



ANNUAL REPORT

making open the default

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Foreword

In 2025, SPARC Europe commenced work on the new 2025-2028 strategy, addressing our vision, mission, core values and goals. This year, we made significant progress toward our new goals, in addition to following through on our work from previous years and seeing an increasing impact as a result.



We are very pleased to report that the Principles of Open Science Monitoring were published and launched at UNESCO Headquarters in the summer. This followed a vital global consultation, during which we addressed extensive community feedback as we co-created the final version. In 2025, we took a considered approach to help develop a new governance structure to ensure international stakeholder engagement and action.

Open Science policy discussions among national open science policymakers progressed through our facilitation, with the Council of Open Science Coordination (CoNOSC) advancing crucial dialogue on the relationship between open access, research security, and AI, as well as on how to address the need to ensure sovereignty and resilience. In the final quarter of the year, SPARC Europe initiated research to gain a deeper understanding of the impact of the changing research environment on open science policymaking, enabling us to provide guidance and recommendations to national policymakers next year.

As part of our drive for more equity in open access and sustaining the opens, SPARC Europe took important steps towards strengthening Diamond OA. The DIAMAS EC project concluded in 2025, marking a major phase of coordinated work in this area. Responsible for engagement with the Diamond OA community, we helped convene over 4,000 experts across more than 60 events over 3 years. We also launched significant new resources to help the community navigate a more sustainable Diamond OA ecosystem. In 2025, both ALMASI and the EDCH launched with immediate impact.

ALMASI (Aligning and Mutualizing Nonprofit Open Access Publishing Services Internationally) is the new 3-year, EC Horizon Europe-funded initiative, designed to build a globally aligned, nonprofit, high-quality and sustainable scholarly communications ecosystem. We are thrilled to be part of this international project. In 2025, we focused on how best to engage, learn and collaborate to develop solutions that work in all three regions for a thriving international Diamond OA system, particularly in the areas of policy and funding. In late 2025, we initiated the first ALMASI Diamond OA Policy Forum, bringing together over 350 experts from three continents for the first time.

We also observed increasing interest in rights retention through our European Rights Retention Community of Practice and beyond, advancing conversations and actions around copyright funded by the KR21 Programme. We are delighted to see the programme continue for another 5 years. In 2025, SPARC Europe concluded Project Retain by sharing deep insights and numerous new resources with a growing and highly receptive international community, including a landscape report, open educational resources, video capsules, and webinars. As part of this, a broad international #OA100 campaign provided hundreds of engaged stakeholders with concrete steps to transition fully to open access.

The Open Access Books Network (OABN), which we help coordinate, has also consistently engaged its global community in important discussions on open access books policymaking and publishing throughout the year. An event organised with the support of the European Research Council (ERC) was a particular highlight.

2025 was a big year for building community around open education. Global capacity-building in open education remained a focus, as we presented, facilitated, and participated in panels and workshops, and shared both our working processes and in-depth resources with the international open education community. We also started our first open textbook. We were thrilled to have the opportunity to explore the feasibility of a European alliance on open education, which received broad international support.

Relatedly, the Connecting the Opens project advanced significantly after having been awarded a two-year operating grant. We published a vital position paper and restructured and operationalised our plans.

While rapid progress is being made in these areas, raising funds for open infrastructure is a continuing challenge. SCOSS accelerated progress in building a sustainable open infrastructure ecosystem, strengthening communications, and broadening international engagement, alongside welcoming four new organisations to the SCOSS family. However, much work remains to fund the crucial initiatives that support a future for open knowledge.

In the context of relative global uncertainty, the research community faces significant challenges. Many of these stem from geopolitical tensions, funding cuts to research and science budgets, increased concerns about how to implement responsible and measured research security in a world that is as open as possible and as closed as necessary, and, of course, the rapid and broad advancement of AI. And yet, there are strong grounds for optimism: open science is firmly anchored in the European research policy agenda, and momentum is building as the higher education community signals its readiness for sustained change, under improved conditions, on more of its own terms, and with an unprecedented level of alignment among stakeholders. We are proud to move forward with our many partners to build a stronger, more diverse, equitable, and inclusive knowledge ecosystem and contribute to a more secure future for the Opens.



Vanessa Proudman
Director, SPARC Europe

Introducing the

SPARC Europe Strategy

2025-2028

In 2025, we commenced work outlined in our 2025-2028 renewed strategy. The strategy reflects SPARC Europe's vision, mission, core values, and goals, as outlined below.

Vision

Our vision is that European education and research are open by default for the Higher Education community, research, education, industry, and for society as a whole.

Mission

Our mission is to advance open knowledge by influencing policies that maximise the access and re-use of Europe's research and educational resources. Through convening and collaborating with a variety of stakeholders, we increase the evidence base, share good practices, advocate for policies and initiatives that support inclusive participation in scholarly communication, safeguard open science and open education, and adopt and promote sustainable, longer-term models.

Core Values

We are dedicated to fostering a fair knowledge ecosystem that upholds diversity, equity, and inclusion while securing the future of the opens.

