OPERAS

open scholarly communication in the european
research area for social sciences and humanities

OPERAS White Paper

Collaborative models for OA book publishers

Business Models Special Interest Group

This is the White Paper of the **Business Models Special Interest Group**.

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CONTENT

1.   INTRODUCTION

OPERAS is the European Research Infrastructure for the development of open scholarly communication in the social sciences and humanities. In 2018, the OPERAS Business Models Special Interest Group (OPERAS, 2021) published a white paper on Business Models for Open Access (Speicher, et al., 2018). The report described the landscape of open access (OA) publishing at the time, and identified multiple approaches to open access publishing. It looked at the business models adopted by OPERAS members as well as emerging models in the USA and at a national level in some European countries. The paper identified a large range of models, often particular to individual countries, institutions or circumstances, and with little overall cohesion and no central sources of funding.

Since that report was compiled, there have been significant developments in the OA publishing world, and an increasing focus on OA monographs in particular. A number of new, funded studies and reviews have been published or are underway, all seeking to identify ways to support an increase in OA for monographs. Examples include two projects from the Educopia Institute in the USA, the OA Ebook Data Trust project, developing a pilot data trust for open access ebook usage funded by Andrew W Mellon foundation (Educopia Institute, 2021a) and the next generation library publishing project funded by the Arcadia Fund (Educopia Institute, 2021b). In the UK, the Research England and Arcadia funded Community-led Open Publication Infrastructures for Monographs (COPIM) project has published a number of reports including one on open access revenue models (Penier, Eve & Grady, 2020) and a COPIM/OPERAS landscape study on academic libraries and open access books in Europe (Morka & Gatti, 2021). Both COPIM reports have influenced some of the survey questions in this white paper. The OPERAS-P project was also influential in the design and direction of the survey (Avanço et al., 2021), although the final report was published after the OPERAS business models survey had closed, as was a report on collaborative funding models (Gerakopoulou, Penier & Deville, 2021).

After a relatively slow start compared to journal policies, there are now a number of existing and emerging OA monograph policies, which are leading to an increased focus on business models. These include Plan S principle 7 on plans for OA monographs (Plan S, 2021), the UKRI Open Access Policy review, which is expected to include OA monographs for the first time (UKRI, 2021), the Dutch National Plan Open Science which promotes open access for scholarly formats other than journal articles (van Wezenbeek et al., 2017; NWO, 2020, Bosman et al., 2021) and the extension of the open access mandate to books in projects funded by the European Commission in Horizon Europe (Tóth-Czifra, 2021; European Commission, 2021). Emerging policies, particularly from Plan S, have also helped to focus attention on infrastructure (see Mounier, Sondervan & Stone, 2021).

In addition, new business models are also being explored. For example, 'Opening the future', a collective subscription model for open access books from the COPIM project (Birkbeck, University of London, n.d.a), MIT Press' Direct to open, a collective action open access business model for scholarly books (MIT Press, 2021), and the Sustainable History Monograph Pilot (SHMP) at the University of North Carolina Press funded by Andrew W Mellon foundation (Sherer, 2020).

Given this dynamic landscape, it was clear that the original OPERAS Business Models Special Interest Group white paper needed to be brought up to date to reflect the current situation. It was also felt that a more in-depth understanding was needed of European monograph publishers' current business

models for open access, their challenges, and their views on how infrastructure for open access monographs could be improved.

As noted above, the recent COPIM report on revenue models (Penier, Eve & Grady, 2020) identified a variety of models used for open access books. Alongside these models, the OPERAS survey puts a special emphasis on the idea of collaboration approaches, relying on sharing of information, funds, and infrastructures (Adema & Moore, 2018). Research undertaken by the OPERAS-P WP6.2 on Innovative Business Models for OA books (Gatti, & Morka, 2021) has shown that there is significant interest coming from the community in finding ways of sustaining OA books, without necessarily going through the book processing charge (BPC) model. Workshops held in the summer of 2020 and spring of 2021 with librarians from Germany, Poland, the Nordic countries and Southern Europe, and with European publishers (Morka, 2020a-d; Mosterd, 2021), have revealed that these stakeholders are exploring new ways of funding OA books publication and share interest in collaborative models.

OPERAS wished to understand more about how the social sciences and humanities (SSH) publishing community applies or could apply collaborative models for open access books, and what issues it encounters when dealing with them. We further wanted to understand what challenges publishers faced when engaging with or thinking about engaging in collaborative models for OA books. Are there enough funds, enough human resources? Are relevant infrastructures in place? What kind of support is needed?

These survey results provide a more comprehensive insight into how OPERAS can make a tangible change and best support the community in building sustainable paths of transition towards collaborative models for open access books. This white paper presents some early observations from the preliminary analysis of the findings. Data will be further explored and inform recommendations for OPERAS in the next version of this paper, which is expected towards the end of 2021.

2.   METHODOLOGY

The survey was designed to serve two core aims:

1. To further our understanding of the scholarly publishing landscape and of the challenges that publishers face in the context of publishing OA monographs
2. To identify main trends (including opportunities and challenges) and the knowledge of collaborative funding and infrastructure models in OA publishing in SSH.

The survey targeted academic book publishers who published books in SSH (but did not need to specialise in these disciplines). It was open between 16 February and 14 April 2021, and was disseminated to the intended audience via the OPERAS blog (Morka, & Schulte, 2021), targeted emails (when possible in the national languages of the publishers), and social media. All questions apart from the first one (the name of the publisher) were optional. While we believe that this encouraged a greater number of participants, it also means that it might be difficult to compare the answers to individual questions in the full analysis, as the number of responses varied. Where appropriate, the number of responses to each question discussed is indicated.

The survey defined books as long form scholarly monographs typically written by one or more authors, edited collections featuring chapters written by a number of authors (including edited collections arising from a conference and published as a book in its own right) and scholarly editions (the critical representation of primary sources). Textbooks (i.e. books written specifically for the undergraduate students market), conference proceedings (i.e. reproduction of the proceedings), and trade books (i.e. written specifically for the non-academic market) were out of scope of the study.

This white paper will give an early indication of the trends regarding collaborative models, we will then follow this up with a full analysis of both challenges and collaborative models in a later version of this white paper. We will not draw any conclusions from the first round of analysis, instead we will conclude this draft of the report with a series of questions, which will be used to target further analysis. This will better inform us during the full analysis. A full set of questions asked in the survey are available (Stone, 2021). Once a full analysis has taken place, we will make an anonymised set of the raw data available.

2.1   LIMITATIONS TO THE METHODOLOGY

The geographical scope of the survey focused on countries within Europe (primarily the European Union) but there was also one response from the USA. The aim was to collect a variety of experiences but we realise that the number of participants from each country (see Figure 1) was too small to draw significant conclusions on differences between various national contexts. Furthermore, although all academic publishers with experience with SSH publications were encouraged to participate, it is fair to assume that most of the respondents had at least some level of interest in OA books, meaning that we might not have captured the sentiments of organisations that were in no way concerned about moving to, or at least experimenting with, open access. Moreover, collaborative business models are a new phenomenon that seemed novel to many of the participants so it would have been difficult to make any definite judgements about the publishing landscape in this regard.

3.   ANALYSIS

The analysis in this version of the white paper will concentrate on the second set of aims outlined in the methodology: To identify main trends (including opportunities and challenges) and the knowledge of collaborative funding and infrastructure models in OA publishing in the SSH. Collaborative models for open access books are based on the idea of sharing: funds, information, and infrastructure. They may involve membership programmes, where libraries, library consortia, etc. support the cost of publishing open access books (for example, Open Book Publishers), they may operate on the idea of library crowdfunding where an intermediate platform connects many purchasers with the option to 'unlock' or 'unlatch' a title (for example, Knowledge Unlatched), or be based on the idea of a coalition of publishers, working collaboratively (such as ScholarLed). This version of the white paper concentrates on the following set of questions:

> 3. In which country are you based?

> 4. In general terms, which one of the following 'publisher types' would you classify yourself as? (Tick all that apply)

> 21. Is your press familiar with some of the existing collaborative funding models for OA books?

> 22. Does your press currently engage in collaborative models for open access books?

