



Introduction

Research

Software

Support Services

Community

Sustainability

Thank you

Annual Report 2019

**Making
knowledge
public.**

INTRODUCTION

Come in, we're open.

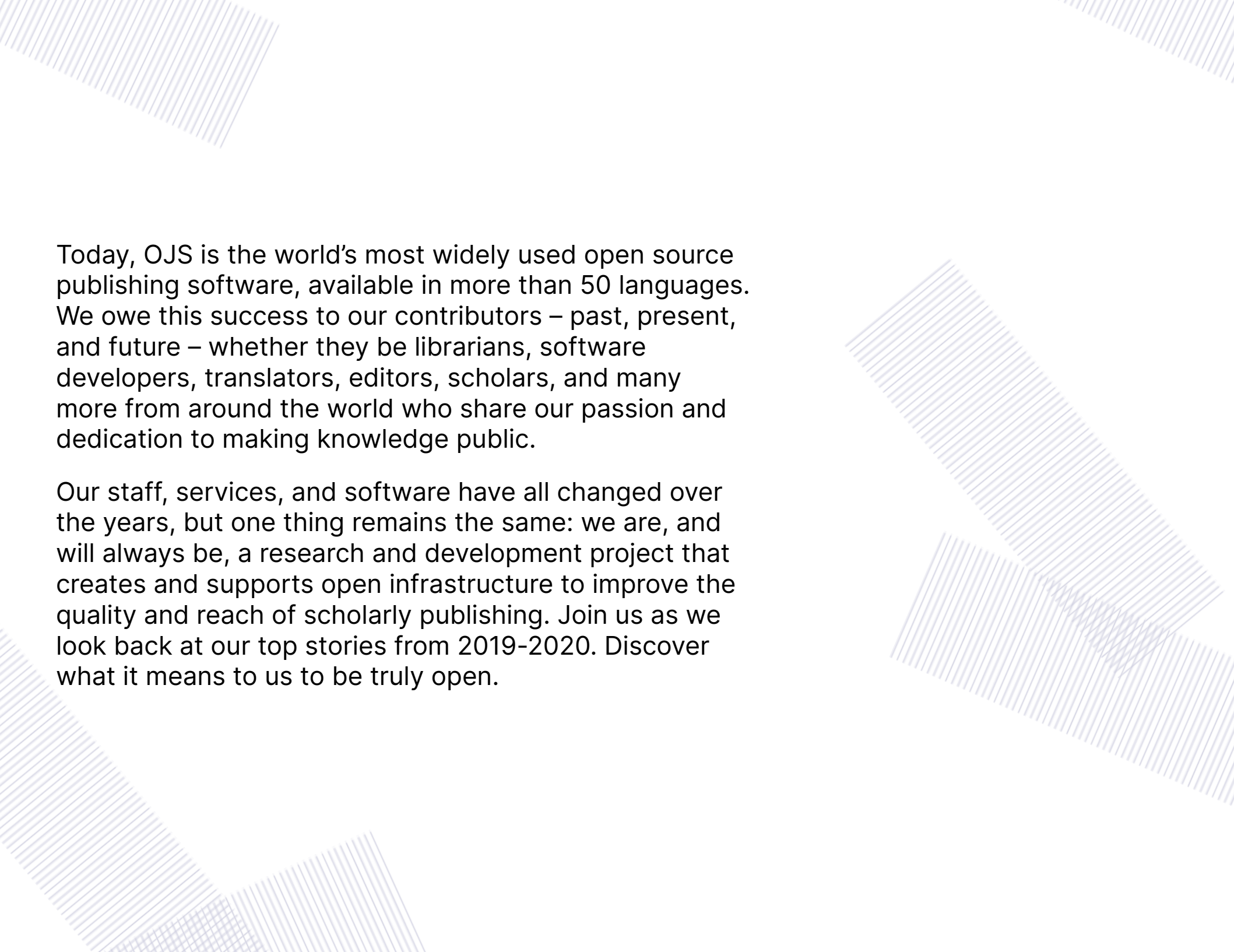


The Public Knowledge Project is a multi-university initiative developing (free) open source software and conducting research to improve the quality and reach of scholarly publishing.

