

# LIBRARIA

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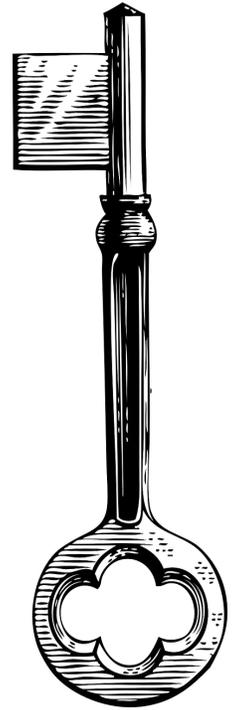
*A collaborative, communal & cooperative  
approach to scholarly publishing in the  
social sciences*

“What we need now is a model for reorganizing the economy and governance of scholarly publishing, a model with open access values at its core, with a concern for greater equality, accountability, and global participation in this access across the disciplines”.

Alberto Corsín Jiménez, John Willinsky,  
Dominic Boyer, Giovanni da Col & Alex Golub

# WHAT IS LIBRARIA?

LIBRARIA is a collective of anthropology, archaeology and social studies of science journals and learned societies that have teamed with the Public Knowledge Project and the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC) to develop cooperative alternatives to the existing ecology of academic publishing.



# WHO IS INVOLVED?

The following organizations are members of the initiative:

- European Association of Social Anthropologists
- European Association of Archaeologists
- Wenner-Gren Foundation
- Society for Cultural Anthropology
- Society for the Anthropology of Work
- Public Knowledge Project
- *Valuation Studies*
- *Limn*
- *Critique of Anthropology*

The following organizations are currently acting as observers:

- Society for Social Studies of Science (4S)
- Society of Ethnographic Theory

*“It is surely time to find a legal, scalable, and equitable means of moving beyond the halfway measures intended to protect a subscription market that no longer serves library nor researcher.”*

John Willinsky,  
Public Knowledge  
Project

# WHO RUNS IT?

The Governing Council is the governing body of Libraria. As of July 2017, the following people sit on the Governing Council:

- Danilyn Rutherford (Wenner Gren Foundation)
- Alberto Corsín Jiménez (European Association of Social Anthropologists)
- Robert Foster (Society for Cultural Anthropology)
- Claes-Hedrik Helgesson (*Valuation Studies*)
- Chris Kelty (*Limn*)
- Marcel LaFlamme (Society for the Anthropology of Work)
- Stephen Nugent (*Critique of Anthropology*)
- John Willinsky (Public Knowledge Project)

# WHAT MAKES IT INNOVATIVE?

Open Access is at the heart of our vision for the future of scholarship. However, OA models based on article processing charges are clearly inappropriate for the social sciences, in light of the relative paucity of grants relative to the STEM fields and the widespread intellectual concerns about the ‘author-pays’ approach. For example, in a 2013 open access survey conducted by Taylor and Francis, 86% of academics agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that “Publication of research should not be limited by ability to pay” and 67% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that “The dissemination of research is a common good and should not be monetised in any way”.

In our view, an economically viable alternative to the prevailing subscription-based and author-pays models of scholarly publishing can be found in a cooperative approach that brings together libraries, journals, and learned societies and enables them to pool knowledge and resources. In our view, there are more than enough resources in the system to bring about this vision; indeed, there is scope for a more efficient allocation of existing resources. What is required is an imaginative yet robust redesign of the ecology of partnerships between libraries, funders, authors, learned societies and journals.

## WHAT DO CONTRIBUTORS RECEIVE?



Every journal member is eligible to one seat on the Governing Council of Libraria.

## WHO ARE YOUR STAKEHOLDERS?

Libraria operates on a not-for-profit basis and is not beholden to shareholders.

*Everything published by Libraria journals will be free for the reader to access. All material will be licensed under a Creative Commons license of the author's choosing.*

# HOW DOES IT WORK?

The cooperative will be funded by redirecting the acquisition funds currently spent by libraries in subscription fees for the member journals. Thus, this model is intended to be *expense neutral* for libraries and *revenue neutral* for journals. However, it is ultimately anticipated that the pooling of resources in the cooperative will streamline journal costs, enabling Libraria to cover the production expenses of a variety of subscription and open access journals, thereby encouraging further innovation in scholarly publishing.