> 23. Thinking about the transition to open access with particular reference to a collaborative model for open access books, how helpful would you find the following support?

> 24. Does your press currently engage in collaborative models for shared infrastructure?

> 25. Looking at the options below, which parts of the open access book publishing process would benefit most from having shared infrastructure? (Tick all that apply)

In order to show the geographical spread of respondents and the 'publisher type' responding, we have included information on the country where the respondents were based and their 'publisher type'. However, this draft will not include any cross analysis based on 'publisher type' (Question 4) and the questions analysed below. The full analysis will investigate whether this is possible or (as described in the methodology) decide that the sample size is too small to make any meaningful conclusions.

3.1   GEOGRAPHICAL SPREAD OF RESPONDENTS

The survey received a total of 77 responses. Figure 1 summarises the number of participants by country. Publishers from 14 EU countries responded to the survey, plus five responses from the UK (one did not indicate the country, but we were able to identify this from the name of the press), one from Norway, and one from the USA.

The sample is relatively small, but we can deduce that the survey has managed to achieve a balanced and geographically dispersed representation of European publishers of different types (see below). It appears that the survey was successful in attracting respondents from European countries outside of the current OPERAS network, such as the Czech Republic, Estonia and Finland. This is likely to be a result of the combination of disseminating by the local networks of OPERAS members, but also through SPARC Europe, the Association of European University Presses and UKSG eNews.
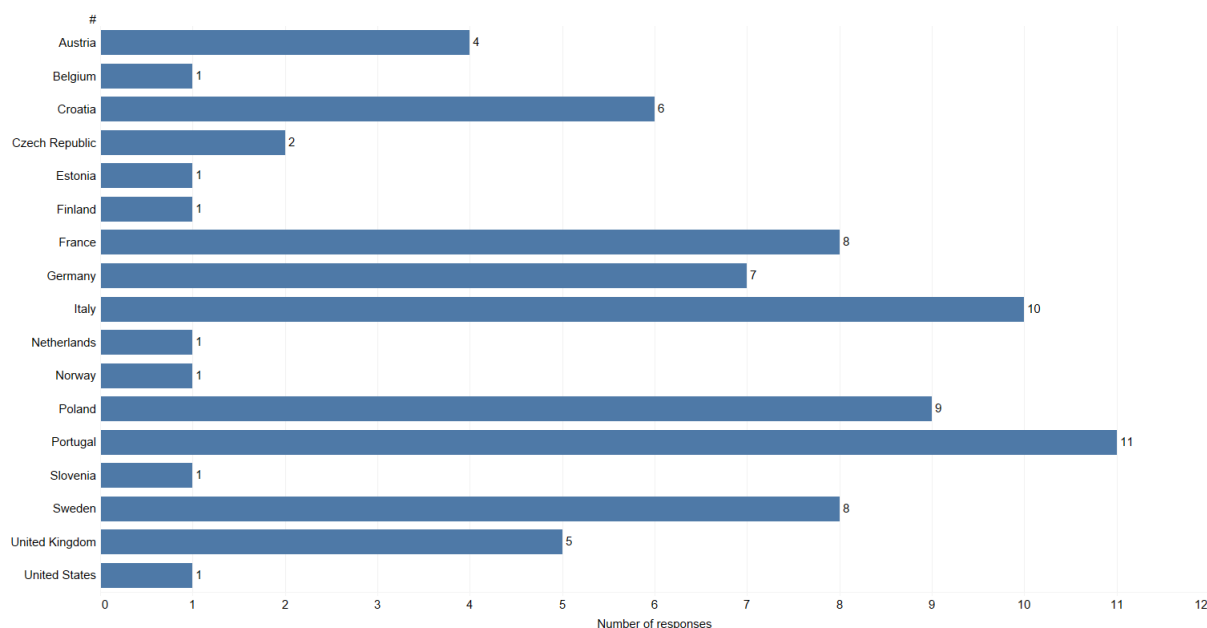

Figure 1. Number of survey participants by country.

At the time of writing, OPERAS had a membership of 53 organisations in 16 countries (see Figure 2). Some countries with OPERAS representatives did not return any responses, i.e. Greece, Luxembourg and Serbia. However, it was not appropriate for all OPERAS members to complete the survey.

OPERAS Members

OPERAS gathers 53 organizations from 16 countries and is led by a 10 members Executive Assembly. OPERAS is coordinated from France by OpenEdition and Huma-Num.
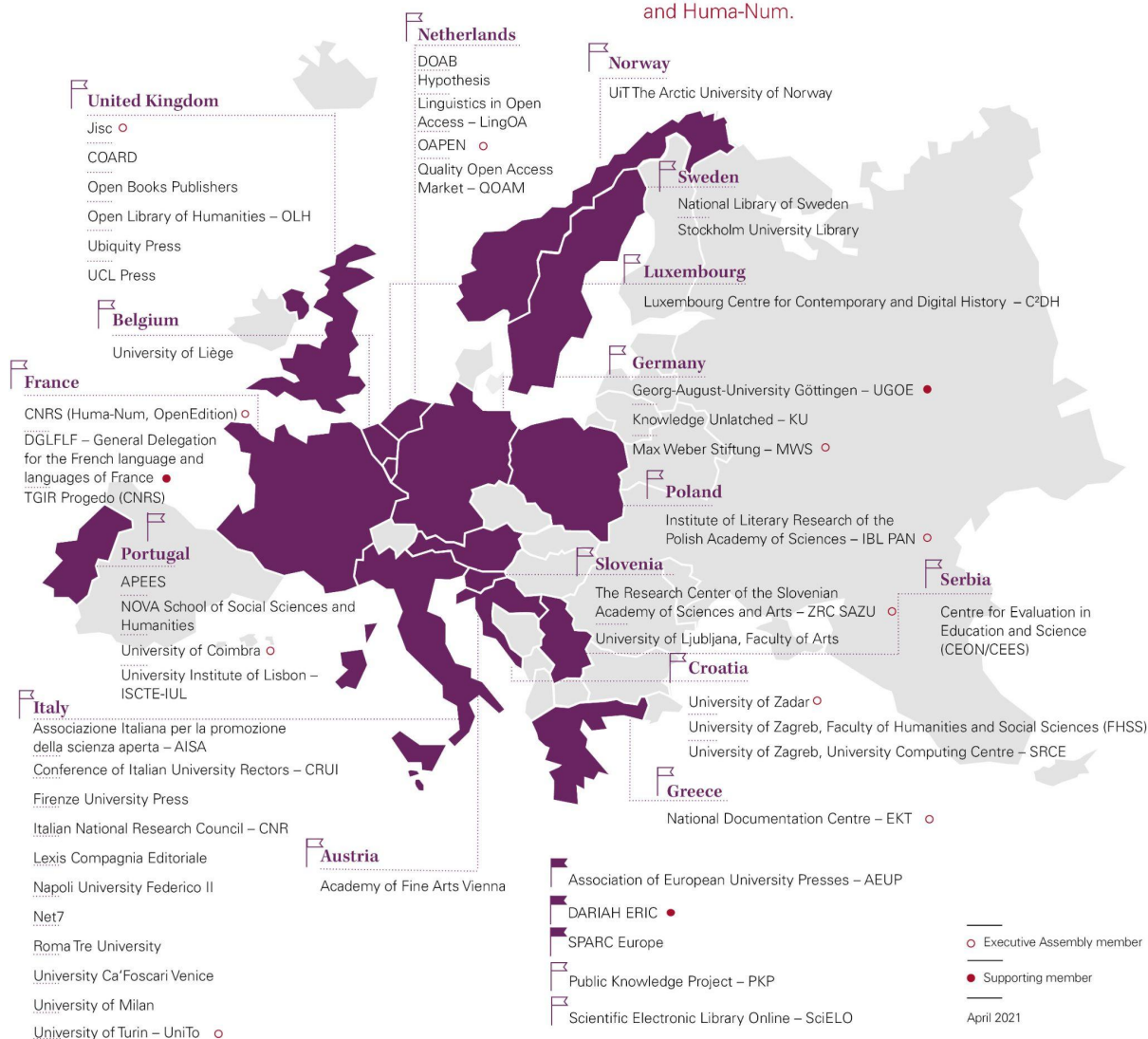
Netherlands
DOAB
Hypothesis
Linguistics in Open Access – LingOA
OAPEN ○
Quality Open Access Market – QOAM