Photograph by Jason Nugent.

Our Story

The Public Knowledge Project (PKP) was established in 1998 as a research project. Years before “open access” became a common phrase, PKP was trying to solve the problem of cost as a barrier to creating and consuming scholarship online. Our team of scholars and students pursued this goal for nearly three years before, in 2001, Open Journal Systems (OJS) was born.



Today, OJS is the world's most widely used open source publishing software, available in more than 50 languages. We owe this success to our contributors – past, present, and future – whether they be librarians, software developers, translators, editors, scholars, and many more from around the world who share our passion and dedication to making knowledge public.

Our staff, services, and software have all changed over the years, but one thing remains the same: we are, and will always be, a research and development project that creates and supports open infrastructure to improve the quality and reach of scholarly publishing. Join us as we look back at our top stories from 2019-2020. Discover what it means to us to be truly open.



“When it comes to ‘open’ in the academic context of access to research, data, infrastructure, and educational resources, what we’ve been learning over the last two decades is how important it is to be continually working on the spirit and the details of that openness. It’s not just unlocking the door, and you’re done. It is not just allowing everyone to download software and you’re open. The challenge and excitement of continually working on open – open to whom; open to what; open for what reasons; open by what means – keeps us engaged and committed”

– **John Willinsky**

Founder and Director, Public Knowledge Project





“The PKP Advisory Committee provides input on general strategic directions, priorities, and the ongoing development of PKP’s organizational structures and governance. Such community stewardship ensures PKP will never be acquired by a commercial publisher and that it will continue to operate in the best interests of the academy, global scholarship and openness principles. As a project that is non-profit, university-based, and academic-led, PKP needs to demonstrate that it operates efficiently, effectively, and responsibly. I am privileged to chair the Advisory Committee to help ensure that community infrastructure is not merely a tagline, but how PKP operates”

– Allan Bell

PKP Advisory Committee Chair

Associate University Librarian, Digital Programs and Services, University of British Columbia



“SFU works with communities, organizations, and partners to create, share, and embrace knowledge that improves lives and generates real change. PKP is an important part of this work. That the world’s most widely used open source software for disseminating open knowledge is developed here at SFU is both a privilege, and an opportunity. The use of OJS in the classroom, for example, has provided real world experiences for our students while giving them a voice, and platform, to address societal issues. Furthermore, open access publishing plays an important role in knowledge mobilization and movements towards greater inclusivity, diversity, and equity in scholarship. This is a new era of potential, and I look forward to what more PKP has to offer both our institution, and the world.”

– Joy Johnson

Incoming President, Simon Fraser University (SFU)

RESEARCH

We research open.

When PKP was founded, a major barrier to connecting the academy to the larger world was restricted access to research through print publications and subscription paywalls. Our research continues to identify those barriers, providing solutions and proposing models that facilitate open access on a global scale.

