

# Open Access Community Investment Program Pilot

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## At-a-Glance

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|--------------------------|---|
| Title                    | Open Access Community Investment Program Pilot  |
| Summary                  | LYRISIS, TSP OA, and Duke University Press have developed this Open Access Community Investment Program Pilot (“Pilot Project”) to test the viability, scalability, and sustainability of infrastructure and outreach to help match funding entities with journals seeking funding. |
| Project Lead Strategists | Sharla Lair (LYRISIS), Rachael Samberg (UC Berkeley), Rob Dilworth (Duke University Press)  |
| Project Team             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Duke University Press</li><li>• LYRISIS Content and Scholarly Communication Initiatives (CSCI)</li><li>• Transitioning Society Publications to Open Access (TSP OA)</li></ul>   |
| Timeframe                | July 2020 - September 2021  |
| Key Deliverables         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• OACIP website</li><li>• Investment criteria template</li><li>• Marketing/outreach</li><li>• Assessment</li><li>• Report</li></ul>   |

## Executive Summary

How do libraries, consortia, and other scholarly publishing stakeholders decide what open access (OA) content to invest in when divesting from paywalled content? In the emerging OA publishing market, stakeholders must consider thousands of OA publications, while often lacking sufficient data relevant to their own values or the pros and cons of each opportunity. This one-off nature of OA investment is not conducive to easy administration or participation. Vetting and procurement processes become onerous as programs increase. While the scholarly publishing community has a great willingness to work together to support OA efforts, we need a stronger, more effective connection infrastructure to sustainably transition to OA.

LYRISIS, TSP OA, and Duke University Press have developed this Open Access Community Investment Program Pilot (“Pilot Project”) to test the viability, scalability, and sustainability of infrastructure, a criteria-based vetting mechanism, and outreach to help match funding entities or potential investors with publishers or journals seeking funding to publish open access. These potential investors encompass the range of scholarly publishing stakeholders, including for example: libraries, consortia, and funders, academic centers/departments, and cultural

institutions. The term “stakeholders” as used throughout this document references this range of potential investors. While the initial set of open access initiatives or programs will be U.S. based, the community of investing stakeholders is expected to be global.

## Purposes

There are three key reasons we are undertaking this effort:

1. Our primary purpose is to generate data that helps test the viability of evidence-based crowdfunding decisions to support open access (OA) scholarly publishing.

***Premise: Scholarly publishing Stakeholders desire and will harness opportunities to make informed investment decisions to support and sustain OA publishing.***

To achieve this primary purpose, the Pilot Project seeks to generate proof of concept data at small scale by providing potential investment stakeholders with publishers’ or journals’ answers to [investment criteria](#) that are intended to support informed decision-making. Through reviewing criteria responses, potential funders can evaluate investment relative to how and whether the criteria responses satisfy their own investment principles. If they deem investment appropriate, the investors will in aggregate provide the publication (either via the publisher or society) with sufficient resources for the journal to be published open access for at least three to five years. This result would evidence the efficacy of an “informed investment” crowd-funded approach to scholarly publishing.

2. A second purpose of the Pilot Project is to test a scalable management platform for investing in OA content initiatives.

***Premise: Collaboratively-funded open access initiatives or programs can be centrally administered through an infrastructure for transactions between OA investors and OA programs.***

To substantiate this premise, LYRASIS will create a basic infrastructure to support the administration of the Pilot Project’s investment transactions, thereby establishing the nexus of a hub for collective information-sharing about the OA programs participating in the Pilot Project. We believe this will help generate a community-driven approach to fund a diverse array of initiatives, including bespoke OA programs, output from smaller non-profit or OA-native publishers, or niche scholarly output where they do not have a place to go otherwise.

3. Finally, the Pilot Project seeks to generate further data about the viability of a broad community-driven environment for sustaining OA scholarship:

***Premise: The Pilot Project should help connect multiple stakeholders in the scholarly publishing landscape (i.e. funders, institutions, libraries, other cultural institutions, and***

***ideally authors, editors, editorial boards, etc.) to establish a truly community-driven environment for sustaining funding for OA publishing.***

To test this premise, the Pilot Project will rely on the infrastructure being developed by LYRASIS and community outreach by all Pilot Project participants (e.g. through webinars, videos, etc.) to engage diverse stakeholders in order to test whether such engagement can help sustain OA publishing for the journals participating in the project.

## Benefits

Achieving these three purposes would support the following community benefits:

- Centralized, streamlined and mission-aligned service for multiple stakeholders to invest in open scholarship;
- Potential for breaching the barrier between libraries and other stakeholders in this space, i.e. researcher communities, provosts/deans, Board of Regents;
- Connecting larger and smaller institutions in the collective decision-making process as to what to support thereby giving voice to a diverse set of institutions; and
- Development of clear criteria and perhaps a centralized clearinghouse or catalog of vetted OA programs that could be used to aid decision-making and to speed the approval process.