Norway
UiT The Arctic University of Norway

United Kingdom
Jisc ○
COARD
Open Books Publishers
Open Library of Humanities – OLH
Ubiquity Press
UCL Press

Sweden
National Library of Sweden
Stockholm University Library

Luxembourg
Luxembourg Centre for Contemporary and Digital History – C²DH

Belgium
University of Liège

Germany
Georg-August-University Göttingen – UGOE ●
Knowledge Unlatched – KU
Max Weber Stiftung – MWS ○

France
CNRS (Huma-Num, OpenEdition) ○
DGLFLF – General Delegation for the French language and languages of France ●
TGIR Progedo (CNRS)

Poland
Institute of Literary Research of the Polish Academy of Sciences – IBL PAN ○

Portugal
APEES
NOVA School of Social Sciences and Humanities
University of Coimbra ○
University Institute of Lisbon – ISCTE-IUL

Slovenia
The Research Center of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts – ZRC SAZU ○
University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Arts

Serbia
Centre for Evaluation in Education and Science (CEON/CEES)

Croatia
University of Zadar ○
University of Zagreb, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences (FHSS)
University of Zagreb, University Computing Centre – SRCE

Italy
Associazione Italiana per la promozione della scienza aperta – AISA
Conference of Italian University Rectors – CRUI
Firenze University Press
Italian National Research Council – CNR
Lexis Compagnia Editoriale
Napoli University Federico II
Net7
Roma Tre University
University Ca'Foscari Venice
University of Milan
University of Turin – UniTo ○

Austria
Academy of Fine Arts Vienna

Greece
National Documentation Centre – EKT ○

Association of European University Presses – AEUP
DARIAH ERIC ●
SPARC Europe
Public Knowledge Project – PKP
Scientific Electronic Library Online – SciELO

○ Executive Assembly member
● Supporting member

April 2021

Figure 2. OPERAS membership (June 2021).

3.2 CLASSIFICATION OF 'PUBLISHER TYPES'

Respondents were asked to select from a selection of 'publisher types', which they felt best described their press. It was possible for respondents to select more than one option (See Figure 3).

All 77 respondents answered this question, 88 responses were received in total. The most common answer was 'university press' (34), followed by 'publishing department in an academic institution' (18) and 'commercial publisher' (13). 'University press', 'publishing department based in academic institution' and 'library based publisher' were often chosen in combination.

Of the 13 responses for 'commercial publisher', only two might be described as large international commercial publishing houses. We can therefore conclude that the survey was successful in attracting responses from smaller commercial European publishing houses.
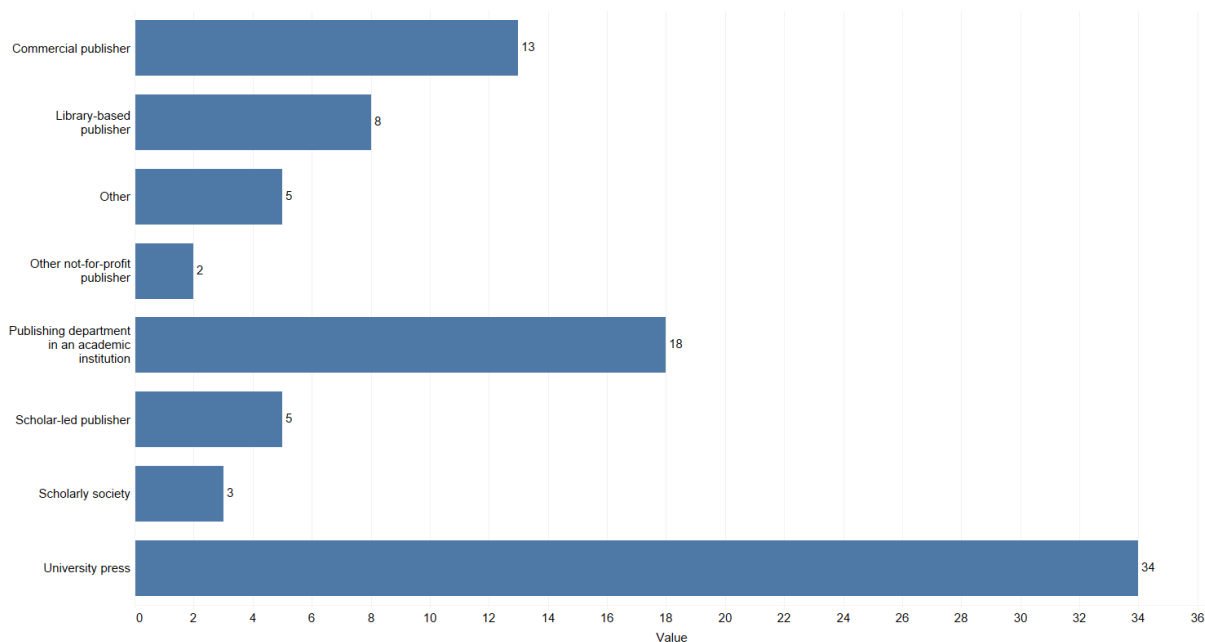
Figure 3. Classification of 'publisher types by survey respondent.

Five respondents selected 'other' and provided further details; they can be described as an intermediary, a publishing portal, a research organization and two publishers, an independent academic press which mixes "funded publishing" with commercial distribution and a publisher created by three research institutes.

In analysis of the collaborative models below, it was found that one of the 'library-based publishers' did not publish books, although we do not know whether they intend to publish books in the future, two of the 'other' respondents, the intermediary and the research organisation are not directly related to book publishing. Their results have not been removed from this analysis, this will be reviewed in the next draft of this white paper. Analysis by country and publisher type will also be undertaken in the next stage. However, due to the low number of responses from some countries, this analysis will most likely not produce any significant results and will be purely for background information.

3.3   COLLABORATIVE FUNDING MODELS

We asked respondents how familiar they were with existing collaborative funding models for books. Five models were explicitly listed:

- **Open Book Publishers' (OBP) Library Membership Programme**
  OBP was founded in 2008. The Library Membership Programme helps to support OA publishing from OBP. The membership includes discounts on print purchases (Open Book Publishers, 2021)
- **Knowledge Unlatched 'KU Select programme'**
  Publishers are invited to submit frontlist and backlist titles that they would like to publish in OA. Titles for KU Select are then chosen through the KU Selection Committee. Libraries are encouraged to pledge to collectively fund the unlatching process. The 8th round of pledging will start in 2022 (Knowledge Unlatched, 2021)

- **ScholarLed**

  ScholarLed is a consortium of five scholar-led, not-for-profit, OA book publishers. Formed in 2018, it comprises Mattering Press, meson press, Open Book Publishers, Open Humanities Press and punctum books. It seeks to "develop powerful, practical ways for small-scale, scholar-led Open Access presses to grow and flourish in a publishing landscape that is changing rapidly" (ScholarLed, n.d.)

- **Lever Press Platinum OA model**

  Formed in 2015, Lever Press was born out of an initiative of the Oberlin Group to study how the libraries of liberal arts colleges could offer a new way for authors to publish (Lever Press, 2021)

- **OpenEdition Freemium**

  Launched in 2011 by OpenEdition, a French public infrastructure dedicated to open scholarly communication in the SSH, OpenEdition Freemium aims to support OA journals and books publishing financial sustainability through a combination of free access to content and licensing premium services to libraries. Currently, the programme includes 8,749 OA books from 120 publishers, 128 libraries and generates revenue of around Euro 600,000 per year. (OpenEdition, n.d.).

Two of the above are open to presses to join as members (KU Select and OpenEdition), one is a consortium of scholar-led presses, and two are publisher-led library membership programmes (OBP and Lever Press).

Figure 4 shows that the majority of respondents are not familiar with the collaborative funding models mentioned in the survey. On reflection, it may have been appropriate to add an explanatory note for each model, i.e. explaining what they were and whether they were open to publishers to join as members. However, there was a definition in the opening to this part of the survey and it is debatable whether further definition would have affected the results. Another explanation may stem from the maturity of models, with some being quite recent, and some are already well established (as noted above).