[Read our full SPARC Europe Strategy 2025-2028](#)

Goals



01

Strengthen Open Access, Open Science/Research and Open Education policy in Europe and align where possible

02

Help sustain the Opens, i.e. Open Access, Open Science/Research and Open Education, and help make this ecosystem more sustainable

03

Help demonstrate the value of open and measure the impact of Open Science/Research through monitoring

04

Defend the value of open in the face of risking the enclosure of open posed by political and technological developments

05

Better ensure that open knowledge practices are rewarded and incentivised

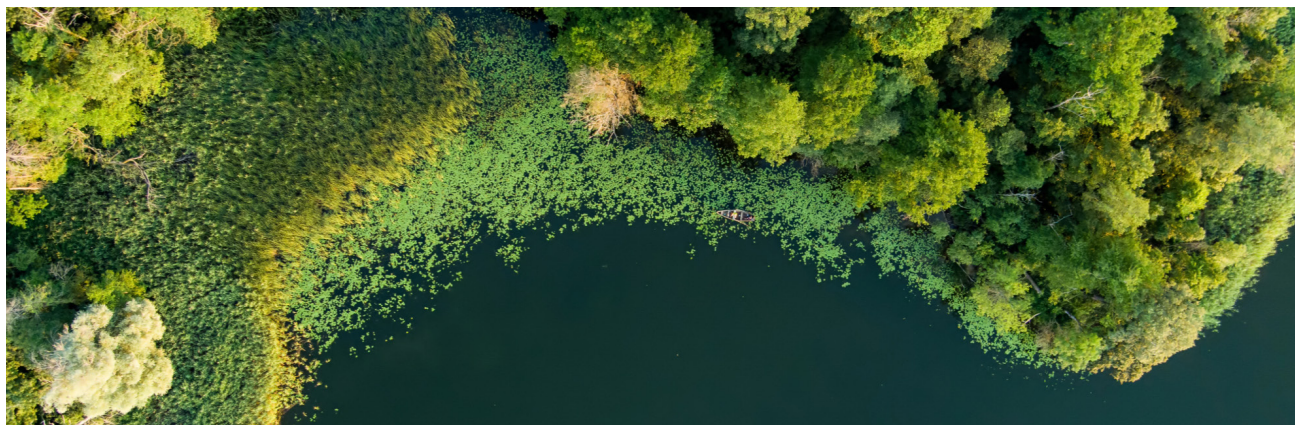
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Connect the Open movements of Open Access, Open Science/Research and Open Education

Strengthening European open science policy

Key points of progress

- CoNOSC provided members with an essential forum where important discussions on timely policymaking topics took place: open science and AI, the narrative of open science impact, research security and open science, open access book publishing and open science resilience.
- The Principles for Open Science Monitoring were published after broad community consultation with over 170 experts from 42 countries.
- Progress was made on the Open Science Monitoring Initiative (OSMI) goals through the organisation, formation and action seen in key working groups.



The Council of Open Science Coordination (CoNOSC)



As facilitators of The Council of Open Science Coordination (CoNOSC), we addressed several areas that are challenging for open science policymaking and implementation, including the intersection of open science and research security; AI as friend and foe and the resilience of open science policies; and the need for policymaker engagement around national open access book policy.

In February, national representatives from 18 countries gathered online for the CoNOSC Members Meeting, which examined the evolving landscape of open access books, with a timely focus on policymaking in light of the newly concluded EU-funded PALOMERA Project. We introduced a set of the project's practical policy resources, including the [Knowledge Base](#) and a suite of targeted [policy recommendations](#). We also outlined steps to deepen engagement with national open access book policymakers. The key emerging message was that while national policymakers are vital in shaping policies that include open access books as part of broader open access and open science strategies, policies must be co-developed with stakeholders, including academic libraries, learned societies, publishers, and infrastructure providers, to have the best chance of success.

SPARC Europe and CoNOSC further engaged the community with a May webinar, themed "Open Science and Knowledge Security: Aligning European policy and practice" in collaboration with the Open Research Community Accelerator (ORCA), the European Science Foundation (ESF), the European University Association (EUA), and Science Europe. The webinar emphasised the importance of providing evidence to inform policymaking, particularly in light of the necessity for cross-sector dialogue around open science and research security. The importance of strategic messaging to support open research practices while also reflecting critically on their resilience was also highlighted. Participants called for practical, collaborative steps: developing common definitions and tools, gathering and sharing real-life case studies, and providing training and awareness-raising across communities.

In June, CoNOSC welcomed members to address open science impact, AI, and the resilience of open science policies at an in-person meeting organised by the Slovenian Ministry for Higher Education, Science, and Innovation, which included participants from thirteen countries and consisted of keynotes from thought leaders and a guided discussion on resilient open research.

In the final quarter of the year, SPARC Europe initiated research to more deeply understand how open science policymaking is being affected by a changing research environment. Themes emerging from focus groups included geopolitical tensions; research security as a framework through which to think about open science policy; rapid and broad advances in AI, and the depth and persistence of funding cuts to research and science budgets. Findings will be shared in 2026.

The Open Science Monitoring Initiative (OSMI)



The [Open Science Monitoring Initiative \(OSMI\)](#) aims to promote the worldwide adoption of [Open Science Monitoring Principles](#), provide technical specifications for their implementation, and support

stakeholders on various levels in monitoring open science practices. SPARC Europe is one of its initiators. As of December 2025, OSMI comprises 160 members from 42 countries across all continents, reflecting the global and widespread commitment to better understand the progress and impact of open science.