For example, based on the financial modeling SPARC has conducted, we estimate that a library payment of \$3,795, which would cover the current subscription costs of five anthropology and archaeology journals within Libraria, would cover both the production costs of these journals and a further three open access journals (*Cultural Anthropology*, *Limn*, *Valuation Studies*), if approximately 350 libraries were involved in Libraria.



Journal	Publisher	Subscription cost
Anthropology of Work Review	Wiley-Blackwell	\$74
European Journal of Archaeology	Taylor & Francis	\$1,124
Social Anthropology	Wiley-Blackwell	\$587
Current Anthropology	University of Chicago Press	\$804
Critique of Anthropology	Sage	\$1,206

Total = \$3,795

\$3,795 X 350 libraries = \$1,328,250 revenue

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**As a society journal we are concerned about how the society's revenues may be impacted joining Libraria – both direct royalties from subscriptions and a potential reduction in membership because of the loss of one of its primary tangible benefits (a free copy of the journal). Have you factored these considerations into the model?**

The cooperative model is intended to be revenue neutral for journals, which means that journals will continue to receive the library subscription funds they presently receive. In light of the fact that many of Libraria's members are society journals, society royalties of 20% have been explicitly factored into the financial modelling SPARC has conducted. Although a print copy of the journal is indeed a tangible benefit of society membership, we do not have evidence that it is a valued one, given the changing ways that academics read journal articles in the digital age. A major survey of UK academics suggests that e-journals have largely replaced physical ones for research use and the lack of interest in print copies is evident in the fact that many societies are now allowing members to opt out of receiving a print copy.

**How will allocations for journals be determined?**

The financial modeling done by SPARC is based on allocating funds to journals on a per-article basis (i.e. based on the volume of articles the journal publishes), which is the standard measure used in other collaborative open access initiatives such as SCOAP3. However, journal allocations will ultimately be determined by the members of Libraria via a deliberative process.

**At present, our publisher entirely manages the production of and subscriptions for our journal. Does the cooperative model mean that we would have to manage them ourselves?**

Some journals may wish to retain their present publisher, which they would be free to do if their publisher is amenable. In such instances, the journal would continue to operate in much the same way as it does at present. For

those journals that part ways with their current publisher, there are a variety of potential options for managing production, distribution, subscription management, etc. (e.g. translations, if required). For example, Libraria might decide to employ the services of an existing publisher; or a stable of freelance editors, designers and marketers might be hired to service Libraria journals. Ultimately, this will be collaboratively determined by members themselves. However, in all scenarios, editors—especially of journals currently published by large corporate publishers—will have far more control over the quality of production than they do at present.

**If we sign an expression of interest with Libraria, what exactly are we committing to?**

The expressions of interest are for a two-year period, and express a good-faith commitment to exploring the viability of a cooperative publishing model for your journal. By signing the expression of interest you are also allowing your journal to be publicly associated with Libraria. However, if you decide at a certain point that the cooperative model is not right for your journal, you are free to withdraw. By signing an expression of interest you are not committing to proceeding with a move to open access. All members will continue with their current publishing arrangements until such time as they are ready to make the change.

**What guarantee do journals have that libraries are willing to make a long-term commitment to continuing to pay their subscription fees? What is to stop libraries joining the initiative and then pulling out under the premise that other members will continue to cover the journals' costs?**

Although free-riding is a potential danger, we have seen little evidence of this in other collaborative initiatives of this type, such as SCOAP3 – a sponsoring consortium for open access publishing in particle physics and the Open Library of Humanities – which funds a number of open access humanities journals via library partners. According to Ann Okerson, the National Contact Person for SCOAP3, no libraries have pulled out of the initiative and it has continued to grow since its inception in 2014, with 3,000 current library members.

**We are happy with our current manuscript submission platform. If we shift to Libraria will we need to change to an open-source system like OJS?**

Although the financial modeling done by SPARC is based on migrating to an open source publishing platform like OJS, journals would be free to remain with their current manuscript submission system if they preferred, unless it was a proprietary system owned by their publisher (e.g. Elsevier's electronic submission platform).

**We are committed to print. Do we have to give that up if we join Libraria?**

Libraria's financial modeling is based on the assumption that journals would be distributed electronically, given the growing move away from print-based scholarly periodicals mentioned above. However, if particular journals wished to retain print copies, print-on-demand services could be employed by the co-op.

**Go to <http://libraria.cc/> to learn more**

