



People in the News

Colleen Campbell

Colleen Campbell describes herself on Twitter as ‘traveller, mother, punk/rock singer; advocate of open access to scholarly content’. We were already intrigued, so when we heard about her new role with Open Access 2020 (OA2020) at the Max Planck Digital Library (MPDL), we wanted to find out more.

Colleen is originally from Indiana (Indianapolis) in the US, but moved to Florence, Italy, to complete her MA in Italian Studies from Middlebury College after graduating with a BA – a double major in Theatre and Italian – from Indiana University. Before that, she trained as an actress and did some professional work in musical theatre and TV commercials. At first, her plan had been to move to New York to continue her acting career once she had finished her degree, but then she felt so happy in Italy that she decided to settle there and has never looked back. As she said, ‘After all, just living in Italy is full of drama!’

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Throughout Colleen’s working life, in between the Italian studies and acting, she always had a strong passion and connection to publishing and libraries. She told us, ‘The day I turned 16 and could legally work in the US, I started a job at the local booksellers, which I maintained all through high school and university. While studying at Indiana University, I also worked part time in the acquisitions department of the Herman B Wells Library; I was (just) opening boxes of materials shipments and checking invoices against purchase orders, but I was genuinely fascinated to be part of a system that could bring everything from rare Tibetan manuscripts to Dutch art books to researchers in a small town in Indiana.’

That experience led to Colleen’s first ‘real’ job once she had settled in Italy. After short-term jobs with a graphic studio and a children’s book publisher, she reconnected with Casalini Libri, the Fiesole-based, family-run library supplier whose shipments of art books she had opened back in Indiana. She told us that in her nearly 20 years at Casalini Libri, she had the incredible fortune to be a part of some exciting changes in the library and publishing industry: the introduction of books approval plans, shelf-ready processing and cataloguing and the digital transformation. The next step in her career came when ITHAKA (JSTOR and Portico) decided to establish a presence in Europe four years ago and Colleen became their first Director of Institutional Participation and Strategic Partnerships in Europe. While at Casalini Libri she worked primarily with research libraries in North America and Australasia, and the role at ITHAKA then gave her the opportunity to work with libraries across Europe and develop a sense of their unique needs and perspectives. ‘Looking back on the past four years at ITHAKA, I am grateful to have worked with some incredible librarians and consortia

149 on some ground-breaking collaborations: a ten-year agreement to provide e-journal and e-book preservation with the Portico Digital Preservation Service to the universities of Switzerland, the launch of the JSTOR E-book Demand-Driven Acquisition programme in the UK, and massively expanding access to JSTOR in underfunded countries like Hungary and Croatia.'

During her time at ITHAKA she was also thrilled to be elected to the UKSG Main Committee. Colleen explained, 'The scope of UKSG fits precisely what, I think, my own career has been all about – connecting the knowledge community – and I hope I can bring an even broader international perspective to the organization!'

We asked Colleen to tell us about OA2020 and what it hopes to achieve. She explained that the initiative was established as a proactive challenge to the current publishing market in which subscription prices continue to increase year after year, hybrid offerings put additional cost pressure on institutions and, despite many laudable efforts over the past 15 years, nearly 85% of scholarly outputs are still locked behind paywalls that limit access and the reuse of knowledge. It is a global alliance of institutions and organizations committed to accelerating the transition to open access (OA) by transforming the existing corpus of scholarly journals from subscription-based to open access, repurposing resources currently spent on journal subscriptions to support sustainable OA business models.

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While continuing to support the development of other OA strategies, OA2020 aims to:

- transform the core of today's scholarly journals from subscription to OA publishing in accordance with community-specific publication preferences
- pursue this transformation process by repurposing resources currently spent on journal subscriptions into funds to support sustainable OA business models
- engage all parties involved in scholarly publishing, in particular universities, research institutions, funders, libraries and publishers in transformative actions to achieve a rapid and efficient transition for the benefit of scholarship and society at large.

'The ultimate goal is to ensure that articles are immediately open and reusable and that the costs behind their dissemination are transparent and economically sustainable', she told us.

We asked Colleen what attracted her to apply for this new and rather different role. 'Actually, I was recruited for the role!' she explained. 'I had been following the activities of the MPDL in the OA movement and, on a personal level, am very much aligned with their vision. Also, while I have worked many years on the "supply" side, I've always desired the opportunity to work in scholarly communications from within the library domain. So, when Ralf Schimmer contacted me to ask if I would be interested in joining their team, it seemed like the perfect opportunity. I am responsible for leading partner development in the OA2020 Initiative and my role combines outreach, advocacy and communications, all of which expand on my previous experience and allow me the opportunity to maintain and build on the relationships that I treasure from my previous roles at ITHAKA and Casalini Libri, as well as on the UKSG Committee. I am absolutely thrilled to be a part of this impactful initiative, working with all the creative and passionate people involved in libraries and scholarly communications.'