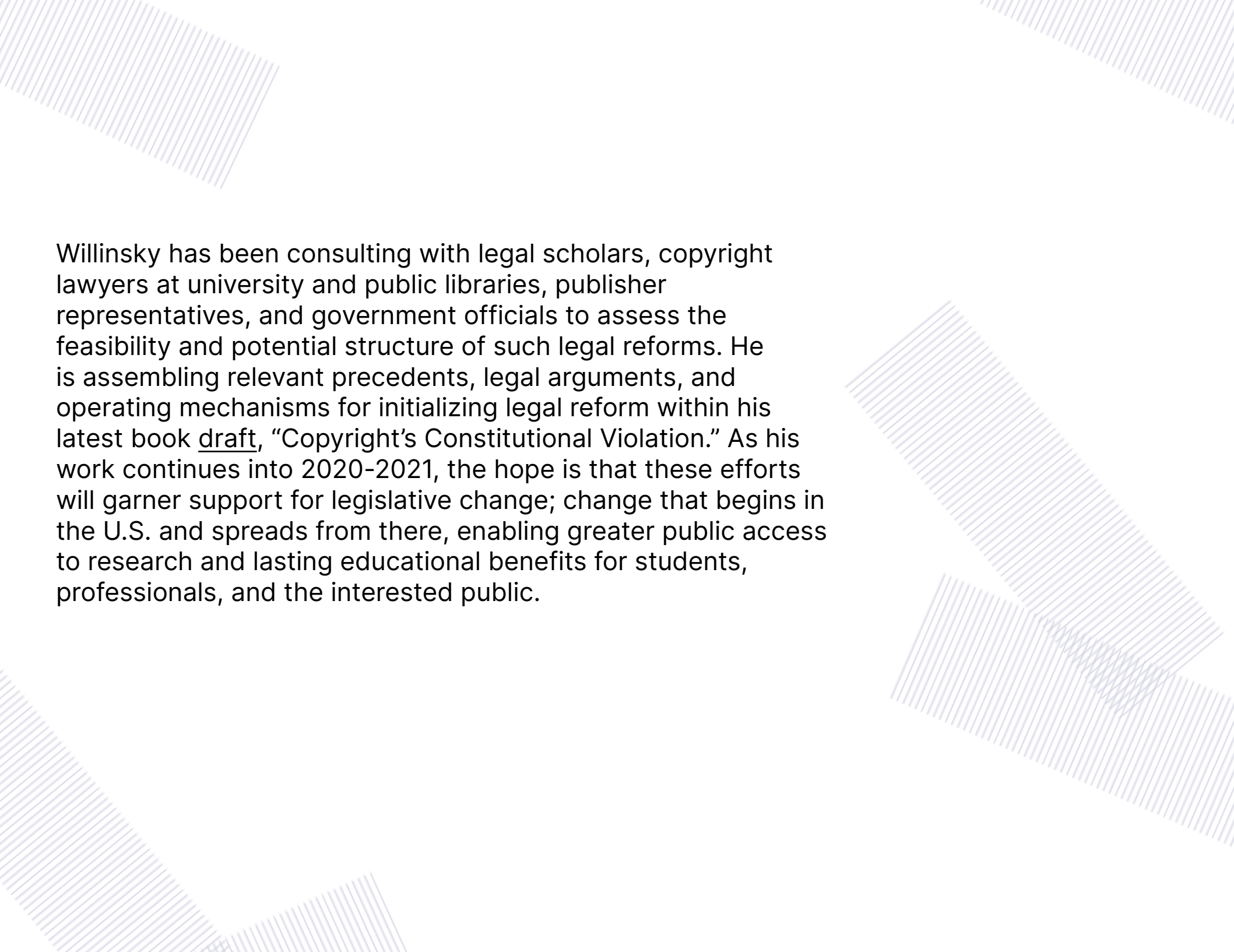
Photograph by Jason Nugent.



Copyright Reform

John Willinsky is on a mission. He's building a case for legal reform and has embarked on a two-year investigation to prove that American copyright law violates the U.S. Constitution. Copyright, he's discovered, is a barrier to open science - and he's willing to take on Congress to change such.

In October 2019, Willinsky was awarded a grant for \$165,000 from the Arcadia Fund to investigate the potential of copyright reform in support of open access. His argument is that American copyright law can be shown to be currently impeding the progress of science now that scholarly publishing's stakeholders agree that open access is best for science.



Willinsky has been consulting with legal scholars, copyright lawyers at university and public libraries, publisher representatives, and government officials to assess the feasibility and potential structure of such legal reforms. He is assembling relevant precedents, legal arguments, and operating mechanisms for initializing legal reform within his latest book draft, “Copyright’s Constitutional Violation.” As his work continues into 2020-2021, the hope is that these efforts will garner support for legislative change; change that begins in the U.S. and spreads from there, enabling greater public access to research and lasting educational benefits for students, professionals, and the interested public.

