A National Consortium for Open Academic Books in Sweden

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Final Report

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1. Objectives

The project's objective was to investigate improvements for the academic book publishing process in Sweden, with particular focus on better distribution (implementation of OA) and raising the prestige of OA publishing with improved quality control (peer review). Included in this was to propose workable organization, workflow and financing.

2. Concluding recommendations

2.1 Overall

- Academic books, particularly those published in Sweden and publically funded, should be made available via an open access version;
- Academic books should undergo an independent peer-review process;
- A national consortium should be set up that organizes a peer-review process for academic books and provides guidance on open access publishing;
- A consortium must work closely with existing publishing channels such as commercial publishers, Acta series and university presses;
- Peer-review should be single blind (i.e. reviewers are anonymous to authors but not vice versa) with two independent reviewers. New developments in peer-reviewing should be monitored for future potential application to academic books;
- We recommend that the consortium should be the responsibility of Swedish Research Council (SRC).
- We recommend that authors pay ca 10 000 SEK (non-refundable) for a peer review process; the remainder of the cost of the consortium should be covered as part of a national infrastructure;
- We recommend that publishers not be paid an extra sum to publish an OA version of a book, in recognition that they get peer review done cost-free;

2.2 Recommendations for National Funders

- National funding agencies should require for books that they support a freely accessible version and that the book has undergone independent peer review. We recommend funding agencies to increase the printing subsidy by 10 000 SEK to cover the cost of the peer review. It could also work if the 10 000 SEK could be included in project funding (or applied for separately in cases where project money comes from, e.g., a university and publishing subsidy from another source). A publishing subsidy of this nature would be in line with funders taking responsibility for the entire workflow associated with a project, from initiation to dissemination and ensuring high-quality output;
- Implementation of the first point also requires that someone takes central responsibility for the infrastructure required to allow an OA possibility for academic books (i.e. a national consortium for open academic books as outline here). Our

suggestion is that this responsibility is taken by SRC, in their already given assignment to be Sweden's national coordinator for OA.

- The issue of elite international publishers is going to require extra consideration in the short term. They do not generally offer an OA option (at present) yet resulting books are considered highly prestigious by universities and advantageous for a researcher's career. Even reviewers of grant applications tend to put significant weight upon these books (as a tangential point, guidelines for grant application reviewers need to be consistent with OA requirements). The long-term goal can be total OA, but a short-term transition could include an exception for "level 2" publishers¹;

2.3 Consideration for publishers

- Be aware that in the academic world, open access, has gone from "why OA" (i.e. justifying and motivating the concept) to "how OA" (i.e. large-scale implementation). Focus to date has mainly been on journals, but interest is now coming to books;
- For researchers there is an expectation that material that they want to use is visible (searchable) online;
- While researchers still think a print version of a book is important, there is a growing number that questions the distribution and availability of print-only material;
- There is evidence that freely available, electronic versions of academic books increases sales of print editions^{2,3}. A freemium model, where a simple electronic version is freely available and where extra products (e.g. print version, more advanced electronic version) are available for a fee, is one business model in use for OA books.
- Academic books need as much as possible to go through a peer-review process;
- The role of the publishing in the book production process is very important and will continue to be. However, it is important to recognize how technology changes are affecting academia (both how it works and what is expected). University libraries are taking an increasingly active role in the publishing process to provide solutions for problems that researchers are noticing⁴. It can be quite probable that there will be a shift from smaller commercial publishers towards university presses in Sweden.

3. Background

At the time of the development of this project, 2011, the move towards open access (OA) in the academic community had made sufficient progress, at least with respect to journal articles, that the time was right to place a focus on the academic book. Over the period of the project, there has been a continued development of OA in Sweden and internationally; now there is much broader support from the larger financing agencies, EU, universities and even governments. In Sweden, SRC has a directive from the government to formulate national

¹ As defined by <http://dbh.nsd.uib.no/>, or Swedish equivalent if developed.

