

# An Open Book: launching a library-based open access books hosting service

Rebecca Wojturska, University of Edinburgh  
rebecca.wojturska@ed.ac.uk | <http://journals.ed.ac.uk>

## Background

- Library & University Collections already run a journal hosting service using Open Journal Systems (OJS)
- Not a publisher (no responsibility for peer review, production, etc.)
- Focus on hosting, support and providing publishing expertise to empower others to publish
- Service is provided free of charge to staff and students of the University of Edinburgh
- Small charges for external partners which only serve to cover costs. Don't make profit
- Service board was built to help shape the service
- We have one full-time member of staff and one day a week of tech support

## Conclusions and Recommendations

- OMP is intuitive and particularly useful if you use OJS already
- Don't feel the need to launch with a huge portfolio – a few key titles will be enough to draw people in
- Be clear about your mission and strategy
- Talk to your fellow librarians, academics, researchers and students to determine their needs. Shape the service around this!
- Invest in publishing and tech expertise
- Plan way in advance as there might be setbacks
- Remember it is better to launch with a finalised high-quality service than to rush something out!



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## Why launch this service?

- Led by academic demand (e.g. staff publishing OA books via WordPress etc)
- Another step in the library's commitment to investing in OA
- Rising costs of e-textbooks
- Academics can tailor textbooks to courses at no cost to students
- Increasing online-based research
- Decided to use Open Monograph Press



## Promoting the Service

- Email existing journal editors and relevant contacts
- Liaise with Academic Support Librarians
- Already offer ISBNs – can promote to these users
- Utilise web pages & word of mouth



## Roadblocks

- Timeline much longer than anticipated
- Incentivising academics to use a hosting service and not a publisher (raising awareness of benefits while respecting all routes)
- Open Access mythbusting: quality assurance and ensuring industry-standard policies, ethics and content



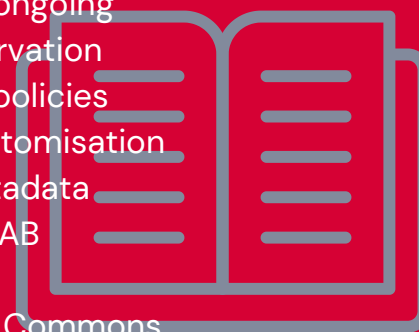
## The Future

- Continue to develop service strategy and policies
- Promote and grow the service
- Indexing e.g. DOAB
- Seek further opportunities for involvement in teaching and learning
- Gather more feedback and grow service according to user need



## What We Offer

- We offer:
  - Books hosting platform, ongoing technical support, preservation
  - Training, guides, advice, policies
  - Initial set-up, limited customisation
  - ISBNs, chapter DOIs, metadata
  - Indexing support e.g. DOAB
  - Annual reporting
- Fully Open Access, Creative Commons licences, no APCs
- Diamond OA = more inclusive publishing



## Feedback from Service Users

"We chose the University's new open ebook platform for convenience and because we believe the support offered by the service will be valuable in helping us to create our ebook."

"The new ebook platform will represent another step in the University's commitment to open knowledge, open access and open education and will help the University achieve its vision to share our knowledge and make the world a better place."

"This service is particularly timely as the University is facing rapidly increasing etextbook costs as it moves away from print materials in response to the COVID pandemic and longer-term trends in academic publishing."

"I hope this service will be a valuable first step in enabling the University to shift towards the use of open textbooks, benefiting the University by reducing textbook costs, benefiting staff by providing access to easily customisable open textbooks, and benefiting students by providing free, high quality digital learning materials."

"OMP looked very flexible and I like the way it can accommodate a wide range of formats. The downside is having to generate all the different formats manually, which may be a barrier to some colleagues using the service."