Preprint Uptake and Use Project

In 2019, ScholCommLab visiting scholars Mario Malički and Janina Sarol (under the supervision of PKP Associate Director of Research, Juan Pablo Alperin) began analyzing preprint metadata to investigate preprint growth and uptake as part of a joint research initiative with ASAPBlo. Looking at data from several preprint servers, the team discovered (much to their dismay) that the metadata available was too unreliable to support their research. All was not lost, however, as their research revealed what not to do with preprint metadata. Shared early on with PKP developers, this project informed the development of our latest software, Open Preprint Systems (OPS), and resulted in four recommendations for improving preprint metadata.

Subscribe-to-Open

In 2017, John Willinsky proposed the following idea: what if we tapped into research libraries' strong support for open access by asking them to subscribe to open access? Libraries would pay fees to journals that they were already subscribing to and in exchange, the journals would flip to open access. Working with Libraria, a collective of researchers based in the social sciences, this idea is now a reality. In 2019, Libraria joined forces with Berghahn Books to create a pilot project and on January 22, 2020, Berghahn Open Anthro was launched. Berghahn is expanding the model in 2021, as is Annual Reviews, with other publishers giving it serious consideration with support from Knowledge Unlatched.

Support for Berghahn Open Anthro as of March 2020:

281

libraries subscribed

13

journals flipped to OA

0

APCs

SOFTWARE

We develop open.



For more than twenty years, PKP has been developing open infrastructure that improves and adapts with the changing scholarly publishing ecosystem. We believe that scholarship is best when it is diverse and global, and we build software to support those aims.

Photograph by Jason Nugent.

Open Preprint Systems

In 2018, PKP announced a working partnership with SciELO to build the open source software necessary to host preprint servers. The requirements were clear: they needed a preprint server that was fully operable with OJS and could meet the decentralized, multilingual, and multidisciplinary needs of their network. With specifications and seed funding from SciELO, along with a generous donation from a Stanford University donor, Open Preprint Systems (OPS) was developed and released in English, Spanish, and Portuguese on February 28, 2020 alongside OJS/OMP 3.2.

OPS joins Open Monograph Press (OMP) and OJS as applications built using the PKP Web Application Library (PKP-WAL). Like all PKP software, OPS can be easily installed with basic infrastructure, is portable, and uses a plugin architecture to enable customization. Those familiar with OJS and OMP will recognize built-in support for a wide array of features, including multilingualism. Because it shares many words with OJS, when released, OPS was also partially available in an additional 15 languages.

The rise of preprints represents another element in the broader move toward open science. It is still early days for OPS, but we look forward to seeing how, like OJS, this software will adapt and grow to meet the needs of scholars around the world.



“PKP products build affordable state of art innovative open science research communication infrastructure worldwide. The SciELO Network is highly dependent on OJS and more recently on OPS. We are proud to partner with PKP.”

– Abel Packer

Director, SciELO Network

Web Accessibility Audit

The release of OJS 3 in 2016 included significant user interface/ user experience (UI/UX) improvements. It was also PKP's first efforts towards making OJS accessible. In May 2019, as a follow-up to this work, community members at PKP's SFU Sprint developed a roadmap to help guide PKP towards further compliance with web accessibility standards. One of the major recommendations was to conduct an in-depth accessibility audit on OJS. In 2019, an external vendor was contracted to evaluate the current state of OJS' public reader interface for compliance with accessibility standards. The evaluation included a combination of automated tests and manual assessment done by people with distinct technologies and disabilities. Based on the results, PKP is now focussing its remediation efforts on OJS' default theme. This work will not only benefit OJS, but by focusing on the default theme (part of the PKP-WAL), has implications for OMP and OPS as well.

