

# **Open Access and Scholarly Communication: Potential Roles for Scholars Portal**

White paper prepared for the OCUL community in consultation with OCUL-SP  
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## **Introduction**

This white paper is concerned with reviewing the role of Scholars Portal and OCUL in aiding member OCUL libraries in their support of scholarly communication and in advancing open access publishing. And while the focus of the paper will be on formal scholarly communication, as represented by the publication of articles and monographs, consideration will also be given to the expanding nature of scholarly communication and the growing importance of non-formal, non-traditional modes for sharing and exchanging research results and for supporting discussion about those results. What new services are OCUL libraries creating in these emerging areas and how should Scholars Portal position itself to support them?

Academic libraries have a long history of supporting scholarly communications and scholarly publishing. In the print world, libraries were the primary purchasers of commercially published scholarly content. By physically holding journals and books, they also played a critical role in the preservation of the scholarly record. And through the systems of bibliographic control they developed, they provided important access services to the research community.

A number of related trends over the last three decades have challenged the traditional role of academic libraries in the scholarly publishing ecosystem. First, the rising costs of serials combined with the continued growth in the output of scholarly articles has put immense pressure on library budgets and is widely viewed as unsustainable. Second, the conversion of scholarly journals to digital form has upset the historic balance between the roles of libraries and publishers in areas such as preservation, access, and content production. Libraries have developed a variety of cooperative solutions in partnership with commercial publishers to support digital preservation of the scholarly record. Access is now largely a function provided by Internet search engines and commercial indexers. And content production has come to encompass a much broader range of producers than scholarly societies and large academic publishers, with important emerging roles for academic libraries.

Underlying all of these changes is a growing appreciation of new publishing models based on open access. Academic libraries have supported the move to open access publishing as a way to control the growth in costs of scholarly publishing; but from early on they have also appreciated the power of open access to facilitate the broadest possible dissemination of research. The two most prominent examples of the adoption of open access by libraries over the last two decades include (1) the use of institutional repositories as a mechanism to repatriate and make available the research output of local faculty members and (2) the emergence of the library as publisher, providing a wide range of services in support of the production and distribution of electronic journals and monographs.

## *Ontario Libraries and Scholarly Communication*

Academic libraries in Ontario, which together comprise the Ontario Council of University Libraries (OCUL), have been at the forefront of the evolution of the role of the library in support of scholarly communication. Many OCUL libraries have been engaged in national open access projects such as the CFI-funded Synergies Project, and OCUL itself is a funding partner for the Public Knowledge Project (PKP) which produces the most widely deployed open source software for open access publishing, the Open Journals System (OJS).<sup>1</sup>

Most OCUL libraries have invested heavily in the development and support of robust institutional repositories. OCUL libraries use IRs, principally D-Space from the Duraspace organization, for collecting local scholarship, with some repositories focused squarely on faculty publications and theses and dissertations, while others accept undergraduate research, incorporate special collections, or specifically aim to gather non-traditional forms of scholarship and creative output being produced locally.<sup>2</sup>

Fourteen OCUL libraries provide support at some level for journal and/or monograph publishing, supporting both commercial and open access models. Support varies from library to library but typically includes software hosting services, design services, ISSN and DOI assignment, training, and registration with key indexing and directory services such as the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ).<sup>3</sup> The majority of OCUL institutions that currently provide journal hosting use PKP's OJS platform, including McMaster's [Escarpment Press](#) and [York Digital Journals](#). Two libraries use Digital Commons from bepress (see [Scholarship@Western](#), for an example).<sup>4</sup> The University of Windsor additionally hosts the [Windsor Studies in Argumentation](#) on the Open Monograph Press (OMP) from PKP.

Support for monograph publishing among OCUL libraries is not as common as support for journal publishing, though a small number of OCUL libraries have special relationships with university presses. Over two hundred journals, nearly two-thirds of which are peer-reviewed, are supported by OCUL member library publishing services.

The OCUL Publishing/Hosting Community has been active since its founding in 2013, with the group focussed on sharing best practices via webinars, documentation gathering, and in-person

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<sup>1</sup> "The Public Knowledge Project (PKP), a partnership of Simon Fraser University Library, the School of Education at Stanford University, and others, has been a key player in the Canadian open access community since 1998. PKP provides the leading open source software, Open Journal Systems (OJS), for journal publication support. Over 14,000 journals worldwide use OJS, many of which are openly accessible." From "Implementing open access: report of the CARL-CRKN Open Access Working Group", Canadian Association of Research Libraries, 2012.