Further research is required to follow up on the lack of familiarity with these collaborative models. Collaborative arrangements can take many forms, and understanding the precise nature of each one and its potential application to an individual press can be time-consuming and confusing. OPERAS could play a role in providing resources that list and describe different models and how presses can make use of them.
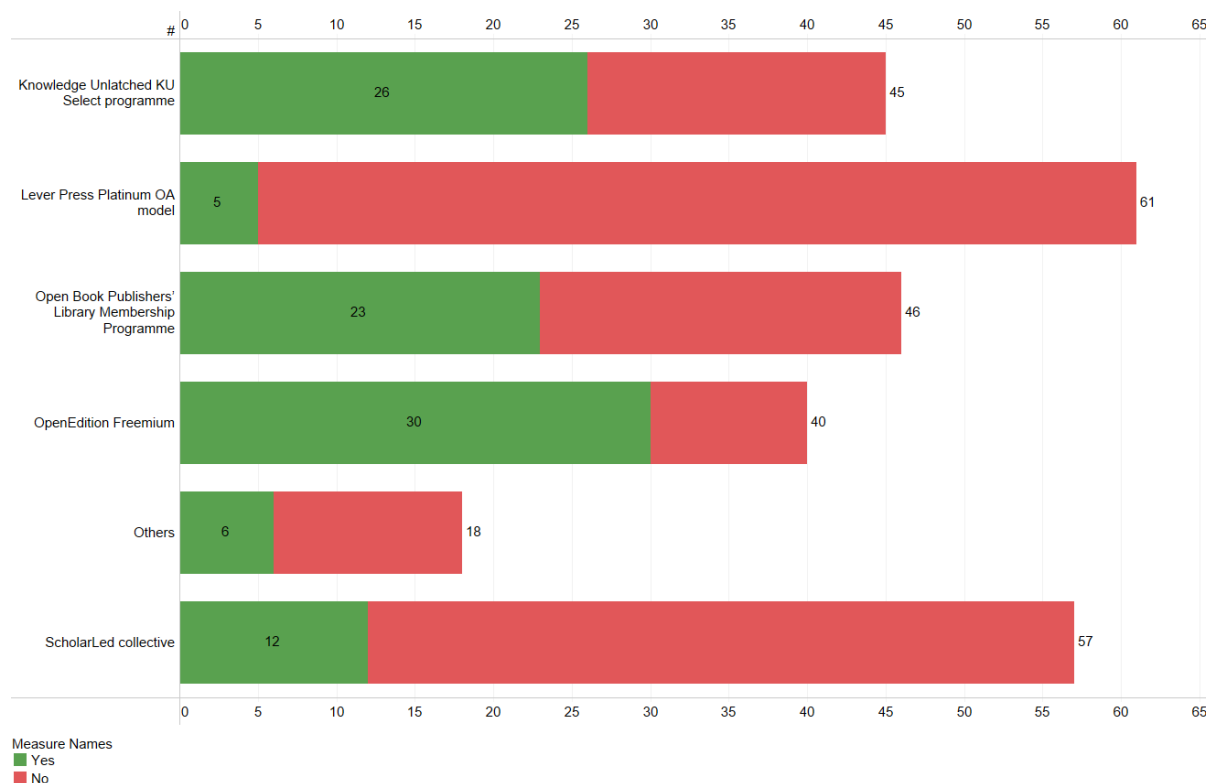
Figure 4. Familiarity of presses with some of the existing collaborative funding models for OA books.

Six respondents selected 'other' and these have been listed below for information. The survey was clear in setting a specific set of questions dedicated to collaborative funding, and another set dedicated to collaborative infrastructures, and there was a definition of each at the beginning of each section of the questionnaire. Despite this, most of these additions can be viewed more as shared infrastructures, rather than collaborative funding models. However, it appears likely that there was some level of misunderstanding of the definitions. OPERAS could therefore engage further with the OA book publishing community in Europe to encourage a broader understanding of the models available.

- **Directory of Open Access Books (DOAB)**
  DOAB is a community-driven discovery service that indexes and provides access to scholarly, peer-reviewed open access books and helps users to find trusted open access book publishers. It is therefore not strictly speaking a collaborative open access books publishing model (OAPEN, 2021)
- **Community-led Open Publication Infrastructures for Monographs (COPIM) project**
  COPIM is an international partnership of researchers, universities, librarians, open access book publishers and infrastructure providers. It is building community-owned, open systems and infrastructures to enable open access book publishing to flourish. Funded by Research England and Arcadia, a charitable fund of Lisbet Rausing and Peter Baldwin, it is currently piloting and researching a number of different collaborative models (COPIM, 2021)
- **SciELO**
  SciELO is a bibliographic database, digital library, and cooperative electronic publishing model of OA journals. SciELO was created to meet the scientific communication needs of developing countries and provides an efficient way to increase visibility and access to scientific literature. It is therefore not strictly speaking a collaborative OA books publishing model (SciELO, n.d.)

- **Open Library of Humanities (OLH)**
  OLH is an open access journals publishing platform that is funded and governed by a library membership model that it operates itself. It is therefore a good example of a publisher that uses one of the varieties of collaborative publishing. However, OLH does not publish books (Birkbeck, University of London, n.d.b)
- **Language Science Press**
  An open access scholar-led publisher. It represents a good example of a single publisher whose activities have been supported by a third-party collaborative funding model (Language Science Press, n.d.).

One respondent commented that some universities subsidize OA publishing, although it is difficult to say whether this is subsidy of a press or an infrastructure and whether this is an example of collaborative funding. Another respondent noted that "since we publish in partnership with [another press] and are mainly funded by our institution, the questions above didn't seem relevant. The question below is hard to answer as the University contributes by way of a special fund for Open Access books, which might be called a 'collaborative model', but I don't suppose that's what's meant here?" It is worth noting that publishing with another press could be seen as a collaborative model, just as publishing with KU would be seen as collaborative.

Respondents were then asked whether they currently engaged in collaborative models for open access books. Of the 77 respondents to the survey, 21 reported that they did engage in collaborative models, 51 did not currently engage and five skipped the question. Of those that did engage, 14 gave further information on the nature of a collaborative model that they employed. Not all responses cited examples, the majority (seven) reported working with Knowledge Unlatched. OpenEdition was mentioned twice and Kriterium once.

Presses that indicated engagement with collaborative models for open access books were asked a follow up question about the challenges they faced in a number of areas. Not every respondent answered each section, the total responses are shown in Figure 5. Three respondents selected 'don't know' for the option 'other', their responses have not been shown in the figure.