Translation

In January 2020, PKP began using Weblate, “a web tool designed to ease translating for both developers and translators” to translate PKP software. Since making this change, we have had a huge increase in translation contributions. To date, we have 159 active Weblate users, and an active translation community.

The translation project for OJS currently contains:

2299

strings

43

languages

88%

complete

SUPPORT SERVICES

We serve open.

The passion and expertise of our team has, since day one, been an integral part of our success. In addition to providing paid consultation and hosting services, PKP supports and serves scholarly publishing around the world through strategic projects, online engagement, documentation, and education.

Photograph by Jason Nugent.



Coalition Publica

Coalition Publica is a partnership between long-standing collaborators Érudit and PKP to establish a national infrastructure dedicated to the digital production and dissemination of research results in the Canadian humanities and social sciences (HSS). It is funded by two Canadian Foundation for Innovation grants: Major Science Initiatives Fund (2017-2022) and Cyberinfrastructure Initiative (2017-2020).

Coalition Publica is focussed on three key activities: **1)** developing a support program for Canadian scholarly journals in the humanities and social sciences; **2)** aligning Érudit and PKP's technological developments to create a national production, dissemination, and research infrastructure offering a comprehensive range of scholarly publishing services to the Canadian community; and **3)** organizing research activities focused on the evolution of the scholarly publishing sector.

In 2019-2020, Coalition Publica's national campaign was a great success: the annual objective to include 20 new journals was reached very quickly and a waiting list was established for 2021. The team also recognized the need for a holistic Digital Object Identifier (DOI) strategy, developing a Metadata Working Group in 2019 to achieve two main deliverables: 1) a best practices guide for OJS metadata for journals, and 2) a report to PKP and Érudit with technical recommendations to improve metadata quality in their respective systems.

Institutional Hosting

In 2019, PKP Publishing Services piloted an Institutional Hosting package with the University of British Columbia and the Colorado Alliance of Research Libraries. Designed specifically for libraries, the package offered multi-journal hosting and support services to meet the specific needs of higher education institutions, along with free and unlimited student journals. The idea came from the realization that we were uniquely situated to support larger institutions, both in expertise and experience. Upon analysis, we also realized we were able to provide volume-based discounts based on size. Now offered widely, the Institutional package is available to universities and colleges who wish to have hosting support for five or more journals. Hosting is free for student and course-journals provided they have faculty representation to ensure some level of continuity.

Community Support

As our community grows, so too does our expertise. PKP staff and community members are available online when you need help, have a question, or just want to reach out. PKP offers free online support via the [PKP Community Forum](#) (discussion board), [PKP Docs Hub](#) (user guides and developer documentation), and [PKP School](#) (open, self-paced courses).

From April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020, the PKP Docs Hub (launched in 2018) continued to thrive, including visits from 178 countries:

259.6K

page views

52.3K

users

9

new guides

COMMUNITY

Community makes us open.



Behind PKP is a vibrant, passionate, and international community who help to make our software better, together. Their voices and contributions are everything to us, and we endeavour to find ways to actively support, educate, and engage them.

Photograph by Jason Nugent.



“The University of Toronto Libraries is proud to support PKP in its pursuit of advancing open access via its open source publishing software. Thanks to OJS, we have been able to support a growing number of faculty and student publications since 2005. Offering this service is part of the UTL’s strategic priorities. It builds strong and enduring collaboration with faculty, students, staff, our consortial partners at the Ontario Council of University Libraries, and the Canadian scholarly communication community at large, and it fosters evolving research and scholarly publishing approaches that encourage sharing, inclusiveness, and knowledge creation.”

– Larry P. Alford

University Chief Librarian, University of Toronto

Events

PKP both offers, and attends, conferences, events, and workshops around the world. In 2019, our team was invited to present workshops in Indonesia ([HEBII International Workshop for Journal Editors](#)) and South Africa ([UCT-SPARC Africa Open Access Symposium](#)).

