Carrying out the Diamond Open Access Standard: actions and challenges

Milano University Press

2008

Riviste Unimi was initially established as an online platform hosting just two journals.

2020

Milano University Press was founded, expanding the Journals section, based on OJS, with a new Books section, built on OMP.

Milano University Press

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Welcome

Milano University Press was conceived as an open-access publishing house that would provide a platform for, and disseminate, research findings produced both within the University of Milan (with its strong multi-disciplinary bent) and in the broader academic community.

The decision to open access to these publications was intended to ensure the broadest possible dissemination of scientific findings, as well as to provide visibility to the work of a talented pool of researchers.

Over the years the number of journals hosted by the platform has increased, reaching a total of **67 journals**, of which 55 are active, from various scientific fields and several universities as of 2025.
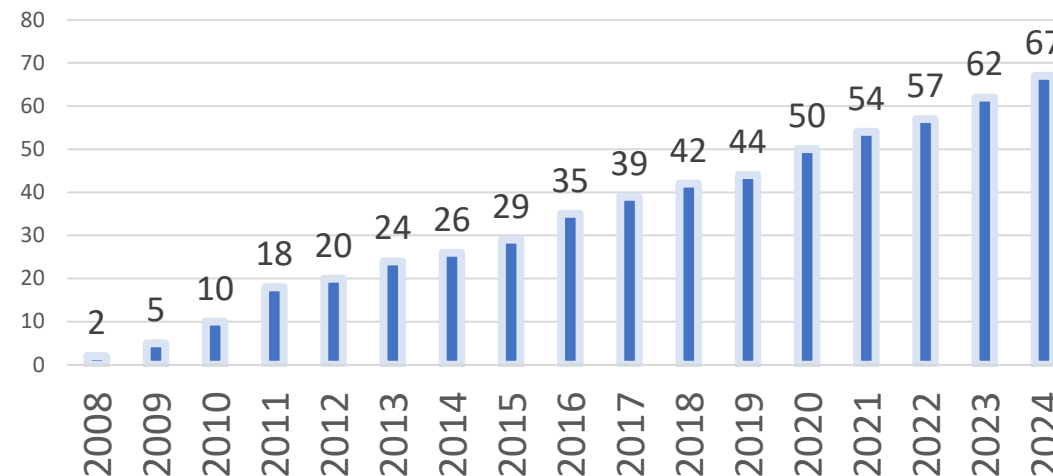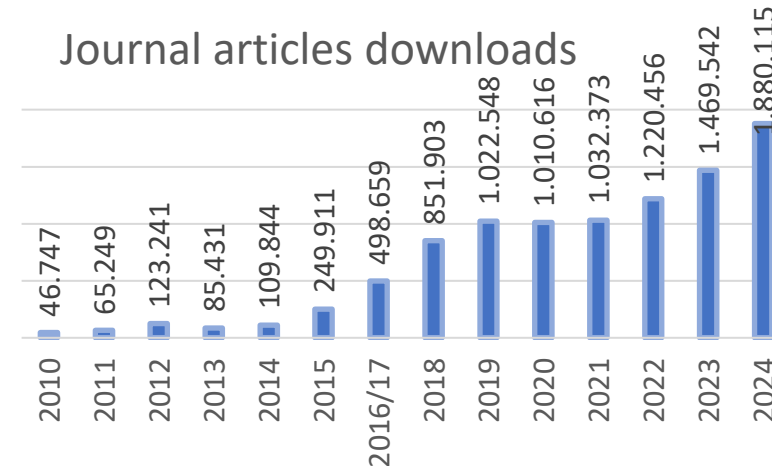
Year	Journals
2008	2
2009	5
2010	10
2011	18
2012	20
2013	24
2014	26
2015	29
2016	35
2017	39
2018	42
2019	44
2020	50
2021	54
2022	57
2023	62
2024	67

Milano University Press

Over this period, the platform has not only evolved into a fully-fledged publishing house and significantly increased the number of journals it hosts....

Journal articles downloads

Year	Downloads
2010	46.747
2011	65.249
2012	123.241
2013	85.431
2014	109.844
2015	249.911
2016/17	498.659
2018	851.903
2019	1.022.548
2020	1.010.616
2021	1.032.373
2022	1.220.456
2023	1.469.542
2024	1.880.115

...but has also witnessed the parallel **development of Open Access standards**, which have gradually established new best practices and requirements for a modern Open Science environment

LOCKSS

COPE — Promoting integrity in scholarly research and its publication

doi

DOAS — DIAMOND Open Access Standard

DOAJ

CC

ORCID

ROR

Until now, we have required **our journals to comply at least with the indexing criteria of the DOAJ**, while treating other recommendations emerging in the Open Science environment as suggestions for good practices

- A publishing history of more than a year or at least ten OA research articles

- Open License (we suggest CC BY-SA)

- Open Access statement

- No advertising

- Information on website the same in all languages

- Clear and easy accessible information such as OA policy, aims and scope, editorial board (including affiliations), instructions for authors, editorial process, licensing terms, copyright terms, author charges, publisher information