<http://books.scholarsportal.info/viewdoc.html?id=577788>

<sup>2</sup> Over 80% of CARL members have implemented an institutional repository (IR) for their campus. 24 CARL has been a strong advocate of IRs since 2003 and has encouraged their development at member institutions. From "Implementing open access: report of the CARL-CRKN Open Access Working Group", Canadian Association of Research Libraries, 2012

<sup>3</sup> <https://doaj.org>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.bepress.com>

meetings. As previously discussed, OCUL institutions are working on a range of scales, but have found the forum useful for discussions surrounding everything from the process for minting DOIs to the philosophy around and use of altmetrics for home-grown content.

As an infrastructure service of OCUL, Scholars Portal has worked to define a role for itself in this emerging scholarly publishing landscape. Key services identified to date include support for digital preservation of journals hosted by OCUL member libraries and hosting support services for both OJS and OMP. Uptake of these services, while steady, has not been as wide as we had hoped. The process for securing archiving rights and the mechanics of harvesting OA journal content for preservation are both more complicated than they should be. To date, we are only preserving 25 open access journals published by OCUL libraries and 65 open access journals in total. And while hosting services offer convenience for libraries with existing publishing programs, hosting costs represent perhaps the smallest barrier to OA publishing for those schools thinking about starting a new program. Costs for journal design and other support services are more serious impediments. Of those OCUL libraries using OJS, seven institutions manage their own OJS hosting, while five host through Scholars Portal.

## **Environmental Scan**

To provide some context for the recommendations in this paper, we start by reviewing innovative scholarly communication efforts taking place within universities, consortia, and issue-based collectives outside Ontario, with a focus on recent North American efforts. The scan will inform the discussion that follows about the roles of OCUL and Scholars Portal in supporting and preserving open access content and in the development of more robust scholarly publishing activities across Ontario. We'll focus the environmental scan in a few areas, including Library Publishing, Digital Preservation, Responding to Open Access Mandates, Education and Training, and Emerging Trends in Scholarly Communication.

### ***Library Publishing***

A growing interest in shifting to a more open scholarly publishing model has contributed to a significant growth in scholarly communications efforts both within and across academic institutions around the world<sup>5</sup>. The development and expansion of organizations such as the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC) and the Library Publishing Coalition point to the real eagerness of many libraries to be agents of change in this domain.

SPARC, which began in 1998, has as its goal “the creation of a more open system of scholarly communication.”<sup>6</sup> Their advocacy and education work happens on a very large scale, and their interest in partnering with other institutions and organizations is demonstrated by the breadth of

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<sup>5</sup> For a history, see Colin Steele's "Scholarly Communication, Scholarly Publishing and University Libraries. Plus Ca Change?" <http://hdl.handle.net/1885/11944>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.sparc.arl.org/about>

initiatives and events they are involved with. SPARC's over 800 members include commercial and academic publishers, individual universities, as well as consortia.

The Library Publish Coalition, founded in 2013, also recently opened its membership to consortial groups, and their focus on library-led publishing makes their goals of knowledge sharing and the development of common practices of particular interest to an organization like OCUL.<sup>7</sup>

JISC in the UK offers a robust set of open access services, including local negotiation and repository support, as well as a number of tools adopted well beyond the UK, including the SHERPA RoMEO site, which analyses and describes author rights across all major publisher policies. Among the many tools and projects under development are a publication router, which will push open access content into its appropriate repository, and an APC monitoring tool that will ensure funders' open access mandates are fully complied with.

South of the border, the California Digital Library's eScholarship unit has been a model for what an integrated, statewide effort can become: the consortium offers a full suite of publishing services, from hosting to peer review management to layout and design support, aiming to allow University of California scholars "to have direct control over the creation and dissemination of the full range of their scholarship."<sup>8</sup> While the CDL effort is a particularly ambitious one, it demonstrates the significant benefits that can come from offering a full ecosystem of services on a large scale.

On a national level, open access advocacy has also been a key component of the work of the Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL) over the last few years. A newer Canadian effort, CRKN's Integrated Digital Scholarship Ecosystem (IDSE) project, which has as its primary goal "to advance research capacity and innovation in Canada," will likely highlight some areas of growth for us. Scholars Portal already has agreements with Érudit to load and archive publications purchased through CRKN and a long standing partnership with PKP, which will continue to bring opportunities to work on transformative infrastructure.

