentially impeding going open, the **Tools R&D working group** responding to requests around easy-to-use interoperable tools and especially adapted to monographs and the SSH area, the **Common Standards group** working on output formats, validation criteria, semantic interoperability, metadata and peer-review processes, the **Best Practices Workgroup** informing on flagship initiatives and key players in this emerging area (e.g. ThinkCheckSubmit, SPARC, COPE and AUP guidelines, FAIR, DOAB, DOAJ, OpenAIRE, JSTOR and HIRMEOS).

The last round table of the first conference day began with a reference to the U.S recent call for a 2,5% academic library budget commitment to support the common infrastructure needed to create open scholarly coordination commons. Discussions mainly revolved around funding based on The Global Sustainability Coalition for Open Science Services ([SCOSS](#)) recommendations and different funding models propositions ranging from central pooling and crowd-funding to grant funding. Newly appointed OPERAS coordinator Suzanne Dumouchel, Huma-Num and DARIAH Program Implementation Officer, explaining types of scientific crowdfunding commented on challenges involved and underscored model's benefits for

**The focus is not in the infrastructure but rather researchers.**

Michael Kaiser (MWS).

**It's a big challenge supporting researchers publishing in their own language and developing at the same time international scientific cooperation.**

Pierre Mounier

**Crowdfunding must be considered as a business model on its own or at least part of a bigger one.**

Suzanne Dumouchel  
(OPERAS)

impact measurement and local projects financing. According to John Willinsky, Director of the Public Knowledge Project, who closed the last session OA is the new norm for science, not the ideal, the extra or the bonus. The end game is how it will be financed and as large publishers are rebranding and marketing themselves as analytical services moving from monopoly capitalism to market capitalism, we have to look into a non-APC future and a change in copyright law.

The second and last conference day started with the Director of SciELO Abel Packer's presentation of the Latin American share of indexed scientific publications in 2016, SciELO's strategy and 2018-2023 future plans including the development of an XML editor adding to services offered to authors, and the adoption of continuous publication policy. During the Q&A section, the main topic was the necessity to separate communication from prestige and the observed change in the way scientific impact is evaluated, not solely dependent on impact factors of journals research outputs are published in anymore.

In the roundtable that followed, the audience was initiated in [OpenAIRE](#), [EGI.EU](#), [EUDAT](#) and [DARIAH](#) collaborative networks' scope of activities including but not limited to deploying services to embed Open Science into researcher workflows, developing global Open Standards, cross-community federation of digital capabilities, resources and expertise between communities and across national boundaries, and supporting data intensive research by providing data access, data discovery, training and consultancy services in a partnership fostering way. In the course of the discussion, Dr. Natalia Manola, OpenAIRE Managing Director, shared her vision of EOSC as an ecosystem, a system of systems and a flow of services and information with no barriers. According to EUDAT project manager, Damien Lecarpentier, although things look a little blurry in terms of EOSC future perspectives, it seems we are moving towards a federation of federations instead of a one-stop shop. Matthew Dovey, head of Jisc e-infrastructures strategy, brought up the scalability issue while DARIAH's director Laurent Romary commented on the existing ambiguity about ways to deploy tools and services specifically targeting SSH. In the end they all agreed upon the necessity to make sure above all that EOSC coordination of national capabilities reflects the needs of the community.

The rest of the conference focused the variety of model propositions around improving peer review and publishing, ranging from highly disruptive to less groundbreaking solutions. Jacques Lafait (University of Jussieu) presented the Jussieu Call

for open science and bibliodiversity recommendations to developing a fair funding model, reforming the research evaluation system, securing a part of library budget to support OA and following OA but not at any price. Dirk Pieper, OA 2020 Advisory Board, provided a brief overview of OA2020 alliance vision to transform the majority of today's scholarly journals from subscription to OA publishing by converting resources currently spent on journal subscriptions into funds to support OA sustainable development while Saskia de Vries, Fair Open Access Alliance Project Leader, presented the Transparent Transition to Open Access (TTOA) consortium's approach to managing the transition to OA by using the expertise and prestige of subscription journals to evaluate OA articles involving CWTS in the implementation of responsible metrics.

Before closing the conference, OPERAS coordinator Pierre Mounier addressed an open call to the community to joining the OPERAS project and 'spreading the OA word'. He also announced that the second OPERAS conference will be held again at the National Documentation Centre next year.

#### **KEY TAKEAWAYS:**

Despite the impetus given by the EC to the development of OA through a systematic support for at least ten years and a growing commitment on behalf of national policy makers to move the OA conversation forward, a lot of issues have come up during the process, associated with data fragmentation, multilinguism, competition, sustainability, scalability, stakeholder engagement, state support, the lack of incentives and debates over funding models.

Nevertheless, prospects seem to be particularly favorable thanks to community's strong enthusiasm, the realization that not everything can be tackled simultaneously and the determination to keep on working together to

- separate communication from prestige and scientific value from journal impact factors
- make sure that SSH scientists will be listened by governments
- make EOSC a common place for all European researchers
- expand existing collaborative networks and
- fast track the development of global Open Standards and fair funding models.

**Ultimately, all pathways have to be assessed to which extent they contribute to bigger OA shares and faster OA growth rates of current academic publishing...**

Dirk Pieper, OA2020



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