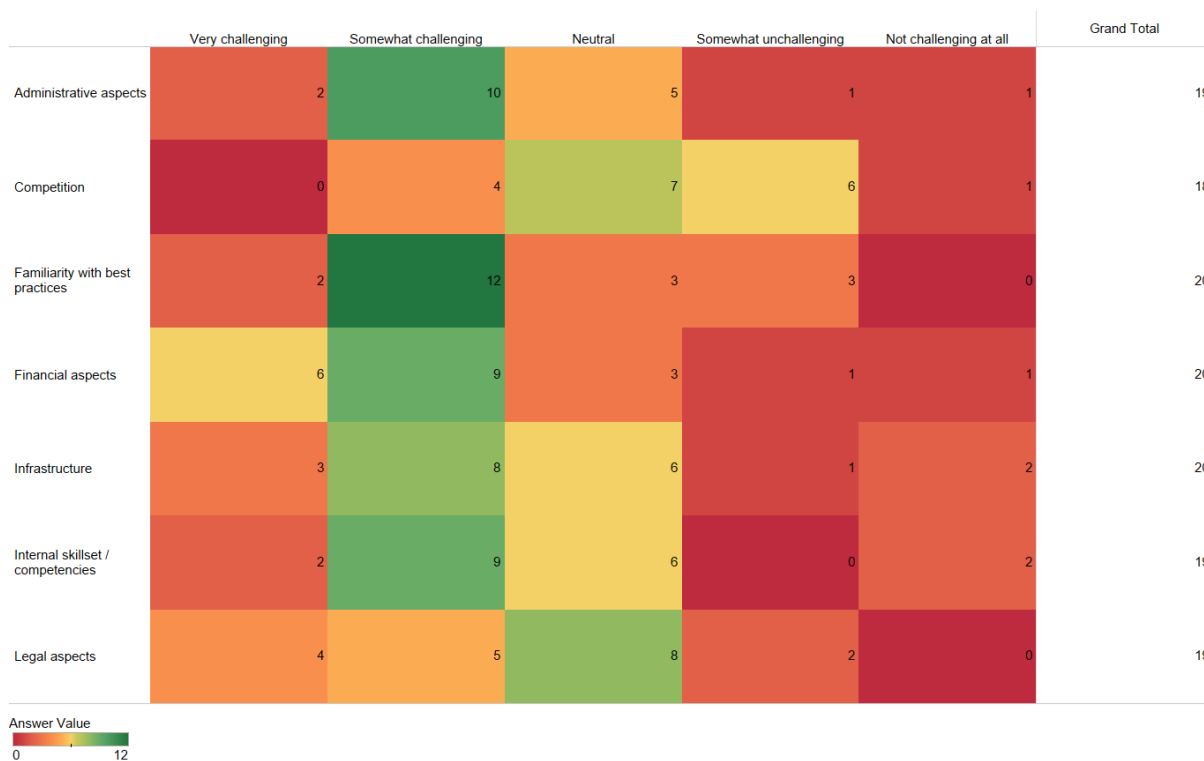|	Very challenging	Somewhat challenging	Neutral	Somewhat unchallenging	Not challenging at all	Grand Total
Administrative aspects	2	10	5	1	1	19
Competition	0	4	7	6	1	18
Familiarity with best practices	2	12	3	3	0	20
Financial aspects	6	9	3	1	1	20
Infrastructure	3	8	6	1	2	20
Internal skillset / competencies	2	9	6	0	2	19
Legal aspects	4	5	8	2	0	19

Answer Value
0   12

Figure 5. Rating of areas for publishers that did pursue collaborative models for open access books.

We asked the same question of the 51 presses who did not engage with collaborative models (Figure 6). Five selected 'other', of these two selected 'don't know' and only two responded with further information Both sets of responses are discussed below.

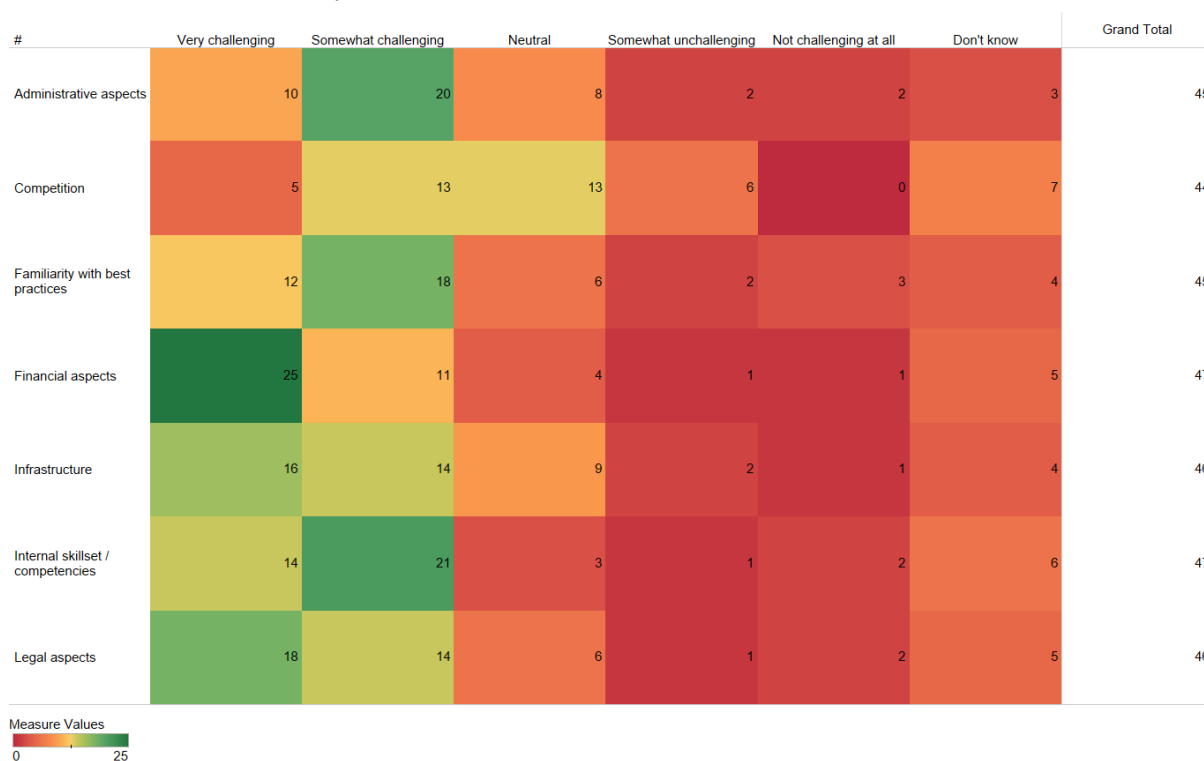| #	Very challenging	Somewhat challenging	Neutral	Somewhat unchallenging	Not challenging at all	Don't know	Grand Total
Administrative aspects	10	20	8	2	2	3	45
Competition	5	13	13	6	0	7	44
Familiarity with best practices	12	18	6	2	3	4	45
Financial aspects	25	11	4	1	1	5	47
Infrastructure	16	14	9	2	1	4	46
Internal skillset / competencies	14	21	3	1	2	6	47
Legal aspects	18	14	6	1	2	5	46

Measure Values
0   25

Figure 6. Rating of areas for publishers that did not pursue collaborative models for open access books.

It is clear from the survey results that for both presses that engage and those who do not engage with collaborative models, most of these areas represent a significant challenge. Financial aspects, familiarity with best practices, administrative aspects and infrastructure are the top four areas, whereas competition was found to be the least challenging area with far more 'neutral' responses. However, there was a much higher proportion of 'don't know' responses from those that did not engage with collaborative funding models.

Respondents were asked to explain their answers in more detail, especially for those factors that they found challenging. Answers have been summarized by a number of themes.

For presses that engaged in collaborative models, one respondent noted lack of funding; as a digital first university press there was no obvious place to go for funding apart from Knowledge Unlatched. Another respondent suggested that there was a high reliance on funding from open access policies.

Scaling and complexity of models were noted as two further issues. Processes were well established for Knowledge Unlatched, but new processes and ways of working would be required for other collaborative funding models with particular reference to contracts with supporting libraries, payment schedules and invoicing.

Comments were also received regarding awareness and training. For example, it was stated that publishing staff would need to be educated about how collaborative programmes work. Indeed it was also noted that both staff and authors may need to be informed of the benefits of open access publishing, and that authors were sometimes skeptical about agreeing to participate in these models. Conversely, another comment noted that an attraction to many authors is the possibility to publish open access.

Loss of revenue was highlighted by a publishing partner who noted that in some countries, publishing is undertaken by small commercial publishing houses not directly linked to universities and open access may be seen as a loss of revenue. This comment implied a misconnection between collaborative open access models and the distribution of print (to non-academic audiences). The two are not mutually exclusive, this point is more related to open access funding rather than collaborative models.

Concerns were raised by some respondents about the transparency of third-party organisations operating collaborative funding models. Finally, one respondent asked whether the FAIR principles were being followed.

Many of the answers from presses that had not engaged with collaborative models dealt with the challenge of OA publishing, such as the need for funding in general and potential loss of revenue, rather than collaborative models as a possible solution. These answers were considered out of scope of the survey and have not been included. In scope answers centered around a lack of internal infrastructure, skillsets or help for the university [press]; and perceived issues around legal and financial arrangements. It was also noted that these models can be administratively burdensome, requiring close invoicing and monitoring, and that the funding for the increase in administrative costs was not available. One press noted that different models compete for funds and that "academic capitalism is gaining ground". Two 'other' points were, firstly, the challenges in the decision making process in larger institutions where staff members who understand collaborative actions are usually

not the ones making the larger financial decisions. Secondly, the underlying ethos of the collaborative model would have to align with the ethos of the press and it's supporting institutions, which could be very challenging.