In the meantime we have kept **editorial boards informed** about other developments in Open Science and responsible research practices, while leaving them **free to adopt** these principles at their discretion, **offering support and solutions** for implementation where interest was expressed
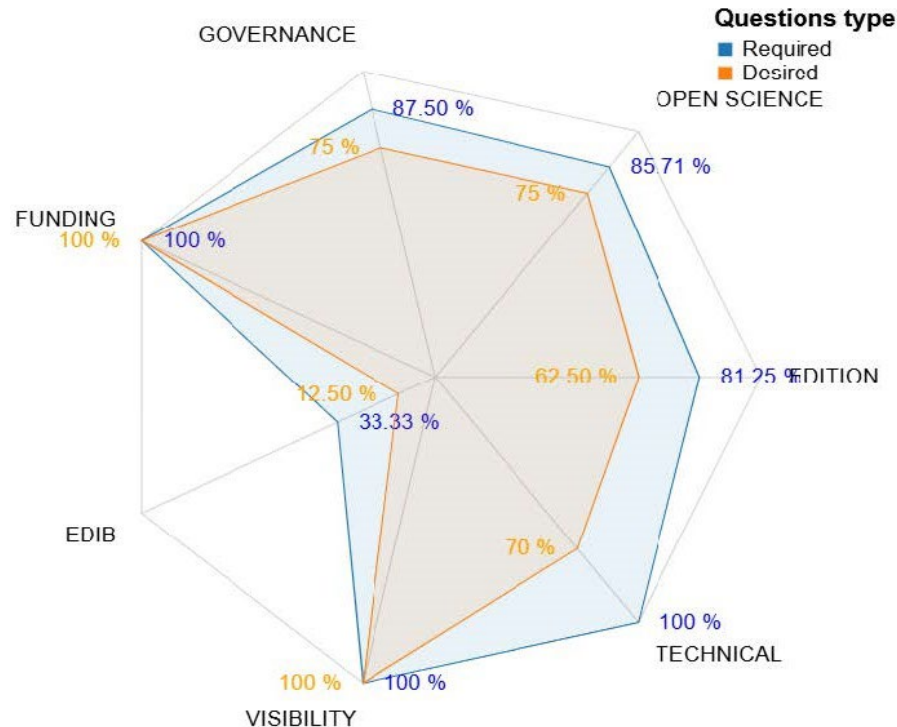
November 2024

We learned about the new **Diamond Open Access Standard (DOAS)** by the DIAMAS project and we compiled the **DOAS Self-Assessment tool** answering for the entirety of Milano University Press.

These results represent an average between practices implemented at the **publisher level** and those adopted by **individual journals**

Depending on **when a journal joined the platform** and the **extent of its editorial board's engagement** with Open Science practices, the detailed outcomes vary from journal to journal

Therefore, **we shared the DOAS Self-Assessment tool with all our 55 active journals**, encouraging them to submit it and send us the results

Questions type
■ Required
■ Desired

November 2024

We then analysed the **aggregated results** from the journals alongside the one submitted at the publisher level, identifying our **weakneasses** (**particularly EDIB requirements**).
We examined the Diamond Open Access Standard **criteria** in depth to determine **which** were **essential**, **which** could be implemented **at the publisher level** and **which** would require **debate and decision by the journal boards**.

Some **issues** emerged from the DOAS tool when journal boards tried to assess their compliance to the criteria.
While **some questions** were more relevant **for an editorial board**, which has its own approach to scientific practices, author/reviewer relationships, etc, **others were for the publisher** (relationships with the scholar institution or the service providers, budgeting, etc)

The follow-up consisted of a **public meeting with all our editorial boards**, during which we presented the DOAS standard and the **selected requirements** using a **question-and-answer format**, in order to provide them with immediate, practical solutions.

Actions we took...

