

# LIBRARIA

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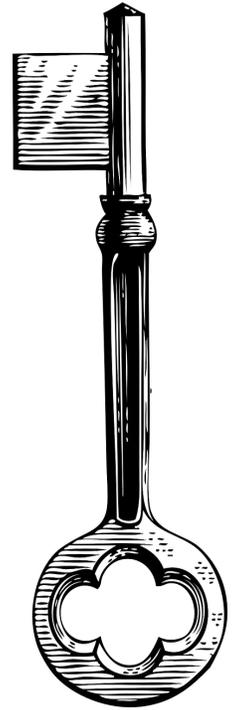
*A collaborative, communal & cooperative  
approach to scholarly publishing in the  
social sciences*

“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?

All contributing libraries are 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

**Won't library members end up paying more for their journal acquisitions, given that many of the journal members of Libraria are bundled within 'Big Deals' and libraries will still need to subscribe to these packages.**

Although it is difficult to disentangle the costs of individual journal subscriptions that are bundled as part of Big Deals, the issue of publishers 'double-dipping' is well recognized in relation to hybrid journals. In this context, there is widespread acceptance amongst publishers that the increase in open access article processing charges means that they should adjust their subscription prices accordingly. This has created a precedent for disentangling the costs of subscription journals that join Libraria to ensure that libraries' Big Deal packages are adjusted accordingly.

**How will you deal with the problem of free-riders? Won't a few libraries end up subsidizing the acquisition costs of the majority? And what is to stop a library joining the initiative and then pulling out?**

Free-riding is a potential danger; however, we have seen little evidence of this in other initiatives of this type, such as SCOAP<sup>3</sup> – a sponsoring consortium for open access publishing in particle physics. According to Ann Okerson, the National Contact Person for SCOAP<sup>3</sup>, 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.

**Won't the costs of library members escalate as more journals join the initiative, especially if they don't already subscribe to some of the journals?**

The starting point of Libraria is that it needs to be revenue-neutral for libraries. As new members join, if member libraries already subscribe to those journals, they will merely redirect these existing funds to the cooperative. They will not be expected to pay the subscription fees of journals they don't currently subscribe to.

**The basic model seems to place the burden of financing member journals on the shoulders of libraries, but don't the learned societies themselves have a responsibility to support open access?**

Although the model relies on libraries being willing to continue paying subscription fees to support journal production, it also requires a willingness on the part of learned societies to reduce their reliance on the royalties they currently receive from corporate publishers. Royalty payments have been set at a 20% return for learned societies instead of the 40% they typically receive under current arrangements. Moreover, all returns are re-investments rather than profits.

**The biggest problem my library faces is cuts to its acquisition budget, so how does joining Libraria actually help us?**

Libraria enables its members to support open access and build a community of practice without spending a single extra dollar. It will also de-escalate the rising costs of journal subscriptions for libraries, which have eaten up a growing proportion of library budgets over the past two decades. Long-term it may also serve to decrease these expenditures as they will be driven more by the actual costs of journal production rather than the bottom line of shareholders.

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