Issues around collaborative funding models could be an area for further enquiry by OPERAS in order to better understand what the challenges are and how to address them. Furthermore, an interesting question for future research would be how challenging administrative and financial aspects of these models are for stakeholders such as libraries who may wish to investigate support for these models.

We also asked those that had engaged in collaborative models, whether they were in touch with other presses that operate a similar model. 17 of the presses that engaged in collaboration were sharing best practices, and four were not. Those that went on to expand on this question highlighted the role of professional associations, such as the Association of European University Presses (AEUP, 2021) and AG Universitätsverlage, the working group of German-language university presses (AG Universitätsverlage, 2021), and other networks such as ScholarLed (n.d.) for sharing best practices in the sector, even when more formal collaborative funding or infrastructure models are not being used. It is also interesting to note that informal discussions with publishers that are seen to play a model role in the community, such as IUC in Portugal (University of Coimbra, 2021) and Stockholm University Press in Sweden (Stockholm University Press, 2021) are also important, as well as informal groups, i.e. presses in Italy.

OPERAS engages with many of the formal networks, such as AEUP as well as the presses at Coimbra and Stockholm. However, it would be useful to establish links with some less formal networks.

In hindsight, the survey should have asked the same question of presses that indicated that they did not engage in collaboration as many presses who are not extensively engaged in formal collaborative models share practice with a wide range of other presses and membership organisations on a regular basis.

3.3.1 Sustainability of current publishing models

Respondents who both engaged (Figure 7) and did not engage (Figure 8) in collaborative funding models were asked about the sustainability of the models they currently use. Of the 77 respondents who completed the survey, 67 answered this question.
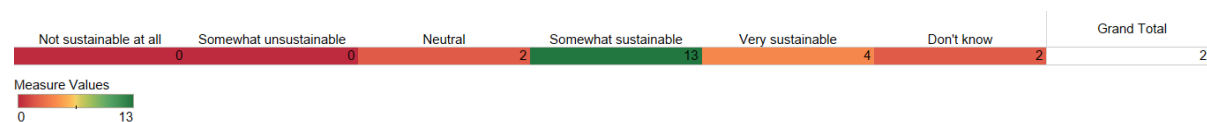

Figure 7: Sustainability of current publishing models (engaged in collaborative funding models)
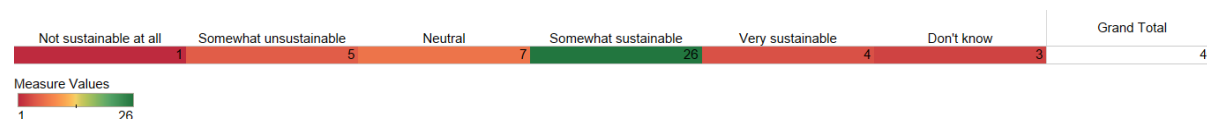

Figure 8: Sustainability of current publishing models (non engaged in collaborative funding models)

Given the high number of respondents who felt their model was sustainable, this represents an interesting area for further exploration in order to identify in greater detail what is working well for OA publishers and whether those success stories can be shared for wider use by the community. However,

any conclusions should be drawn with caution as 'sustainability' may be perceived differently from different perspectives and there might be gaps between the way respondents self-assess their own sustainability and the way they could be assessed by other stakeholders. It is also interesting to note that whether the respondents are engaged in collaborative models or not, it doesn't seem to change their perceived sustainability. This is a very counterintuitive indication that should be explored further in the future.

3.3.2   Reasons for not engaging in collaborative models for open access books

A significant majority of presses (51 out of 77 respondents) reported that they did not use collaborative models for OA books. Reasons included lack of knowledge, information, experience or contacts (as the most prevalent reason); a lack of resources ("we don't have technological infrastructure"), and a lack of an appropriate collaborative funding model for respective region, publishing outputs (e.g. reference works) or specialised audience.

Dissatisfaction with prior engagement with some existing collaborative models ("the admin increased costs & the decision on whether funding would be provided far too late in the project") was also noted. Some presses already had existing sustainable funding mechanisms ("at the moment, the academic grant process is working well and is sufficient to pay our costs") or a satisfying collaboration with a commercial publisher. Others reported that they were a new press or a press that is currently transitioning to open access (with funding models and OA policies under development).

Finally, there was concern about the sustainability and transparency of existing models ("there is concern about sustainability of models based on the assumptions being made, as well as the impact on value to the funding source, transparency and cost").

The attitudes varied significantly, from the presses that were sceptical about the very idea of open access book publishing or did not feel it was relevant to their model ("We believe that [our national publishing environment] does not represent an area that could significantly use open access"), to those that were very interested and are already working toward developing collaborative models. Two countries were mentioned in particular, the Czech Republic and Croatia and it would be useful for OPERAS to follow up regarding collaborative models in these countries and also to cross-reference with any data from the OPERAS-P project, which concluded in June 2021.

3.3.3   Supporting presses transition to open access through collaborative models

We proposed three possible tools that would help support transition to open access, with particular reference to collaborative models:

- a toolkit with advice on transition;
- a workshop advising on transition;
- a one-to-one session with an expert.

When asked about them specifically, 67 respondents answered, with 65 rating the helpfulness of all three (see Figure 9). Nine chose 'other', six responded with further details. In addition, a tenth response was received for the 'other' section; this 'born open access press' did not answer the other questions in this section.

The survey showed that all three options were viewed as helpful by respondents. Both a toolkit and a workshop were seen as the most useful, with 51 'helpful' responses each, although a toolkit had more 'very helpful' votes (one respondent that selected 'very helpful', also noted that useful toolkits already exist).

A one-to-one session with an expert was ranked the lowest of the three possibilities with 42 respondents finding it either 'very helpful' or 'helpful'. Significantly, 16 were neutral on its usefulness, which indicates that further investigation might be required. Furthermore, for those that selected 'not helpful at all' it would be interesting to analyse these responses by publisher type and country in the next phase in order to establish if support already exists.
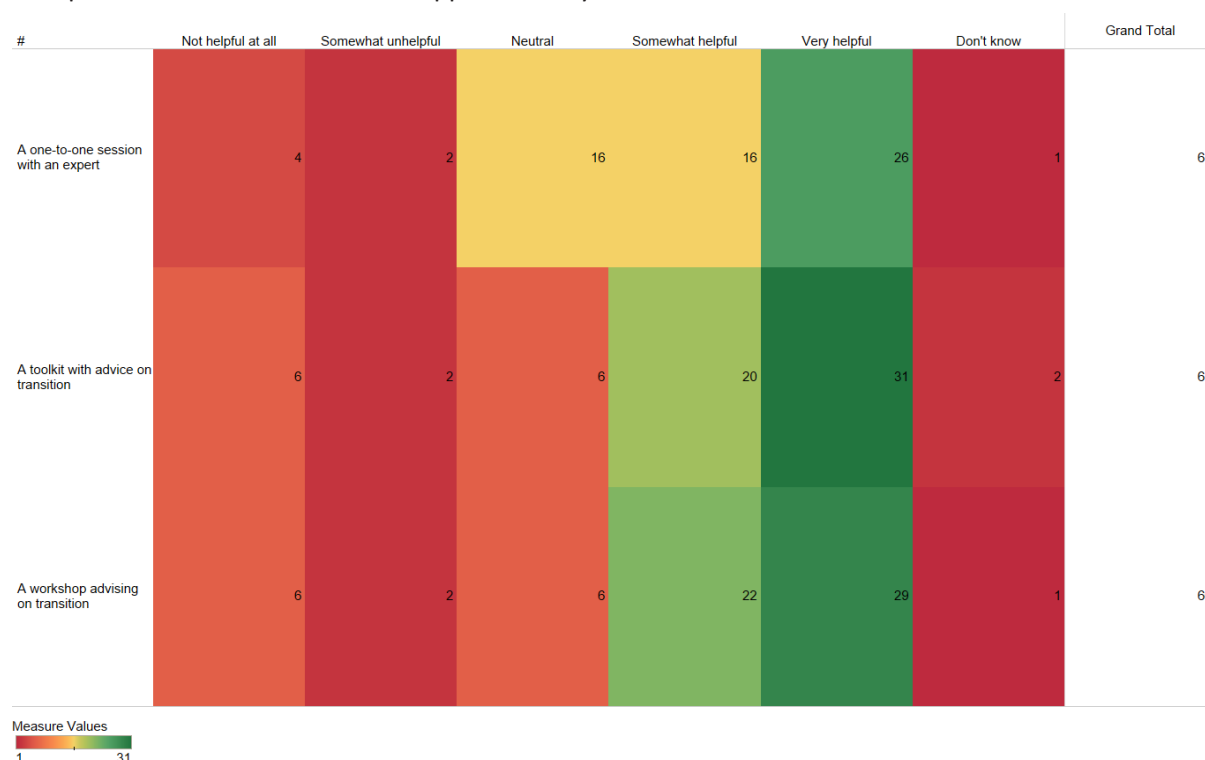
#	Not helpful at all	Somewhat unhelpful	Neutral	Somewhat helpful	Very helpful	Don't know	Grand Total
A one-to-one session with an expert	4	2	16	16	26	1	65
A toolkit with advice on transition	6	2	6	20	31	2	67
A workshop advising on transition	6	2	6	22	29	1	66