Early in the year, four Working Groups formed under OSMI, with considerable engagement worldwide resulting from their work to progress OSMI's goals:

- Scoping the needs of open science monitoring
- Understanding the open science monitoring landscape
- Open science monitoring with scholarly content providers
- Shared resources and infrastructure to analyse scholarly outputs

After extensive global consultation, painstaking analysis and addressing all perspectives, SPARC Europe, along with a handful of initiators, finalised the OSMI Principles. We launched them in Paris at UNESCO Headquarters at the [“Open Science: Monitoring Progress, Assessing Impact” conference](#). An international panel of experts, led by SPARC Europe, represented diverse stakeholder groups, including national and regional policymakers, service providers, and institutions. They reflected on the Principles' potential impact in diverse contexts worldwide and highlighted the Principles' usefulness, inclusivity, transparency, modularity and timeliness.

A new good governance model was developed, incorporating a Steering Board comprising working group chairs and five experts, in addition to the initiators, above the Coordination Committee, and the Working Groups. The new OSMI Steering Board will establish the primary guidelines and strategy for OSMI, oversee the work of the Coordination Committee, and monitor the working groups, commencing in January 2026. SPARC Europe will serve on both the Steering Board and the Coordination Committee.

Campaigning for change in copyright and rights retention

Key points of progress

- With renewed funding for a further five years, Phase 2 of the Knowledge Rights 21 Programme was launched to continue innovating copyright in the knowledge sector.
- KR21's Project Retain, led by SPARC Europe, concluded, sharing deep insights and many key resources with the international community on rights retention via the Rights Retention Helper: from a landscape report to a rights retention position paper, to open educational resources, to knowledge video capsules or webinars.
- By the end of 2025, the SPARC Europe European Rights Retention Community of Practice (CoP) had held a total of 7 meetings, during which key topics related to copyright legislation in Europe were discussed. The CoP has over 400 members.
- The extensive #OA100 social media campaign at Open Access Week and beyond ended our rights retention year, engaging hundreds of stakeholders.



Knowledge Rights 21



The Arcadia Fund extended its support of the [Knowledge Rights 21](#) (KR21) programme for a further five years in 2025. SPARC Europe has been one of the project's three partners since 2021. KR21 is dedicated to reforming copyright across Europe to strengthen the right of all to access and apply knowledge.

Knowledge Rights 21: Phase 2

Phase 2 of the KR21 Programme was launched to continue innovating copyright in the knowledge sector. The first meeting of Phase 2 (2025-2029) of the KR21 Programme Network of national coordinators, i.e. legal copyright experts, took place in June. A central message emerged that early, coordinated action is essential for advancing secondary publishing rights, defending researchers' access in AI and copyright debates, and influencing key EU files, like the ERA Act and DSM Directive. During the same meeting, SPARC Europe and LIBER presented on current open science key topics, including the critical role of repositories and the need for strong rights retention policies and Secondary Publishing Right (SPR) legislation. The network, built in collaboration with SPARC Europe, remains strong, with members from 17 countries helping to reform copyright.



Project Retain

The Project Retain part of KR21 concluded this year. The project included key research on rights retention policies across 10 European countries through in-depth case studies analysing how policies differ by jurisdiction and affect author-publisher relationships. We presented our findings during a webinar early in the year, featuring an esteemed international panel of experts and attracting over 175 attendees. The panel agreed that a combination of legal interventions, funder mandates, institutional policies, and researcher education is essential for ensuring long-term progress in this area. They emphasised the role of libraries and universities in educating researchers about intellectual property rights and integrating open access into academic evaluation systems.

We delivered varied community resources and disseminated this work:

- An updated [Rights Retention Helper](#)
- Open Educational Resources: [Rights and open licensing in scholarly publishing](#) and [Rights Retention policies](#)
- Two Knowledge capsules: '[Understanding Open Licences](#)' and '[© & Open Licensing in Open Access Journals](#)'
- [Rights Retention flashcards](#)
- Spanish and French translations of certain Phase 1 materials:
 - Spanish [Glossary on rights retention and open licences](#),
 - Spanish [Checklist for #Researchers](#) on retaining their rights,
 - Spanish [Checklist for #InstitutionalPolicymakers](#) on implementing RR policies,
 - Spanish [Checklist for #NationalPolicymakers](#) on implementing RR policies
 - French translation of the [checklist for #InstitutionalPolicymakers](#)
- Active dissemination through relevant channels, including SPARC Europe, KR21 social media, and presentations at international conferences (such as the annual LIBER conference, the MUNIN conference, and PUBMET).
- Cooperation with other engaged organisations:
 - EIFL: Support drafting the updated EIFL's model law with an SPR provision.
 - CESAER presentation to its open science expert group on the 2025 report.
- Supporting KR21 national copyright expert coordinators on rights retention approaches, including France, Finland, Slovenia and Sweden, providing guidance and coaching.

The European Rights Retention Community of Practice

The European Rights Retention Community of Practice (CoP) gained momentum in 2025, with a total of 7 meetings held throughout the year. Discussion topics included the institutional implementation of rights retention strategies, the complexities of publisher negotiations, legal and policy frameworks such as European policy developments, rights retention as a strategic tool for advancing open access, strategies for engaging researchers, and integrating publisher perspectives into sustainable scholarly models. Sharing national perspectives alongside evidence-based and project-driven initiatives at CoP meetings provides the community with a clear view of the current landscape and emerging directions in rights retention. The CoP has over 400 members registered. We are seeing consistent policy progress over time, for example, in Finland, Ireland, and the United Kingdom. Other countries are mobilising efforts on rights retention in France, Germany, Italy, Slovenia, and Sweden, for example.