## Assessment & Reporting

During the summer of 2021, we will assess whether we achieved our primary purposes through examining the following success factors:

- Funding targets met by deadline(s)
- Favorable community survey responses from the participating investors and publishers about the vetting criteria, funding campaign, pilot program in general, etc.

Project outcomes will be disseminated publicly by September 2021 in a jointly-released project report.

## Project Plan

As envisioned at scale, journals participating in the evidence-based crowdfunding approach may be seeking funding either to flip their publishing to open access or maintain their open access status. For purposes of the Pilot Project, the particular journal identified by Duke University Press to participate in [Environmental Humanities](#), which is already OA but is seeking sustainable funding for additional issues.<sup>1</sup>

## Functional Components

Leveraging the infrastructure/website being created by LYRASIS, the Pilot Project will have two functional components: (1) a primary vetting process, and (2) a funding campaign involving outreach.

### Primary Vetting Process

Duke University Press will supply responses to the jointly-developed [Investment Criteria](#). The Investment Criteria are designed to elicit sufficient information for potential stakeholders to make informed investment decisions, and include matters like:

- Journal description
- Editorial board members
- Current funding model and source(s) of funding
- Required funding
- Timeframes for accepting and applying required funding (one-off capital funding or operational funding for a fixed or repeat period)
- Technical standards supported (Crossref membership, digital preservation strategy, accessibility standards, etc.)
- Sustainability plan

### Funding Campaign with Outreach

LYRASIS will disseminate Duke University Press' responses to the Investment Criteria on the Open Access Community Investment Program (OACIP)" (a sub-page on LYRASIS website). The OACIP website will elicit investment bids by funders. For the sake of the pilot timeframe, all bids must close by June 30, 2021.

By design, the funding transaction process is straightforward and simple.

1. Investors can explore the OACIP webpage to determine what project(s) they wish to invest in based on established facets, established by the Vetting Process criteria.
2. Commitments are indicated through a pre-made form that is delivered to LYRASIS staff.

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<sup>1</sup> A journal from another publisher is also seeking funding through the Pilot Project, though does not bear Pilot Project co-development responsibilities.

3. LYRASIS invoices Investor, collects funds and based on agreement had with Press, either:
  - a. Deposits funds into an account until funding target is met; or
  - b. Distributes funds immediately to the Press; or
  - c. Does not invoice until funding target is met.
4. Multi-year commitments can be made. If desired, LYRASIS can hold on to multi-year funds in a deposit account and can spend them down in the predetermined increments in the event the Press cannot accrue the funds in total.
5. Funding amounts are reported on the OACIP website in near real-time.
6. Pilot Project archives all bids (successful and unsuccessful).

Project Partners will also engage in an outreach program designed to build and test a community-driven environment for sustaining OA funding. Outreach will include efforts like:

- Announcing Pilot Project efforts through listservs, blog articles, LYRASIS Website, conference presentations, and social media
- Offering webinars or videos for potential investors summarizing the Pilot Project and soliciting investment in participating journals

## Timeline

### Development Phase

September - December 2020

1. Finalize project team
2. Develop MOUs for project team participants
  - a. Establishes responsibilities and expectations of each participant in the MOU
3. Set up internal infrastructure
  - a. Develop workflows that ensure a smooth end-to-end process
4. Finalize [Investment Criteria](#)
5. Create a web page that:
  - a. Outlines all OA Programs
  - b. Shows near real-time investments made
6. Develop a marketing/outreach plan
  - a. Identify targets (e.g. libraries, campus departments, provosts, etc.)
  - b. Information page on website
  - c. Blog/Social Media/Listserv blasts by all Pilot Project members
  - d. Informational webinars
7. Duke University Press completes Investment Criteria responses for *Environmental Humanities*.
8. Project partners draft and finalize a press release

### Launch

December 2020 – June 2021

1. Issue press release
2. Project partner monthly check-ins

## Assessment & Reporting

July 2021 – September 2021

1. Administer assessment plan
2. Prepare and release report

## Required Resources

### LYRASIS

- Community Services
  - Assist with program administration
- Outreach and Marketing
  - Including at least the following:
    - Joint press release (Lyrasis/DUP/TSPOA)
    - Webinar announcing project and funding request
    - Social media announcements
- Content and Scholarly Communication Initiatives team (CSCI)
  - Program coordination
- Fiscal
  - Invoicing
- Technology
  - Website development

### TSPOA

- Outreach
  - Joint press release (Lyrasis/DUP/TSPOA)
  - Webinar announcing project and funding request
  - Social media announcements

### Duke University Press

- May provide some cost recovery funds for LYRASIS invoicing
- Outreach
  - Joint press release (Lyrasis/DUP/TSPOA)
  - Webinar announcing project and funding request
  - Social media announcements