Measure Values
1   31

Figure 9. Potential supporting mechanisms for a collaborative model for open access books.

Of the respondents that commented on the 'other' option, three stated that they were 'born open access' so support for transition was not required. However, it was noted that more information on how to implement and professionalise such a process was welcome.

Other support considered 'very helpful' in transitioning towards collaborative models included: a broader discussion and critique of collaborative models, lobbying at top level funding organisations and high-level decision makers in politics and higher education politics, increased funding, and technical support. These suggestions could be included in a potential toolkit or workshop. Advice on how to apply for grants financing open infrastructure for books was also suggested. However, it is uncertain whether this refers to collaborative models.

One respondent called for specific advice for non-established library or university-based publishers to develop revenue-raising capacities, joining others in collaborative financial support schemes, and needing materials to engage and convert key university managers in seeing the virtues of funding

publishing. It should be noted that in this case, a toolkit to support new university and library-led presses was launched by Jisc in March 2021 (Jisc, 2021).

3.4 COLLABORATIVE MODELS FOR SHARED INFRASTRUCTURE

Following the questions related to collaborative funding models, a further set of questions focused on collaboration in the domain of infrastructure (primarily, but not limited to, technical infrastructure). Collaborative models for shared infrastructure could include unions of small/independent presses, or of publishing communities providing mutual aid and logistical support, shared services and best practices where all the members participate in decision-making processes. For example, in some models the books all have a shared technical infrastructure and publishing organisations support one another and share knowledge and skills (Adema & Moore, 2018).

When asked if they engaged in collaborative models for shared infrastructure, 19 respondents replied that they did, 55 said no and three did not respond to the question. Additionally, they were asked to elaborate on the nature of collaboration that they engaged in. Within the responses, it was possible to discern three groups of potential collaboration.

Collaboration with services providers in book publishing, where those services could be free or offered for a fee. Such collaboration could also be accompanied by an "exchange of knowledge and skills in both directions". Examples of providers offering services for a cost from commercial and not-for-profit organizations are OAPEN, OpenEdition, Knowledge Unlatched or transcript. Among free services, most often mentioned were specific production tools, such as PKP products and Métopes.

Collaboration with other players in the area of scholarly communication. Besides mentioning OPERAS (and its project HIRMEOS), as an organisation where members have different roles in the scholarly communication landscape, a few respondents also mentioned that they collaborated with libraries, university or national, or more specifically, with an institutional repository.

Collaboration with other presses. Several respondents answered that they worked together with other similar presses, whether through smaller consortia as ScholarLed, or in publishers associations, like AG Universitätsverlage. In one case, co-publishing with a commercial publisher was mentioned as an example of collaboration.

Another point to note is that the collaboration, according to our respondents, takes place in the context of different aspects and at varying stages of the publishing cycle, solving a range of problems and providing value in many areas. The fields of collaboration that were mostly mentioned included hosting, production and dissemination of content and metadata (for instance, through joint catalogue of a publishing association, or in collaboration with libraries), as well as using open source software. Others were mentioned only once: author support, open source metrics platform for books, technical dashboard for peer review or co-publishing. Respondents recognised knowledge and expertise as another important infrastructural area worthy of collaboration as it was mentioned several times ("exchange of knowledge and skills in both directions", "sharing of knowledge across publishers", "joint quality standards").

We then asked respondents how they felt about the importance of a series of statements when considering a collaborative model for shared infrastructure for open access books. This question was

posed both to respondents that previously answered that they engaged in collaborative infrastructures, and those that did not, therefore allowing a comparison of the answers.

#	Very unimportant	Somewhat unimportant	Neutral	Somewhat important	Very important	Don't Know	Grand Total
If the infrastructure is for profit	4	2	5	4	0	1	16
The infrastructure has publicly available/transparent governance procedures	0	0	0	8	10	0	18
The infrastructure in nonprofit	1	2	5	4	5	0	17
The infrastructure is centralised	1	2	8	3	2	3	19
The infrastructure is community-led or governed	1	0	2	8	7	0	18
The infrastructure is decentralise	0	1	8	4	0	3	16
Your organization has some ownership/control over the infrastructure provided	0	0	5	9	3	0	17

Pivot Field Values
0   10

Figure 10. The distribution of answers from the group that previously reported engagement in collaborative infrastructure.

From the distribution of answers (Figure 10) we can identify the aspects of collaborative infrastructure that are perceived as most important: having publicly available and transparent governance procedures followed by being community-led or governed and the fact that the organization has some ownership or control over the infrastructure provided. When asked about the importance of having a for-profit vs. non-profit, or centralised vs. decentralised infrastructure, a slight majority voted for non-profit and centralised options, but overall these issues were not considered as significant. It is worth mentioning that in the matter of having publicly available and transparent governance procedures, no respondents were indecisive or neutral. All who answered considered this issue as very or at least somewhat important.

The much larger group of respondents that had not previously engaged in collaborative infrastructure answered the same question (Figure 11). In this group, many more answers fell into the category "Don't know" or "Neutral", which is understandable, given the fact that they had no previous experience (and in many cases no knowledge either) with the shared infrastructure. Still, the aspects perceived as most important were similar within both groups: publicly available and transparent governance procedures, community governance and having some ownership or control over the infrastructure. However, within this group, slightly more importance was placed on the non-profit character of the infrastructure.

#	Very unimportant	Somewhat unimportant	Neutral	Somewhat important	Very important	Don't Know	Grand Total
If the infrastructure is for profit	9	2	12	5	5	8	41
The infrastructure has publicly available/transparent governance procedures	0	1	3	7	25	6	42
The infrastructure in nonprofit	0	2	9	5	18	7	41
The infrastructure is centralised	3	2	15	4	7	9	40
The infrastructure is community-led or governed	2	1	4	12	15	8	42
The infrastructure is decentralise	3	2	15	5	6	9	40
Your organization has some ownership/control over the infrastructure provided	1	2	9	10	14	5	41

Measure Values

0 — 25

Figure 11. The distribution of answers from the group that previously reported lack of engagement in collaborative infrastructure.

In the future analysis, it will be interesting to investigate if the importance given to certain aspects vary between types of publishers, or by country. This will be of particular interest in the respect that there are some infrastructures that are developed and operational only on a national or regional level.

The group of respondents that did not engage in collaborative models for shared infrastructure for open access books were asked a follow up question about their reasons. The answers varied, but the main reasons could be summarised as:

- Lack of time and resources (to explore possible options and get involved in them)
- Lack of knowledge and information
- Satisfaction with local solutions currently available
- Lack of convincing or appropriate options (for a given region or for specific publication types, for instance). It was noted that it is not easy to adopt models developed in different environments
- Being new in OA book publishing (therefore not having a clear strategy, and not having defined needs yet).

When observing these groups of answers, we can recognise that the explanations for not engaging in collaborative infrastructures are often similar to the reasons for not taking a role in collaborative funding. In the full analysis we will report on whether this is the same group of presses.