#OA100

During Open Access Week, SPARC Europe launched a 5-week social media campaign called “Getting to 100% Open Access – A Campaign for Libraries in 2025”. Its goal was to mobilise librarians to take action in accelerating the transition to full open access. The campaign raised awareness of the different pathways to reach 100% open access for publicly-funded research, and provided key concepts, best practices, and concrete actions. We explored topics such as copyright and legal ownership, repositories and green open access, rights retention, a secondary publishing right, and support for open access publishing. We engaged with hundreds of experts. The campaign concluded with the webinar “Can the ERA Act help reach 100% Open Access?”, which attracted 80 attendees and received over 550 views of the recording. The campaign caught the attention of key stakeholders and increased our audience.

Building and sustaining Diamond open access

Key points of progress

- DIAMAS concluded, having convened over 4,000 experts in Diamond OA across more than 60 events over 3 years. In its final year, it launched necessary resources and published new international [DIAMAS Diamond Open Access recommendations and guidelines](#).
- SPARC Europe concluded its work on sustaining Diamond OA as part of DIAMAS, providing more than 10 resources for the Diamond OA community.
- [ALMASI \(Aligning and Mutualizing Nonprofit Open Access Publishing Services Internationally\)](#) launched, with SPARC Europe co-leading the work package on 'Exploring and supporting sustainability through policy and funding.'
- The ALMASI Diamond OA Policy Forum was launched, attracting over 370 participants.



DIAMAS



The 3-year EC-funded [Developing Institutional Open Access Publishing Models to Advance](#)

[Scholarly Communication \(DIAMAS\) Project](#) concluded in 2025. Early in the year, DIAMAS launched a suite of resources to support the financial sustainability of Diamond OA. This collection was developed as part of the DIAMAS work package, 'Exploring and supporting the sustainability of institutional publishing,' which SPARC Europe led. The toolsuite is the culmination of extensive fact-finding, research, and speaking with hundreds of our community members. Many of our partners contributed to creating the following resources:

ADVOCACY RESOURCES

- [Talking Points: Making the case to fund Diamond OA](#) - Lead SPARC Europe
- [The centrality of the workforce for Diamond OA: Contractual, in-kind and voluntary work](#) - Lead SPARC Europe

TOOLS

- [Consider your options. The different funding streams for Diamond Open Access](#) - Lead University of Zagreb
- [How to define your Diamond Open Access business case: a six-step guide](#) - Lead SPARC Europe
- [Nonprofit Business Model Canvas](#) - Lead EIFL
- [Optimise your expenses: a guide for Diamond OA publishers](#) - Lead EIFL
- [The Diamond OA Sustainability Check self-assessment tool](#) - Lead SPARC Europe

RESEARCH, THE EVIDENCE BASE

- [Report: Research funders committing to Diamond OA](#) - Lead SPARC Europe
- [Report: Understanding the financial sustainability of institutional publishers and service providers in Europe](#) - Lead CNRS
- [National overviews on sustaining institutional publishing in Europe](#) - Lead TSV
- [Collaboration in Diamond Open Access publishing](#) - Lead TSV

Mid-year, DIAMAS published new international [DIAMAS Diamond Open Access recommendations and guidelines](#), resulting from two years of extensive work building on DIAMAS evidence-gathering and consultation with key stakeholders who are critical to help grow and sustain Diamond OA. SPARC Europe contributed to these Recommendations and Guidelines, particularly those related to libraries, funders and national and international policymakers.

The DIAMAS Project concluded in August. We were proud to have led on the engagement task that strengthened the European Diamond OA community through knowledge sharing and dialogue, convening over 4,000 experts across more than 60 events organised over 3 years as part of the project to develop the [DOAS](#) standard, the [DIAMAS recommendations](#), the [European Diamond Capacity Hub \(EDCH\)](#), and to discuss sustainability challenges and solutions. We reached diverse stakeholder groups interested in Diamond OA, including funders, institutional publishers and service providers, libraries, policymakers, RPOs, and learned societies. This effort also brought together many learned societies for the first time in a webinar. Events were held in several European languages to open conversations on project findings and to co-create key outputs with various stakeholder needs in mind. These processes helped forge new communities and created a better understanding of Diamond OA. We have seen significant action as a result, with many national capacity centres in the making.

The European Diamond Capacity Hub



In January, the [European Diamond Capacity Hub \(EDCH\)](#) launched. It aims to strengthen the Diamond OA community in Europe by providing institutional, national and disciplinary Diamond OA capacity for Diamond publishers and service providers. The EDCH provides coordination, sustainability, guidance, training modules, technical tools, and services at scale. SPARC Europe led the DIAMAS work that created the financial sustainability tools on the EDCH, and it also continues to co-lead the Funding Task Force for the EDCH.

In 2025, SPARC Europe also fed into the design of the EDCH new Diamond OA engagement services: the [European Diamond Capacity Hub \(EDCH\) Registry](#), through which Diamond OA organisations can represent themselves and promote their profiles; and the [EDCH Community Forum](#) - a new European Community of Practice for Diamond OA. This is a new place for people to engage in discussion, collective problem-solving and networking on Diamond OA.