By far our biggest event was PKP 2019, our bi-annual International Scholarly Publishing Conference co-hosted by the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB) November 18-22, 2019. In addition to a two-day sprint, the event included six workshops, five keynote speakers, and 32 presentations attended by 164 participants from 25 countries.

We also held three development sprints. In May, PKP held a pre-conference sprint as part of the Library Publishing Forum at Simon Fraser University (Canada). Then in July, the University of Pittsburgh (USA) hosted a three-day sprint. Our final sprint, as mentioned above, was in Barcelona (Spain) for PKP 2019. Sprints are free, fun, and interactive events for community members to brainstorm important tasks, set priorities, and work collaboratively. Participants don't just talk about improvements: in 2019, PKP sprints made direct and real-time contributions towards documentation, user testing, accessibility, XML, metadata, and more.

Strategic Partners

Strategic Partners include institutions, publishers, and other agencies that have an ongoing consultative relationship with PKP and closely aligned strategic goals. Collaborative activities are wide ranging and may include: collaboration on research projects; development contributions; provision of language translations; assistance with software documentation, learning material or technical support; joint workshops, seminars or conference presentations; and participation in software testing. In 2019, three new strategic partners joined PKP: 4Science, Crossref, and Open Academia.

Community Forum

The PKP Community Forum is more than just an online discussion board. It is a gathering place, a source of knowledge, and a safe space for inquiring minds. Participants come from all over the world, from all types of professions, and bring a range of skills and abilities. In 2019, trending topics included DOIs, themes, plugins, and upgrading Forum statistics from April 1, 2020-March 31, 2021:

Forum statistics from April 1, 2019-March 31, 2019:

32.6k

visits

12.6K

posts

884

new contributors

SUSTAINABILITY

Sustaining open.

Our future depends upon strengthening ties and support from others committed to alternative models of scholarly publishing. In 2020, we continued to rely on four major revenue sources: community contributions, PKP Publishing Services revenue, research grants, and support from our administrative home, SFU Library.

Photograph by Jason Nugent.





“SFU Library is no stranger to open. We lead by example in supporting open access, open source, open data, and open educational resources. At the heart of our own open learning and research practices is the Public Knowledge Project (PKP). From our work in Digital Publishing, hosting OJS journals for students and faculty, to our latest project, SFU’s Knowledge Mobilization Hub, we understand first hand the value of making knowledge public. This shared vision - what it means to be open - is the reason why we continue to serve as PKP’s administrative home, providing human resources, financial, and legal support.”

– **Gwen Bird**

Dean of Libraries, SFU Library, Simon Fraser University

SCOSS

The Global Sustainability Coalition for Open Science Services (SCOSS) was formed in early 2017 with the purpose of providing a new coordinated cost-sharing framework for enabling the broader open access (OA) and open science (OS) community to support the non-commercial services on which it depends. In its pilot funding cycle, more than 1.5 million euros were been pledged by some 200 institutions worldwide to help secure the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) and SHERPA Ro/MEO.

In 2019, SCOSS launched its second funding cycle. PKP was selected as one of three vetted services – along with the Directory of Open Access Books (DOAB)/Open Access Publishing in European Networks (OAPEN) and OpenCitations – to be presented to the SCOSS international scholarly community for funding.

SCOSS selected PKP because of our ambition to scale up our hosting and publishing services. PKP Publishing Services was created in 2007 to cross-subsidise the development of our open source software. In order for these services to continue to offer a sustainable future, we need to expand and grow our business acumen. Our fundraising goal is to raise €734,647 towards operational costs including marketing and business development.

PKP Publishing Services

By choosing OJS and hosting with PKP, our clients are directly supporting and sustaining open infrastructure. From April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020, Publishing Services brought in 48 new clients (from 22 different countries) for a total of 86 new OJS journals and 1 OMP press

PKP Publishing Services at-a-glance:

540

Hosted installations

10

OMP Presses

53

countries

Financial Statements

PKP's financial management utilizes SFU's financial system and therefore adheres to all standard institutional budget procedures and policies. The fiscal year is April 1-March 31. All budget amounts are in Canadian dollars.

