OAPEN-NL - Open Access publication of Academic books in the Netherlands

Project description

During a two-year period, at least 50 academic books covering a range of different disciplines will be made freely accessible via the internet immediately following publication. Academic publishers will receive a fee for this. The project, OAPEN-NL, has been established in order to gain experience of this new form of book publication and collect data on the effects of enabling Open Access.

Background and research design

Despite the increased options for enabling public access to information, the availability of book publications remains fragmented and limited, especially in the Humanities and Social Sciences. This means that there is an imbalance in the availability of academic literature between articles and books. The reduced purchase by libraries of monographs has resulted in a significant fall in the average circulation of academic books despite the fact that the number of books actually published in this period has increased. As a result, the dissemination and accessibility of academic information has become inadequate.

By publishing digitally in Open Access, an effort is being made to improve the dissemination and accessibility of academic information. Both in the Netherlands and internationally, there is an increased focus on Open Access to the results of academic research. The efforts made in this area have so far primarily concerned academic articles and there has been very little focus on academic books. The aim of this project is to put right the current deficiencies in terms of Open Access for academic books and by extension also for the Humanities and Social Sciences.

OAPEN-NL builds upon the results achieved in the European OAPEN project ‘Open Access Publishing in European Networks’, launched in September 2008. The OAPEN project aims to develop a long-term European approach to achieving the supply, visibility and usability of Open Access monographs. It also intends to boost the creation of new publications through the development of forward-looking methods of publication.

The general models and protocols developed within the OAPEN project are being assessed in OAPEN-NL in terms of their specific practicability in the Dutch context in order to gain knowledge and experience of both the publication and funding of academic books in Open Access. The project will be implemented in collaboration with a range of academic publishers and academic institutions in the Netherlands. OAPEN-NL covers the whole publication cycle and evaluates the results. This will result in a public report including recommendations and guidelines for a new way of publication for Open Access monographs.

The results from the project will be shared with similar national projects in other European countries in order to develop international recommendations for the Open Access publication of academic books.

Aim

The primary aim of the pilot is to test a publication model for Open Access books and to create transparency into the costs and procedures involved. This with the ultimate objective of increasing the visibility, accessibility and impact of academic publications.

The specific objectives are:
To delineate the models developed in the OAPEN project in the Dutch context, test these in practice and evaluate the results in order to develop a practical framework for the Open Access publication of academic books in the Netherlands.

The issuing of a public report with recommendations and guidelines for the publication of Open Access monographs, including quality standards and a legal framework (peer review procedures, access requirements).

Enlisting the involvement of stakeholders in academic communication in the introduction of Open Access publication of academic books and generating more widespread support.

Conducting research into experiences with, and the advantages of, the Open Access publication of academic books and publishing the results in the academic community.

Sharing the results of OAPEN-NL with similar projects abroad, in order to help promote standardisation and international acceptance.

Extending the context of Open Access articles to Open Access publications (including books) in order to rectify the current deficiencies with regard to academic books (and by extension large sections of the Humanities and Social Sciences) in terms of Open Access.

**Organisation**

OAPEN-NL is being implemented in collaboration with academic institutions and academic publishers. The project partners are NWO (Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research), KNAW (Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences), VSNU (Association of Universities in the Netherlands), UKB (Dutch Association of the University Libraries and National Library of the Netherlands), the SURF Foundation and OAPEN (via the coordinator Amsterdam University Press (UvA)). OAPEN-NL is open to all academic publishers. The task allocation is as follows:

- **Steering Committee**: NWO, OAPEN, SURF – ultimately responsible for the project
- **Project Group**: NWO, OAPEN, SURF – project management and implementation
- **Selection Committee**: three members under the chairmanship of the chair of the OAPEN Scientific Board – an independent committee ultimately responsible for the evaluation of publishers and publications
- **Monitoring Committee**: NWO, OAPEN, SURF, VSNU, KNAW, UKB – responsible for receiving and discussing reports, evaluating results and determining guidelines and recommendations for Open Access book publications.

**Funding**

OAPEN-NL is being funded by means of a grant from the PRIMA funds (ICT Policy Agenda Implementation Programme) and a contribution from NWO. The NWO contribution will be used to set up a temporary publication fund for Open Access book publications. The management and administration of the publication fund will be the responsibility of NWO. Authors can approach their publishers to apply for funding from the publication fund. The maximum contribution for Open Access books has been set at €5,000.

**Application procedure**

Academic publishers can apply for Open Access publication projects. This involves the use of an application form on which information about the relevant publication is provided. Applications will be assessed according to criteria relating to quality (peer-review), access and technical preconditions.
These criteria will be submitted in advance to and approved by a Selection Committee. This committee will check the selection of publications based on a report of all applications. In the event of ambiguity, the overrepresentation of individual publishers or an excessive number of manuscripts, applications will be submitted in advance to the Selection Committee. New applications for OA publications will be processed up to three months before the end of the project period.

**Criteria and conditions**

All academic publishers are eligible to take part in OAPEN-NL. Academic books (peer reviewed monographs and collections) that are made available immediately after publication are eligible for a contribution from the publication fund. All academic disciplines are eligible to participate, but priority is accorded to results from research funded in part by the NWO. OA editions will be included in the OAPEN Library on a non-exclusive basis. Efforts will be made to include a wide representation of (Dutch) academic publishers, participation involving several titles from the publisher and a wide spread across academic disciplines.

Publishers must be willing to cooperate with the research into the effects of enabling Open Access and provide information on the costs of publication and the sales figures for other editions. Information about individual titles will be handled confidentially and will not be made public. The research into the effects of enabling OA access will focus on a control group of similar publications from participating publishers which have not been made available in Open Access.

**Period**

The project period runs from 1 October 2010 until 1 October 2012. The publication fund will be open to applications during the period from 1 January 2011 until 1 July 2012.

**Dissemination**

The approved publications will be included in the project and placed in the OAPEN Library. In this, the OAPEN Library will operate not as an exclusive publication channel, but as a central repository for all participating publications. In addition, publications will preferably also be made available with 100% open access via Google Book Search. Publications must be issued with a Creative Commons licence.

**Work packages**

The OAPEN-NL project is divided into six work packages:

**WP1: Project Management**

Project management focuses on the overall coordination of activities, the coordination of work packages, scheduling and organisation of meetings, monitoring results and costs, compiling reports. This work package also includes technical management.

**WP2: Providing support to users; Guidelines and procedures for publications**

During the first two months of the research, a number of guidelines and protocols will be established, including calculation models for OA books, quality requirements for OA book publications, the legal framework for Open Access and guidelines for submission and application procedures for publishers.

**WP3: User survey and evaluation**

As soon as the publication fund is opened, the Project Group will begin evaluating its use. At three separate points during the project, progress will be evaluated (two interim evaluations and the final evaluation).
WP4: Quality management and selection
Applications will be assessed in line with pre-determined criteria approved by the Selection Committee. Publishers and authors can also submit an objection to the Selection Committee in the event of rejections.

WP5: Management of publication fund and financial reporting
The Project Group is responsible for the project administration, but NWO will take responsibility for the establishment and management of the publication fund. The interim and final evaluations include financial reports. During the first two months, the financial guidelines for applications and reports will be drafted. The publication fund will also be established at this time.

WP6: Dissemination
Publishers and authors will be provided with information throughout the entire project. A central information point will be established in the form of a website. The project will culminate in a Seminar, organised by the SURF foundation.

More information and contact

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