#### *Possible Directions for SP/OCUL*

1. Continue to support the development of key open source software such as OJS and OMP through enhanced collaboration with PKP, including dedicated programming resources. Combined focus on big-picture advocacy and practical, usable, and fully open tools points to a mixed-model of engagement that may be a practical approach for an organisation like OCUL with a long history of collaboration and significant recent successes in technical development.

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.librarypublishing.org/>

<sup>8</sup> [http://escholarship.org/about\\_escholarship.html](http://escholarship.org/about_escholarship.html)

2. Enhance the Scholars Portal OJS Hosting service to become a full-service journal design and support service. Incorporate the Scholars Portal OJS and OMP services as core services, eliminating the opt-in service charges and making access to the service available to all OCUL members as part of their standard membership fee.
3. Provide consortial support for Altmetrics and ORCID membership, including the development of strategies for encouraging researcher registration on a voluntary basis.

### ***Digital Preservation***

There is the need to preserve open access publications on a large scale. While major commercial publishers are well represented in key preservation services such as LOCKSS, Portico and Scholars Portal, smaller publishers, including OA publishers, are often not being preserved at all. The Public Knowledge Project has taken a significant step in this direction through the PKP Private LOCKSS Network, which will provide long term preservation in a dark archive for any registered OJS journal, and which already has participants from across western Canada as well as the United States.<sup>9</sup>

The Keepers Registry, a JISC funded initiative managed by EDINA at the University of Edinburgh, tracks holdings of trusted archives of scholarly content across the globe.<sup>10</sup> Scholars Portal and the PKP PLN are both members of the Keepers Registry. The goal of the Registry is to build a comprehensive database of preserved scholarly content and work with archiving agencies to identify material not preserved adequately.

### ***Possible Directions for SP/OCUL***

1. Scholars Portal should work with the PKP PLN to ensure effective archival coverage of Canadian scholarly publishing, including open access publishing, by participating in the PKP PLN and integrating its content into the Scholars Portal TDR.
2. Scholars Portal should work with PKP to develop simple deposit mechanisms from OJS to the Scholars Portal TDR to reduce technical and administrative barriers to the preservation of open access content.
3. OCUL should support the work of the Keepers Registry and Scholars Portal should use tools the Registry is developing to identify at risk scholarly publications by comparing registries of ISSNs to archived holdings.
4. Scholars Portal should explore alternative harvesting technologies being employed by other archiving agencies, such as web archiving, to lower the technology barriers for small journals wishing to be archived in the Scholars Portal TDR.

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<sup>9</sup> <https://pkp.sfu.ca/pkp-lockss/>

<sup>10</sup> <http://thekeepers.org/registry.asp>

## ***Open Access Mandates***

The “Tri-Agency Open Access Policy on Publications” requires that any published research funded by one of the three major Canadian academic research funding agencies (SSHRC, NSERC, CIHR) should be freely accessible within 12 months of publication, either through deposit in an institutional or disciplinary repository or publication in an open access journal.<sup>11</sup> The Policy takes no stand on Gold or Green models of open access, leaving the decision as to which model to use in the hands of the author.<sup>12</sup>

A survey conducted by the OCUL-IR Open Access group revealed that there was a general feeling of increased support for OA since the Tri-Agency mandate had come out, with 14 of seventeen respondents indicating that it had had a direct effect on institutional support. While seven of the 17 respondents had purchased article processing fee memberships, support for Gold OA seems to be declining among OCUL libraries, with a number of institutions planning to end subsidization of these publishing charges for their faculty. With a long history of use of institutional repositories, OCUL libraries are well positioned to support Green models of open access compliance, but questions about the effectiveness of IRs as dissemination and preservation platforms remain. The Academic Preservation Trust in the US uses a collaborative model to aggregate and preserve content from IR’s of member institutions, providing dark archiving and replication services in partnership with DPN.<sup>13</sup>

### *Possible Directions for SP/OCUL*

1. Ensure that open access content in OCUL member IR’s is adequately protected for long term preservation through aggregation and replication at Scholars Portal on a model similar to that used by the APTrust.
2. Explore the legal and logistical issues related to use of Scholars Portal as an institutional repository of first resort for OCUL member libraries lacking IR support.
3. Consider consortial support for key IR software initiatives, such as DSpace and Fedora, through membership in Duraspace.