ALMASI



In January, ALMASI (Aligning and Mutualizing Non-profit Open Access Publishing Services Internationally) launched. It is a new 3-year, EC Horizon Europe-funded project designed to build a globally aligned, nonprofit, high-quality and sustainable scholarly communications ecosystem.

SPARC Europe is 1 of 15 partners from ten countries in Europe, Africa and Latin America to join ALMASI's work on global Diamond OA publishing.

SPARC Europe co-leads the work package on 'Exploring and supporting sustainability through policy and funding', which sought to gain a better understanding of the national policy landscapes related to Diamond OA publishing amongst governments, research funders, and institutions, as well as policy funding arms in 2025.

We also launched a new Diamond OA Policy Forum in October. After months of planning, this new forum for policymakers and funders drew over 370 participants from across three continents to the launch. SPARC Europe chaired the first cross-regional Forum, which convened international, national, and local policymakers and funders from Africa, Europe and Latin America to discuss nonprofit scholarly publishing policy and funding needs, progress, and challenges. It was the first time we managed a simultaneously translated event in four languages, reaching a wide audience across three continents. In the next two years, we will conduct both regular cross-regional and separate regional events for Africa, Europe, and Latin America to support more equitable, diverse, and community-led scholarly publishing internationally. We, along with other ALMASI partners, look forward to sharing, discussing and developing policy recommendations and funding mechanisms that work in various contexts.

We contributed to the groundbreaking report, which describes the regional, national, and international policy landscape of Diamond OA and its funding mechanisms across Africa, Europe, and Latin America. We helped with the conceptual framework, focused on analysing and summarising the context in Europe, and conducted case studies of the national OS policy landscapes in the Netherlands and Switzerland.

Developing capacity for open access books

Key points of progress

- Meaningful community engagement around open access books policymaking, facilitating the addition of policies to the Knowledge Base that we collaboratively developed as part of the PALOMERA project.
- Engagement of OA book stakeholders, such as the European Research Council (ERC), to support our efforts to promote OA book publishing.

The Open Access Books Network (OABN)



In 2025, the [Open Access Books Network \(OABN\)](#), which SPARC Europe coordinates with Open Book Publishers and OAPEN/DOAB, continued work in engaging the community around OA book policymaking. During an April webinar, 'Services for open access book policymaking', the OABN showcased the OAPEN OA Books toolkit, the PALOMERA [Knowledge Base](#), and the Jisc Open Policy Finder. In June, the OABN hosted a practical event to equip community members with the skills needed to upload new or updated OA book policies to the Knowledge Base.

Later in the year, we co-authored '[How Should Diamond Open Access Work for Books?](#)' in Katina Magazine, exploring the challenges of applying the [Operational Criteria for Diamond OA Journals](#) to books.

With the support of the European Research Council (ERC), the OABN also hosted a webinar to provide authors with an insight into the experience of publishing an open access book. The OABN brought together a panel of ERC-funded researchers to discuss their experiences, describing the decisions they made, challenges involved, and the significance of OA for their work.

Building the open education community

Key points of progress

- We continued to build capacity on open education across Europe through over 10 talks, presentations and workshops internationally, while the ENOEL consistently engaged the community through webinars throughout the year.
- The ENOEL Toolkit was provided in 22 languages.
- We began writing and designing our first ENOEL open textbook.
- Discussions advanced on the connection between open science and open education, as well as the challenges and benefits of Generative AI.
- We developed a feasibility report on a possible European alliance for open education.

The European Network of Open Education Librarians (ENOEL)



**European Network
of Open Education
Librarians**

Our [European Network of Open Education Librarians \(ENOEL\)](#) started the new year with further plans and actions to collaborate on sharing, creating and reusing resources to support the transition to open education.

[Open Education Week](#) took place in March, during which we shared our sixth version of the [ENOEL Toolkit](#) - now available in 22 languages - curated by librarians across Europe. The toolkit has been downloaded more than 7,000 times. More language versions will be published in 2026 to enlarge our advocacy work, outreach, and support more people advocating through local language versions. The Toolkit includes slide decks to advocate for the benefits of open education (OE) in presentations, posters, and social media assets.

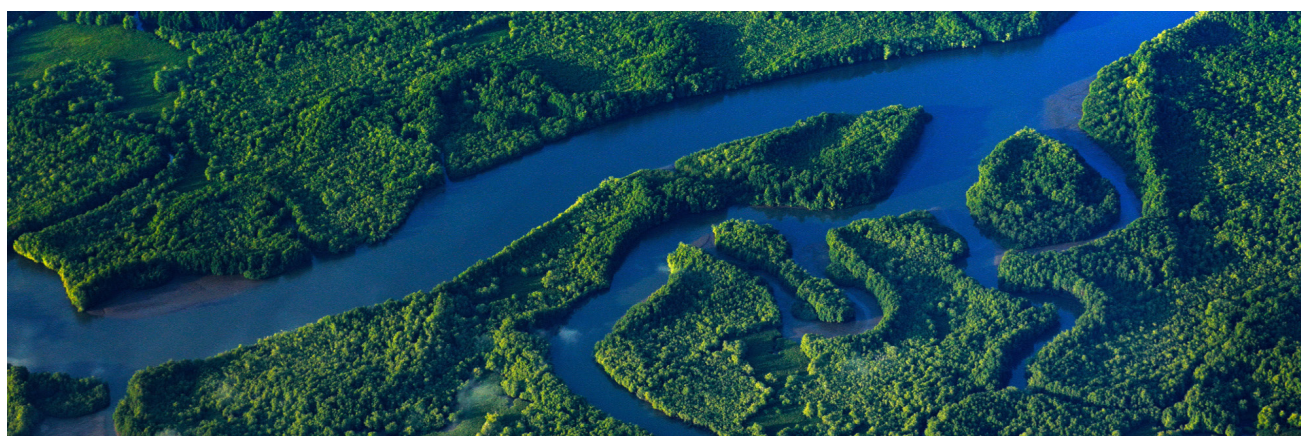
During OE week, we hosted an ENOEL Workshop, which provided an opportunity to explore in depth ways OE practitioners can advocate for OER while (re)using, adapting, and creating them.