Following the meeting, **we addressed several previously unmet requirements** by implementing the following measures:
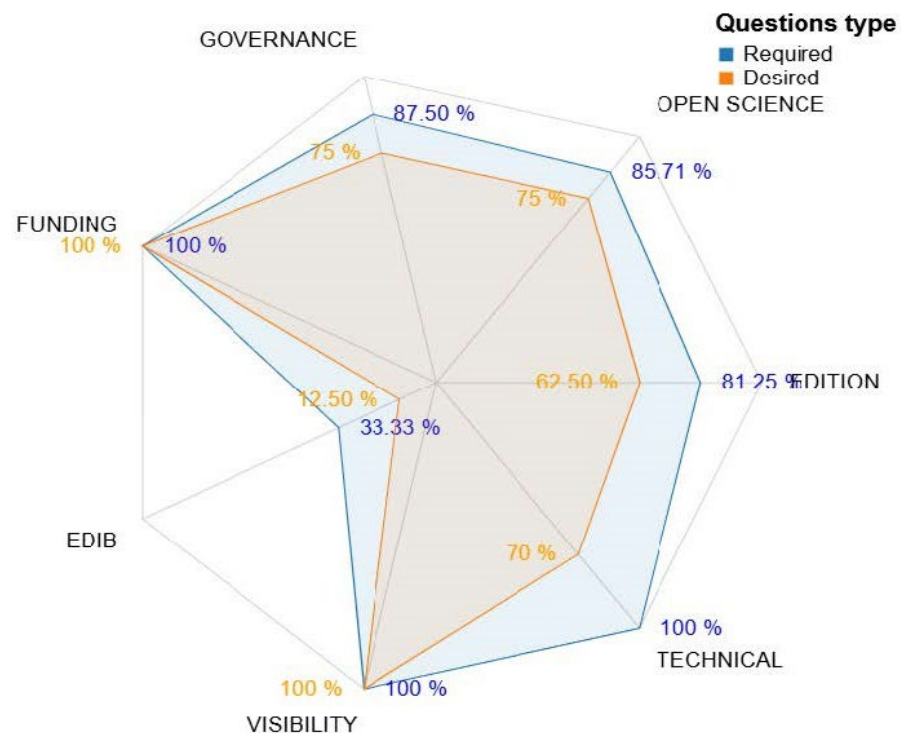
- the use of **inclusive and non-discriminatory language** across all shared sections of the website;

- a **plugin to track funding sources** via the Crossref Open Funder Registry (implemented on OJS);

- a standard declaration form for reviewers to disclose any **conflicts of interest** (implemented on OJS);

- links to **institutional profiles** or ORCIDs for members of the scientific and editorial boards;

- **greater transparency** regarding **desk rejection** criteria, **publication timelines**, and procedures for addressing research **misconduct**;
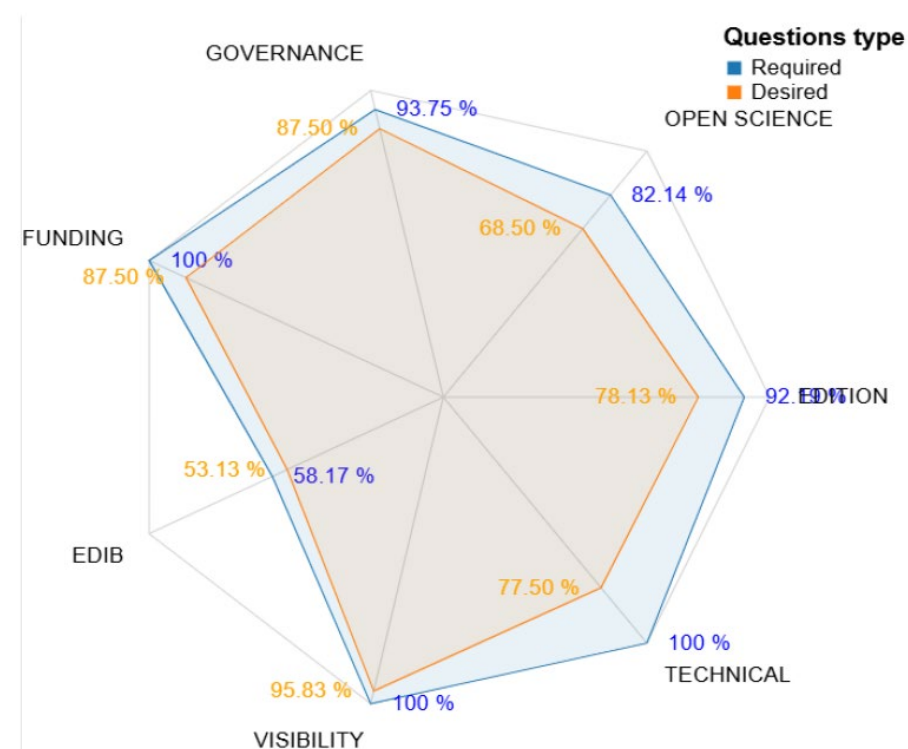
- etc.

… where we are now…

We recently completed the DOAS Self-Assessment tool again, which showed an improvement in our adherence to the criteria.

November 2024

April 2025

... and what are the next challenges

As a scholarly publisher managing 55 active journals across various disciplines, universities and research institutes, with only 3 managing editors responsible for the entire section, ensuring full compliance with all DOAS requirements across all titles presents significant challenges.

In order to assess **the level of adherence to DOAS** we are planning to

monitor the implementation of the criteria discussed in the meeting, on a journal-by-journal basis

select several requirements from DOAS that we consider essential and make them mandatory for all our journals

continue to provide information on Open Science best practices and their role for robust and reliable scientific research

What are we lacking?

Benefits.

In order to effectively engage journals in implementing these requirements, and thus committing to more demanding standards to be recognised as a DOAS-compliant journal, information and ethical motivation alone may not be sufficient.

Additional forms of support or incentive may be necessary for the journals that choose to comply to the Diamond Open Access Standard.

Initiatives such as the Diamond Capacity Hub could play a key role in this regard.

Thank you!

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