Libraries, Archives, Museums Working Together to Create and Sustain Open Knowledge in the Humanities

Lyrasis Annual Member Meeting
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Director, University of Michigan Press
Why is it important to support open knowledge in the humanities?
What our authors say . . .

Sharing research and creative outputs openly . . .

• is philosophically right
• extends impact for their work
  • with a social justice motivation
  • with a public accountability motivation
  • with a desire to target particular specialist publics
• catalyzes digital scholarship via data sharing & reuse
Philosophically right

“The most principled reason for academics to publish is to share ideas and engage with the ideas of others, as part of a larger process of enriching the body of knowledge. We embrace the arguments that open-access scholarship is more widely discoverable, useful, and consistent with the principles of our scholarly societies.”
“The main reason we requested an Open edition was to increase access to people who would be unable to afford the book or obtain a copy easily. This is especially true in Southeast Asia, where we expect many interested readers to be. The top priority is on sharing our message with as many readers as possible.”

“The main reason we supported an Open edition was to promote civic engagement that improves representation by informing citizens about the work of Congress and candidates for its offices.”
Catalyzes digital scholarship

“Scholars and students from any discipline or institution can read and discuss the book using Hypothes.is to contribute to a collaborative annotation of the text.”
What are the impediments to sustaining open knowledge in the humanities?
Five challenges

1. Lack of funding for “producer pays” approaches, e.g., BPCs
2. Difficult to discover open access materials
3. Tough to demonstrate use and impact
4. Intellectual/cultural property barriers to reuse
5. Preservation issues
1. Lack of funding

$18,526

http://www.sr.ithaka.org/publications/the-costs-of-publishing-monographs/

Academic RD Expenditures: Humanities compared with other selected fields
http://www.humanitiesindicators.org
2. Difficult to discover OA materials
3. Tough to demonstrate use and impact
4. IP/cultural property barriers to reuse

“One-third of all respondents to a survey administered by the College Art Association reported that they had abandoned or avoided a project because of real or perceived copyright problems. Among editors and publishers, the figure was the highest: 57 percent. One-fifth of artists reported avoiding or abandoning a project because of copyright-related self-censorship.”

5. Preservation issues
How can we support open knowledge?
Three opportunities

1. Deploy funding strategically
2. Promote discovery and use
3. Leverage IP and preservation expertise
Deploy funding
Deploy funding strategically

Librarians at over 50 institutions connect the press with financial resources via pledges but also . . .

- connect faculty members to roles on editorial board
- identify and connect authors and series editors
- connect trends on campus to drive product lines
- connect publications to users on their campuses
- connect publishing decisions to ethical principles
Understand OA discovery and use

How do people find, get, and use OA books?
• Analysis of web logs and usage stats for ca. 140 books from Open Book Publishers and University of Michigan Press.
• Deployment of survey widget in OBP and UMP open access books.
• Qualitative Interviews with users of a subset of books and information supply chain partners.

http://www.publishing.umich.edu/projects/mapping-the-free-ebook/
Eric Hellman, Rebecca Welzenbach, Rupert Gatti, Ken Varnum, Kentaro Toyama

“The Open Access mission is f***ing awesome. Thank you for providing this in a downloadable PDF. You guys are doing it right Delighted to have this resource.”
Advocate for better discovery and use
Leverage existing intellectual property and preservation expertise

http://fulcrum.org
to sustain digital and open scholarship

http://northwestern.fulcrumscholar.org
... and let’s not do it all alone
Looking forward to the conversation . . .

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