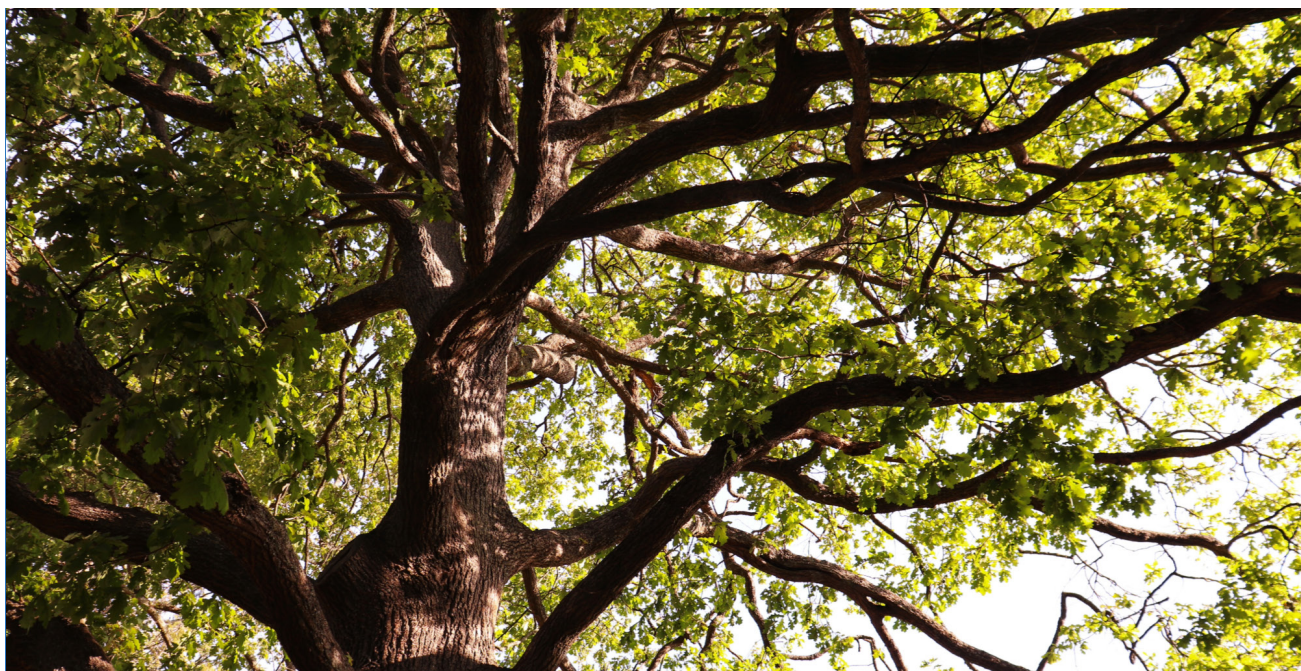
Global capacity-building in open education activities was extensive, as we presented, facilitated, and participated in panels and workshops, and shared our working processes and resources with the international open education community. Presentations and workshops were hosted at various meetings and events, including the [Estancia UNESCO 2025](#) and the [IFE Conference](#) with the presentation 'Encouraging effective, inclusive and equitable access to quality OER'.

SPARC Europe was also invited to give a keynote at the 4th Conference of the Association of European University Presses (AEUP) in Vienna, focusing on the role that open textbooks can play as part of the strategic work of university presses. At the Munin Conference in November, we presented on the ENOEL's intentional community-building work.

We also welcomed increased participation throughout the year through the 'Embrace the Open' workshop series with 4 workshops facilitated by ENOEL members and three episodes of Open Education Cafe discussions, where we invited experts across Europe and worldwide to share their perspectives on key topics. These included the implications of Generative AI for open education.

We took practical action with some of our network members as we started designing and writing an ENOEL open textbook in collaboration with SURF and the University of Groningen University Press in the Netherlands. This open textbook, to be finalised in 2026, consolidates ENOEL resources and critically assesses how co-designed OE resources can better align with Universal Design for Learning principles.





A possible European alliance for open education

In 2025, SPARC Europe also stepped up its collaboration with [Npuls](#), the Dutch National Growth Fund programme aiming to bring about (digital) transformation in post-secondary education. In 2025, Npuls commissioned SPARC Europe to provide a feasibility report on a possible European alliance for open education. With this report, SPARC Europe seeks to initiate more organised concerted action across Europe for open education among higher education institutions, transforming institutions by using open education as a key driver of systemic change in Europe over the long term.