A number of respondents answered that they were not opposed to shared infrastructure models, and would actually be willing to engage although they had not done so yet. Some were even in the process of setting up a shared infrastructure ("We hope to do this in the united University [...] Press which was

just established." or "we are also building a network of Italian OA-oriented publishers to share skills and practices''). Interestingly though, among the responses presented for not engaging in collaborative infrastructure, some of the answers were actually examples of sharing (working "closely with a commercial publisher") or using community resources (using open source infrastructure by PKP OMP), but not recognised as such.

3.4.1 Shared infrastructures in the book publishing process

All 77 participants were asked for specific parts of the open access book publishing process that would benefit most from having shared infrastructure; they were free to choose as many functions as they regarded as applicable.
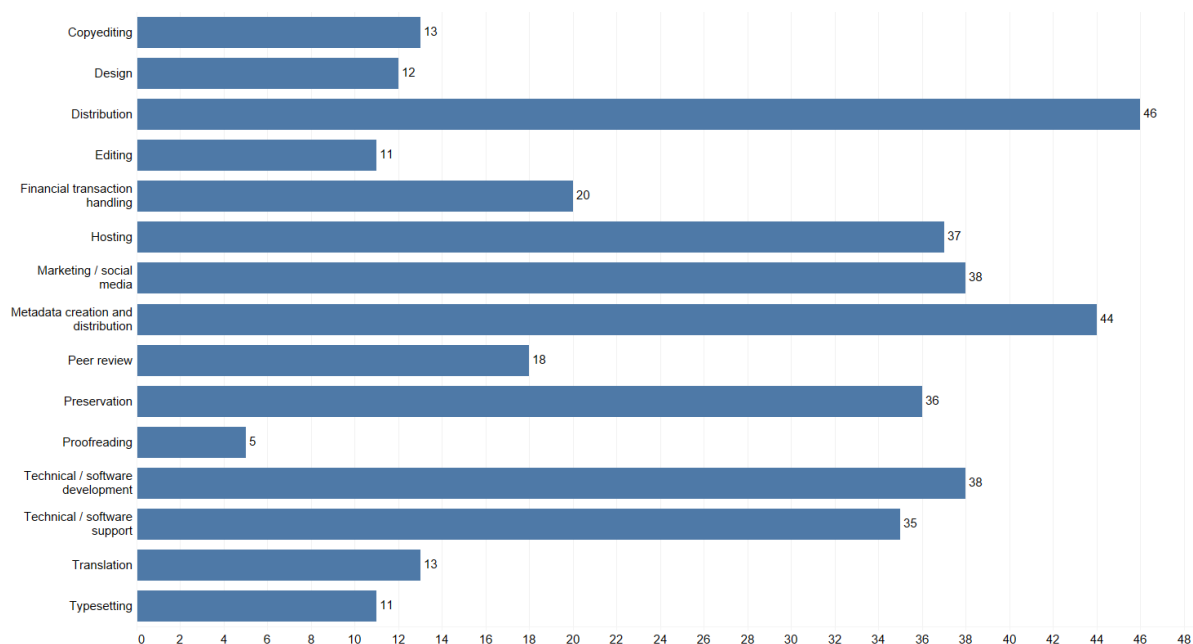
Figure 12. Shared infrastructures in the book publishing process.

Figure 12 shows the distribution of selected options, we can identify two rather distinct groups of functions in the publishing process. The functions that were regarded as the most beneficial in having shared infrastructure (35 presses or more selected them) were; distribution, metadata creation and distribution, technical/software development, marketing/social media, hosting, preservation, and technical/software support.

Functions for which only a minority of respondents (20 or less presses) believed could be improved by collaborative infrastructure were; financial transaction handling, peer review, translation, copyediting, design, editing, typesetting, and proofreading. 'Other' was also an option but was not selected.

For a final interpretation of these results, we will have to research the results of the overall survey in order to compare these answers with the type of publisher, their country of origin, but also with their publishing portfolios and existing experiences with OA publishing. However, even before drawing the final conclusions, we can observe a certain pattern in the grouping of these answers. Aside from 'Distribution' (where we can only assume that respondents were interpreting it as online distribution, but without certainty), all other aspects of publishing that were perceived as the ones where the

presses needed help with and expected to benefit from shared infrastructure, were the aspects related to online publishing.

We find that the presses were seeing less benefits from collaboration in the functions that are inherited from print tradition. The reasons for this could vary. It could be that most presses within our sample were generally better equipped to perform the 'traditional' aspects of publishing. But it could also mean that many presses were already witnessing the benefits of collaboration in the landscape of digital publishing, and were better aware of them.

And even for functions where most presses did not see the potential for collaboration, the reason could be not the lack of need, but the lack of current opportunities. It is possible that the attitudes would change if and when convincing options were to be presented. One good example could be the potential development of collaborative translation services within the OPERAS consortium.

4.   OBSERVATIONS AND FURTHER WORK

This white paper has concentrated on the sections of the survey that dealt with questions on collaborative models. Essentially, this is the first round of the analysis, which we aim to complete later in 2021. As such, we will not conclude this version of the white paper with any concrete recommendations. However, this first round of analysis has thrown up some interesting areas that have caught our attention. This will enable us to delve deeper into the full analysis to try to shed more light on the results. For example, we will now go back to look at the responses and comments in the light of type of publisher, country (although we believe that the sample size is too small for anything more than an indication). We will reassess the responses to the collaborative questions by looking at things from the perspective of non-OA publishers and publishers who already publish OA. We will also compare revenue models to the answers on collaborative funding models.

However, responses to the questions analysed already indicate that there is a potential lack of awareness and confusion about what constitutes a collaborative model. Further research is required and definitions are needed or perhaps distinct terminology for different types of collaborative models, rather than grouping them all under this one term. OPERAS could play a role in providing resources that list and describe different models advising how presses can make use of them.

This initial analysis has also surfaced the following observations and questions, which need further exploration in the data.

Regarding collaborative funding models, many presses already engaged in collaborative models are finding most aspects challenging or very challenging. Since the intention behind collaborative models is to provide benefits to publishers, it is interesting that collaborative models are not perceived to be doing that in the areas covered in this survey. It is important to understand why that is and how it can be addressed. In order to do this, we need to better understand the types of publishers and their revenue models.

Furthermore, an interesting question for future research would be how challenging administrative and financial aspects of these models are for other stakeholders, such as libraries who may wish to investigate support for these models. We will cross reference our results with the OPERAS-P research, which was completed in June 2021.

Looking at what support could be provided, our current analysis has shown that all three of the options listed were viewed as helpful to respondents. However, 16 presses were neutral regarding a one-to-one session with an expert, which indicates that further investigation of the data might be required. In addition, for those that selected 'not helpful at all' it might be interesting to note the publisher type and country in order to establish if tools already exist. In addition, presses helpfully listed a number of areas that they might find useful in a toolkit or workshop and these need to be noted for action in the final version of this white paper.

Any conclusions regarding sustainability should be drawn with caution as the term can be perceived differently depending on perspective and there might be gaps between the way respondents self-assess their own sustainability and the way they could be assessed by other stakeholders. Further analysis of the data may shed further light on this. It was also observed that it did not seem to matter whether respondents were engaged in collaborative models or not regarding their view on

sustainability. This is a very counterintuitive indication that should be explored further in the final analysis in future research.

For collaborative models for shared infrastructure, it will be interesting to investigate if the importance given to certain aspects varies between types of publishers, or by country. For example there may be infrastructures that are developed and operational only on a national or regional level.

Explanations for not engaging in collaborative infrastructures appear similar to the reasons for not taking a role in collaborative funding. In the full analysis we will investigate whether this is the same group of presses.

When looking at shared infrastructures in the book publishing process we will also have to compare these answers with the type of publisher, their country of origin, but also with their publishing portfolios and existing experiences with OA publishing.

This white paper has given us an early view on the challenges that European presses see ahead regarding collaborative models for funding and infrastructure. We now have a clear direction for further analysing the data. Once a full analysis has taken place, we will publish a final draft of this white paper and publish an anonymised set of the raw data.

5.   ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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