The European Research Council

Open Access to books – challenges and opportunities

from the perspective of researchers and funders

Dagmar M. Meyer
ERC Executive Agency
Unit 'Support to the Scientific Council'

Aim of this presentation

- Highlight challenges and opportunities related to open access for books from the researcher / funder perspective <u>as input for debate</u>

- Drawing on the <u>example</u> of the ERC grant programme, taking into account feedback from grantees and applicants

- Issues raised should be seen in a <u>broader context</u>

ERC and Open Access

- ERC's general approach to Open Access in a nutshell:
  - Mandate applies to all <u>peer reviewed </u>publications related to results from the project; recommendation also for other types of publications
  - Immediate <u>deposit in repository</u> mandatory; all requirements relate to the deposited copy
  - Mandate has <u>evolved</u> – from recommendation to 'best effort' requirement to strict mandate

- Books and chapters have always been included in the ERC Open Access mandate!

Key aspects of current ERC Open Access rules

- Under the current 'Horizon Europe' research framework programme:
  - Deposition of AAM (author's accepted manuscript) or VoR (version of record) in <u>trusted</u> repository
  - <u>Immediate</u> open access to deposited version
  - Deposit under <u>CC BY</u> licence or equivalent; for full books (not chapters) commercial and/or derivative use can be excluded
  - Detailed <u>metadata</u> required via repository (FAIR principles)
  - <u>Linking</u> with related research outputs mandatory (e.g. data)
  - Publishing fees eligible only if <u>fully open access</u> (no hybrid)

Challenges for grantees (1):
Book publishing process and academic culture

- Definition of 'peer review' for books?

- Concept of 'author's accepted version' (AAM) may not be clear-cut in case of books?

- Persistent scepticism towards self-archiving of AAM ('AAM = inferior version'; layout can be important part of output)

- Impact of choice of publishing house/series for authors' careers

Challenges for grantees (2):
Practical implementation of funder rules

- Self-archiving of AAM in <u>immediate</u> OA generally not an option offered by publishers

- Licence requirements:

  - concerns about reuse of parts out of context, poor translations

  - how to deal with third party content

- Availability of high quality infrastructure adapted to books?

  - e.g. trusted repositories with metadata features supporting FAIR principles

Challenges for grantees (3): Costs

- Publishing costs for books published after end of grant
- Publishing costs for invited chapters in non-OA books
    - authors need to have open discussion with editor up-front before accepting to contribute
- Edited collections – who is / should cover costs for open access (editor or individual authors)?

Challenges for funders

- Policy development in view of great diversity of backgrounds, including language and publishing tradition and markets
- Discovery of outputs (books, chapters), especially after end of grant
  - team members' outputs hard to track
  - incomplete funding information in publisher metadata; automatic extraction from acknowledgements challenging
  - citation data for books not easily accessible
- Support of suitable infrastructure may not be within funder's remit

Opportunities

- Many experiments for alternative business models ongoing!
- Researchers can produce change through their behaviour
    - through their choice of publisher / publishing programme
    - through the way they assess others (hiring committees, grant selection panels)
    - by demanding adequate publisher services such as FAIR metadata and direct repository deposit (especially where a fee is paid)

What funders can do

- Incentivize good practices through strong mandates

- Provide adequate guidance and training to grantees

- Adopt good research assessment practices focused on content rather than prestige

- Contribute to broader debate through relevant networks (e.g. Open Access Books Network) and events

- Engage in discussions with grantees, publishers, infrastructure providers etc.

- Support relevant initiatives where compatible with the funder's remit

More information on Open Science at the ERC

- ERC page 'Manage your project - Open Science'
  https://erc.europa.eu/manage-your-project/open-science

- References provided on that page