Revenue

	2018-2019	2019-2020
Publishing Services	\$632,788.73	\$784,603.05
Grants	\$575, 827.61	\$428,632.21
Development Partners/Sustainers	\$165,893.10	\$270,130.67
SFU Library (in-kind)	\$64,328.23	\$107,230.89
Total	\$1,438,837.67	\$1,590,596.82

Expenses

	2018-2019	2019-2020
Administration	\$5,328.21	\$1,242.51
Infrastructure	\$47,635.06	\$93,165.19
Community Support/Outreach	\$84,723.81	\$114,091.25
Personnel	\$1,028,050.79	\$1,381,869.53
Total	\$1,165,737.87	\$1,590,368.48

THANK YOU

The future is open.



In 2019, PKP was awarded an Open Publishing Lifetime Contribution Award, part of the 2019 Open Publishing Awards. None of our work - past, present, and future - would be possible without the ongoing commitment and support of our community. For those who contributed in 2019-2020, we thank you

Photograph by Jason Nugent.

Contributors

Our thanks to the many individuals and institutions who contributed gifts of time including translators, writers, sprinters, developers, and testers. In particular, we would like to thank members of our committees (Advisory, Technical, and Members) and interest groups (Documentation Interest Group and Accessibility Interest Group).

With special thanks to the following organizations for providing space, staff, and support towards PKP events:



**Universitat Autònoma de
Barcelona**

PKP 2019 Conference
BCN Sprint



University of Pittsburgh
PGH Sprint



Simon Fraser University
SFU Sprint
PKP 2019 Conferenc

Sustainers

PKP sustainers provide financial support on a renewable, annual basis. Sustainer levels are determined by the amount of financial contribution. In 2019, the SCOSS program added a new, special/campaign category to our sustainer program. Thank you to the following institutions for their contributions:

SCOSS

- French National Fund for Open Science (FNSO)
- KU Leuven Bibliothekenbib
- Universitätsbibliothek Mannheim

Platinum Level (\$15,000+)

- University of Toronto

Gold Level (\$10,000)

- Indiana University Libraries
- SciELO
- University of New Brunswick Libraries
- York University Libraries

Silver Level (\$5,000)

- Thai-Journal Citation Index Centre
- Ubiquity Press
- University of Calgary Libraries
- University of Guelph Library
- University of Illinois at Chicago Library
- University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Library
- University of Manitoba Libraries
- University of Miami Libraries
- University of Ottawa Library
- University of Victoria Libraries

- University of Windsor Library
- Western Libraries, Western University

Bronze Level (\$2,500)

- Biteca
- Carleton University Library
- Dalhousie University Libraries
- McMaster University Library
- Knoxville Libraries, University of Tennessee
- Ohio State University Libraries
- Queen's University Library
- University of Arizona Libraries
- University of Groningen Library
- Université Laval Bibliothèque
- University of Texas Libraries, University of Texas at Austin
- Wilfrid Laurier University Library

Supporters (\$1000 – \$2499)

- Academy of Fine Arts Vienna
- Mount Royal University Library
- Ontario Tech Libraries
- Penn State University Libraries
- University of Florida Libraries
- University Library, Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI)
- University of Waterloo Library

Development Partners

The following institutions provide significant financial and in-kind support for a renewable three year term. Development Partners also play an important role in PKP's governance, serving as members of the PKP Advisory Committee and on additional committees and interest groups. We gratefully appreciate the time, funding, and passion these institutions bring to our team:



**Ontario Council of University
Libraries**



Stanford University



**University of British
Columbia**



Simon Fraser University



University of Alberta



University of Pittsburgh

Financial and in-kind contributions help fund PKP's research, software development, and support services. Become a member our established and much appreciated community and help us continue to develop and improve open access/open science infrastructure well into the future. To make a pledge, please [contact us](#).

Public Knowledge Project

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**Making
knowledge
public.**