Exploring the perceptions of over 25 national and international experts, we asked whether there was interest in an alliance, what the goals and mandate of such an alliance might be, what areas of focus would be of interest, who it should be targeted to and what challenges it might face. Our research showed unanimous support for how an international alliance of diverse stakeholders could play an important role in driving meaningful change to take place in the digital transformation of (open) education. We found a clearly articulated call for a broad European open education alliance from a range of professionals, experts, and organisations. The report will be published and shared more broadly in 2026.

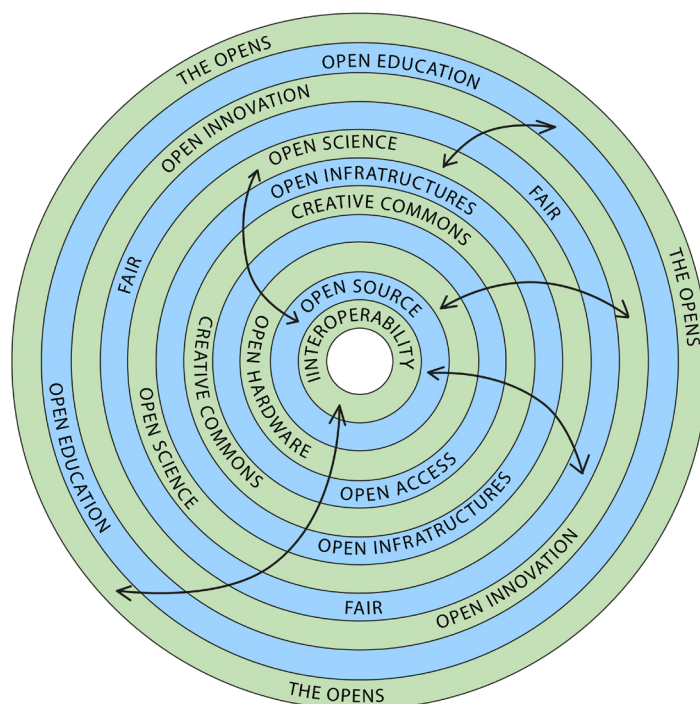
A formative year for connecting the opens

Key points of progress

- Following the awarding of a two-year operating grant, the Connecting the Opens Programme was structured and operationalised.
- We thoroughly analysed the qualitative data from scores of senior leaders across Europe on the topic.
- Our important Connecting the Opens position paper was published; the first in a series of several outputs on this topic.



Connecting the Opens



SPARC Europe aims to play a leading role in promoting, facilitating, and building capacity for the Open Agenda in European higher education. It was awarded a substantial two-year general operating support grant from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, following five years of dedicated project work in advancing open education in higher education. This grant enables SPARC Europe to scale up our existing open education efforts and lay the groundwork for a new Connecting the Opens Hub. Work kicked off in earnest in 2025, as we strategised for the future, analysing our resources, restructuring, appointing staff, and making work plans. In a SPARC Europe-facilitated workshop at the Munin Conference, we gathered valuable input on the Hub's scope and services. This will shape our next steps as we identify new partners, foster meaningful connections across the Opens, and establish mechanisms to advance this collaborative agenda.

From late 2024 to early 2025, we analysed interviews with many European rectors, vice-rectors, librarians, deans, and other university leaders who connect open science and open education at 13 European higher education institutions to understand their drivers, visions and goals and pinpoint the incentives, policies, strategies, resources and plans behind creating a broader open agenda. We found that connecting the opens improves knowledge reliability, reduces duplication, lowers costs, and supports more equity and fairness globally. Our research informed [The Case for Connecting the Opens. A SPARC Europe Position Paper](#), published in November. This is the first in a series of outputs on this critical topic.

Helping sustain the Opens

Key points of progress

- SCOSS welcomed 4 new organisations to the SCOSS family.
 - We strengthened communications and expanded international engagement in 2025 through targeted webinars in Europe, Latin America, and Australasia, as well as conference presentations in Europe and the Middle East.
- SCOSS celebrated a milestone, having facilitated over €7.5 million in pledges to support open science infrastructure since its inception in 2017.

SCOSS

2025 priorities for [The Global Sustainability Coalition for Open Science Services \(SCOSS\)](#), an initiative of SPARC Europe, focused on working with its 19 SCOSS family members to amplify the message that Open Infrastructure is essential to fund. SCOSS continued its work through several working groups launched in 2024, focusing on communications, operations-level collaboration, service-level collaboration, and an open science infrastructure Directors' Network. SCOSS launched its 6th pledging round with [African Journals Online \(AJOL\)](#), [Episciences](#), [Make Data Count](#), and [SciPost](#) selected to join the SCOSS Family. The newest infrastructures to campaign for operational funding.

In April, we introduced Transparency to Sustain Open Science Infrastructure ([TSOSI](#)) to the SCOSS family to encourage the uptake of this new service. TOSI aims to enhance global confidence and momentum for co-investment in open science infrastructure by visualising and demonstrating a collective commitment.



We received many new pledges during the year. By June, [SCOSS](#) had surpassed a significant milestone, facilitating over €7.5 million in pledges to support open science infrastructure since its inception in 2017.

We also provided a new thematic view of the 19 SCOSS-endorsed infrastructures, inviting supporters to explore services aligned with their institutional priorities ([Explore a new view of the SCOSS-endorsed infrastructures](#)).