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<sup>11</sup> <http://www.science.gc.ca/default.asp?lang=En&n=F6765465-1>

<sup>12</sup> "The terms green and gold were coined in 2004. Green Open access is defined as a mode of publishing in non-open access journal but also self-archiving it in an Open Access archive. 'Gold' publishing aims to make articles and information resources open for access by publishing in a journal that is an open access journal or an open access publisher. There is no embargo period before an article is openly accessible. An open access journal may charge authors for making their articles as open access content but it is not true of all Gold OA publishers. From *Concepts of Openness and Open Access* <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002322/232207E.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> <http://academicpreservationtrust.org>

## ***Education and Training***

Increased Involvement in support for scholarly communication has implications for staffing at OCUL libraries and Scholars Portal. Some OCUL libraries support dedicated Scholarly Communication Offices, with librarians dedicated, at least in part, to issues around copyright compliance, publishing support, IR management, and open access. Other libraries combine these duties into more traditional roles including reference and liaison.

### *Possible Directions for SP/OCUL*

1. Explore opportunities for OCUL-sponsored training in areas related to scholarly communications
2. Identify key international advocacy and education groups such as the Library Publishing Coalition and secure OCUL membership in these groups to open up training and other opportunities for member libraries. Focus on issues surrounding repositories, the evolution of article-level metrics, and campus-based publishing initiatives. At present, nine OCUL libraries are members of SPARC, and CARL is also a consortial member. No OCUL libraries are currently members of the Library Publishing Coalition.

## ***New Forms of Scholarly Communication***

While there is not always a clear line separating library efforts that fit under the umbrella of “scholarly communications” from those that do not, some examples of what are considered today to be scholarly communications work include:

- Algoma’s [Copyright Portal](#), which includes information on the AUCC model license, fair dealing guidelines, and A/V and public performance rights FAQs
- McMaster’s [Sherman Centre for Digital Scholarship](#), which is located inside McMaster’s Mills Library. Its aims, among many other goals, include “providing a framework of research support for digital scholarship that optimizes library/researcher resource sharing,” as well as “promoting and disseminating McMaster University e-research through archival and access initiatives that interface with global e-research partners.”
- Carlton’s MacOdrum Library partners with the university to offer the [CURIE OA Fund](#), which helps authors cover article processing charges associated with publication in open access journals
- The University of Toronto Scarborough’s [Digital Scholarship Unit](#) provides consultation and development support to the UTSC community

While this list is not comprehensive, it does give an idea of the breadth of activity now included under the heading “scholarly communications”. Likewise, new models of digital scholarship are



leading to new assessments of what constitutes a scholarly publication. The formal models of the article and the monograph, while still dominant, are making room for less formal outputs, including databases, online exhibits, and even research data itself, which, it is argued, becomes meaningful only through a kind of curation and publication which is in turn scholarly in nature.

Since so many OCUL libraries are already involved individually in the support of formal scholarly publishing on their campuses, it might make more sense, in terms of building new capacity, for Scholars Portal to focus on new service developments in support of less traditional forms of scholarship — for instance exhibits and special collections built using tools like [Omeka](#), [Neatline](#), or [Gephi](#). Likewise, it might be useful for Scholars Portal concentrate its efforts on new publishing models, such as those demonstrated by publishing cooperatives, and on alternative funding models, such as Knowledge Unlatched, Luminos Press, or the Open Access Publishing Cooperative Study. There is case to be made for Scholars Portals' involvement on both the micro and the macro level, but with such a breadth of possible activities, and with much work already being done at both the local and the national level, it is important to consider how regional consortial strategies can support, expand on, or even shape this work.

#### *Possible Directions for SP/OCUL*

1. Survey OCUL members about interest in consortial support for tools for collection building and exhibit management
2. Identify new roles for Scholars Portal in aggregating and archiving non-traditional outputs of scholarly communication, including websites and social media conversations

#### **Conclusions**

A number of potential areas of growth for OCUL and Scholars Portal have been highlighted in the previous pages. While some action in almost all of these areas should be considered essential in the next five years, whether that action is most appropriately undertaken at the local, regional, or national level is something that requires careful consideration . Many OCUL schools already have robust digital scholarship support services, and while they might welcome opportunities to share experience and practices with peers, they may not be “in the market” for new shared services coming out of Scholars Portal. Shared regional services are sometimes useful simply as a means to kickstart local initiatives, which end up replacing them; sometimes shared services take hold and grow into national services, even generating revenue for OCUL. Context is critical in considering all of this, and it is hoped that this paper provides some basis for discussion of these and other opportunities facing the consortium in the next few years.



## Helpful Readings

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