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Colleen has worked closely with libraries in her career and so we asked if libraries were important in achieving the OA2020 vision. 'Libraries hold the key to success!' she replied. Till now, the move to open access has been delegated to other stakeholders, and progress has been slow. Funder policies have a vital role, but require significant changes in researcher behaviour; new OA publishing initiatives are promising, but in most cases require new money in a time when materials budgets are already under pressure.

150 'Many traditional publishers have also stepped into the game, offering gold OA publishing options, with the result that even more revenues are flowing into the publishing system (i.e. hybrid costs and double-dipping). But the MPDL White Paper illustrated that the funds that are currently being invested in the subscription system are more than enough to sustain a transformation of the current corpus of scholarly journals to open access.'

'Libraries have unique expertise in managing service-level agreements and ensuring the best possible return on investment (ROI) for the funds in their care; who better than libraries, therefore, to drive transformation in the economic model underlying journal publishing? The transformation envisioned by OA2020 is an opportunity for libraries to take on a central role in scholarly communications on behalf of their institution in the emerging OA environment, reallocating their subscription budgets to support new academic publishing models and initiatives. By virtue of their spending decisions, libraries can inject open access into the system and demonstrate new value to their institutions.'

'Gold OA publishing by commercial publishers represents the most dynamic growth market in scholarly communications, yet the transactions supporting gold OA publication currently reside outside the library domain. If librarians who manage licence agreements today question what role they will have in the OA environment, they might begin to look beyond the subscription budgets currently under their immediate control and start analysing the funds flowing through their institutions in gold OA publication costs. When considering ROI, they might begin to enhance usage statistics with publication data of their researchers: where they are publishing and what journals they are citing. Armed with this level of understanding, libraries will have new opportunities to demonstrate to their administration their unique expertise in managing the strategic interests of the institution.'

'The ultimate measure of success is the needle that marks the subscription expenditure of every institution'

The OA2020 programme is clearly ambitious. We asked Colleen what she sees as its major opportunities and challenges. 'Currently, OA efforts are fragmented,' she explained, 'most significantly by geographical borders. Publishers, on the other hand, are global. The global nature of research and scholarly communications means that a transition to OA must be carried out on a global level. To facilitate the transition across borders, the MPDL is co-ordinating the OA2020 Initiative, providing stakeholders with a forum to come together in proactive efforts in this transition. Endorsing OA2020 is an opportunity to engage with a global community committed to shaping scholarly communications and finally bring a rapid transition to open access.'

There is a strategy for measuring success based on action and collaboration. 'The principles of the OA2020 Initiative are embodied in an Expression of Interest, which has already been endorsed by scores of international scholarly organizations including national and international research councils, funding agencies, university associations, universities, research institutes and publishers. By signing the OA2020 Expression of Interest, institutions show their support for a global transformation of the current corpus of scientific journals from subscription to open access.'

Colleen explained that to accomplish the transformation, institutions pledge to make their best efforts to convert resources currently spent on journal subscriptions into funds that support sustainable OA business models, defining a local OA2020 Roadmap with the practical steps they are taking towards the envisaged transformation. Institutions are encouraged to share their experiences with the OA2020 community in order to co-ordinate these efforts on a global scale for maximum impact.

'The ultimate measure of success is the needle that marks the subscription expenditure of every institution: with each notch the needle moves away from subscriptions and toward open access, we are making progress.' Colleen added, 'OA2020 is about removing our money from the current subscription system and repurposing those funds for OA services. Absolute success will come when institutions are no longer investing in content behind paywalls.'

151 Colleen told us that she is so excited about this role with the MPDL and is loving every minute of it! She works from her flat in a small town near Florence, but her job involves plenty of travel, whether to work with the team at the MPDL in Munich, or out and about at conferences and meetings. Luckily, Colleen loves travelling and so wherever she is, she feels at home. She always tries to stay in Airbnb flats rather than a hotel, to get a real feel for a place. If she has some extra time, she'll seek out independent bookshops and modern art museums, and find a good route for a run. 'The first trip I made on behalf of OA2020 was to the US last April and, over the weekend between two conferences,' she told us, 'I got in some great runs on the National Mall in Washington DC, participated in the March for Science on Earth Day and caught a fantastic PJ Harvey concert.' When back home in Italy, she will do more running in the countryside and spend time with her 'awesome' daughters, Grace (15) and Mary Claire (21). Full of surprises, Colleen also told us she still finds time to sing with her punk/rock band.



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