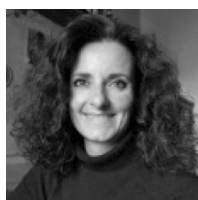
In a series of blog posts published last year, SCOSS explored how its endorsed infrastructures work together within the SCOSS Family and across the wider open science ecosystem to strengthen collective impact. Central to the series was the idea that “support one and you support all”: in tight financial times, investing in even a single open infrastructure helps sustain an interconnected ecosystem rather than an isolated service. The blogs emphasised that open infrastructures are, by design, interoperable and interconnected, built on open standards, transparency, and community-led principles, so they naturally work together across platforms and regions. The result for researchers and other users is tangible and immediate: improved discoverability, more robust and trustworthy processes, and a more efficient and accessible scholarly communication system. Read: “[Collaboration in Action](#)” and “[Smart Investments, Shared Impact](#)”.

To broaden engagement, we partnered with Canadian Research Knowledge Network ([CRKN](#)) and the Canadian Association of Research Libraries ([CARL](#)), [LA Referencia](#), [LIBER](#), and [Open Access Australasia](#), in partnership with Council of Australian University Librarians ([CAUL](#)), to host a series of regional webinars to further awareness of open infrastructure.

At the Munin Conference 2025, SCOSS co-hosted a 90-minute interactive workshop, entitled “[Collective Action Advancing Open Infrastructure](#),” alongside DOAJ and Episciences, focusing on collective action to advance and sustain open infrastructure. The workshop was an interactive and productive session. Participants shared their insights into why open infrastructure continues to struggle to secure long-term, strategic support. They noted that fragmented understanding, diffuse institutional responsibility, and the lack of clear open science strategies leave institutions uncertain about where to begin or how to prioritise. Additionally, open infrastructure is often perceived as “free” or less essential than other traditionally funded resources, such as publications. Attendees emphasised the need to strengthen advocacy and awareness through clearer narratives, user stories, institutional champions, and practical tools, and suggested some longer-term strategies, including aligning open infrastructure with research assessment reform and normalising its inclusion in grants and open access budgets. These rich insights will help inform SCOSS and SCOSS Family future outreach and engagement with open infrastructure stakeholders.

Contributors to SPARC Europe

This work could not have been done without the following individuals:



Paola Corti, Open Education Community Manager, who joined the SPARC Europe team in February 2021, manages the Hewlett Foundation-funded projects, implementing the UNESCO OER Recommendation. Paola is the always-energetic engine behind the European Network of Open Education Librarians.



Andrea Davidson joined SPARC Europe as Communications and Engagement Leader in December 2023. She supports several projects, including communications for SCOSS, the European Network of Open Education Librarians, and the coordination of the Open Access Books Network and the Open Science Monitoring Initiative.



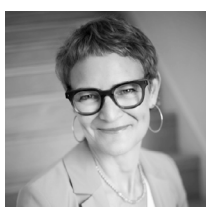
Mieke Grooten has been supporting SPARC Europe since 2017. Mieke built the SPARC Europe, SCOSS, and OpenScholarChampions websites and continues to maintain them, helping SE with new website needs. Designing things makes Mieke happy.



Camilla Haycock started providing administrative support for SPARC Europe in July 2023. She lives in Suffolk, England, and enjoys singing in many choirs and walking her two collie dogs.



Ignasi Labastida i Juan has participated in Project Retain, bringing with him his extensive experience in copyright and open licensing. He loves to find solutions to complex problems.



Rosalie Lack, SCOSS Coordinator, leads SCOSS Family community activities, manages strategic initiatives and crafts communications to strengthen connections and collaboration. She is an independent consultant with a deep personal commitment to and passion for providing the broadest possible access to knowledge.



Mariël Lam designed the current logo of SPARC Europe, SCOSS and ENOEL. She likes the idea of sharing in open education and ENOEL to create better opportunities for everyone.



Iva Melinscak Zlodi is a scholarly communication librarian at the University of Zagreb and has been Chair of the SPARC Europe Board since 2025. She is involved in Project Retain within the KR21 Programme. She enjoys exploring and discussing the complexities of open science and takes even greater satisfaction in transforming these challenges into practical solutions.



Vanessa Proudman, Director of SPARC Europe, is working to make Open the default in Europe. Vanessa tries to make sure that there is a true spark in every SPARC Europe project.



Clara Riera, who lives in Barcelona, has supported SPARC Europe with its engagement strategy and planning in various international projects since 2022. In 2025, she continued in this area, focusing on copyright in the KR21 Programme.



Paul Stacey

Connecting opens researcher and advisor working with SPARC Europe to assist with connecting open science and open education across Europe. Paul is a painter, a poet, and outdoor nature lover living in Vancouver, Canada.

Jon Treadway, the Founder and Director of Great North Wood Consulting, helped SPARC Europe with strategic and research projects in 2025. He will contribute his analytical skills to more SPARC Europe research projects in 2026.



Robert Pel has been involved in the financial administration and annual accounts of SPARC Europe since May 2022, and **Petra Leroy** joined in 2025. They help SPARC Europe extract valuable information from the financials and present it in an efficient, visually appealing way using business intelligence software, which in turn helps SPARC Europe.



Robert van der Vooren, Senior Open Science and Open Education Consultant, joined the SPARC Europe team as an expert member in November 2024 to work on Connecting the Opens. Robert has a deep faith and inexhaustible energy for international cooperation.

Thank you for supporting our work!

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