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OpenCitations: an open science infrastructure on its way towards sustainability

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OpenCitations is a community-based open science infrastructure organization with the mission of harvesting and openly publishing accurate and comprehensive metadata describing the world's academic publications and the scholarly citations that link them, under open licenses at zero cost and without restriction for third-party analysis and re-use. This means that OpenCitations' activities generate no income to sustain its operations. Currently, OpenCitations operates on a mixed funding model that includes voluntary effort from its Directors, in-kind support from the University of Bologna, financial contributions from supporting organizations including donors and members that are used to support staff and computational infrastructure, and time-limited grant income from public and private funding agencies including the EU that is used solely for time-limited research and development projects. However, despite the valuable support from the community and the successful involvement in the SCOSS second funding cycle, OpenCitations is still seeking a 'business model' which could help move it from being a 'sustainable infrastructure' (in POSI terms) to being a financially sustained infrastructure. To strengthen its weak points, OpenCitations has recently launched two internal Working Groups dedicated to the themes of "Governance Evolution" and "Community Building", which in OpenCitations are deeply connected. Indeed, OpenCitations' stakeholder community is integrated into OpenCitations' existence both in a financial way, by providing economic support via membership and donations, and strategically, by guiding activities in the OpenCitations Council (made up of OpenCitations members) and the elected International Advisory Board. Moreover, OpenCitations never stops to build connections with other Open Science actors and initiatives, and to look for external advice as an active member of the "SCOSS family" group and the "POSI adopters" group. OpenCitations activities are community-driven and community-dedicated. For this reason, OpenCitations' way towards sustainability needs collective guidance and effort with the mission to make OpenCitations a solid and enduring infrastructure upon which the global scholarly community itself can rely for open bibliographic and citation metadata for many years to come.

Other key topic

Key Topic

Business models, governance and sustainability

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