² John Hilton III and David Wiley (2010) The Short-Term Influence of Free Digital Versions of Books on Print Sales, the Journal of Electronic Publishing (DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3998/3336451.0013.101>)

³ Eelco Ferwerda (2012) Preliminary results from two OAPEN projects (<http://www.against-the-grain.com/2012/11/open-access-book-publishing-case-studies/>)

⁴ Helena Francke (2013), *Publicera! Svenska forskningsbiblioteks arbete med publiceringsfrågor*, Svensk biblioteksörening

guidelines for OA. In essence, there has been a shift from “why OA” (i.e. first justifying and then encouraging the concept to researchers) to “how OA” (i.e. making it happen in as wide a scale as possible)⁵. In a very up-to-date development, the Wellcome Trust has just released (2013-05-30) an announcement that they will require monographs and chapters in anthologies that they fund to be OA⁶.

At the same time there is a growing awareness of weaknesses in the current academic book publishing system: variable quality control, non-optimized distribution, frequent loss of copyright even though much of the cost of producing the book is paid for by research funding etc. A general feeling amongst researchers, university libraries and even funding agencies is that the current model of production and distribution of academic books no longer works, mostly because university libraries use an ever-smaller proportion of their budgets for book purchases. Hence, it is necessary to find other ways to distribute books while still covering publishing costs. One way to do this is to make a simple (usually html) variant of a book’s text freely available and then to sell additional services such as a print version via print-on-demand and advanced electronic formats (for example the “freemium” model). While an option is also that authors pay some of the production costs (an equivalent to publication fees for OA journal articles), some feel (particularly internationally) that it is unrealistic to cover production costs using author fees in the humanities and social sciences. However, in Sweden, we are in another position with an established tradition whereby authors can obtain a print subsidy to cover publication costs.

According to SwePub⁷ researchers at Swedish universities produced 636 books in 2012. The data in SwePub cannot be taken as highly accurate, but as a rough picture it suffices. The “books” registered in SwePub include everything from larger project reports to anthologies and monographs. Some 60% of these are written in Swedish (and hence most probably published in Sweden) and about 50% are monographs. From experience with bibliometric analyses (and applying the “Norwegian Model”, where one gets an indication, via “level 2” publishers of “elite publishers”) experience shows that at an aggregated level in Sweden roughly 20-30% of books fall in the “elite” category⁸. These books have a very high prestige attached to them and correspondingly it is hard to recommend to researchers to not use these publishers “just” because there is no OA possibility. On the other hand, there is a large number of books which suffers from some or all of the issues mentioned above and which would benefit (in terms of distribution and resulting academic impact) from a functioning OA system.

⁵ Cf Helena Francke (2013), *Publicera! Svenska forskningsbiblioteks arbete med publiceringsfrågor*, Svensk biblioteksförening, p. 38

⁶ For details, see <http://www.wellcome.ac.uk/News/Media-office/Press-releases/2013/WTP052746.htm>

⁷ SwePub makes it possible to search among articles, conference papers, dissertations etc. published at Swedish universities. SwePub currently contains references to research publications registered in at present approximately thirty of the Swedish university publication databases. <http://swepub.kb.se/>

⁸ Ulf Kronman, Lisbeth Söderqvist & Susanna Bylin (2010), *Vid vilka förlag publicera sig humanister och samhällsvetare?*, internal unpublished report at SRC.

4. Communication with those involved in the publishing process

An underlying principle for the project has been to make use of as much of the strengths in the current publishing system as possible rather than to create an entirely new system. In this light, an important part of this project has been communicating with funding agencies, publishers, researchers and university libraries. Multiple contacts with interested parties were held, often initially to understand their perspective and what their contributions to the current system are and to introduce our ambitions; later contact was aimed to get feedback on more matured and concrete ideas that crystalized from the project. A list of the meetings, workshops, seminars and conferences that project members were involved with is given in Appendix B.

4.1 Workshop with Publishers

A workshop with publishers was organized by Katarina Bernhardsson and Thomas Neidenmark and held at Stockholm University, 2012-08-28. 17 publishers were contacted (Makadam, Gidlunds, Nordic Academic Press, Historiska Media, Sekel, Hström, Symposion, Carlssons, Ellerströms, Artos & Norma, Atlantis, Ramus, Nya Doxa, Arcus, Roos & Tegnér, Studentlitteratur, and Åström Editions), of which three participated, Nordic Academic Press, Makadam förlag and Atlantis förlag, along with SRC and Riksbankens jubileumsfond (RJ). A number of other publishers was interested but could not participate on the given date. Others were only going to be interested once a policy decision had been made (*i.e.* to go OA). The low participation can be seen as a reminder of the importance of these issues being pursued by researchers, as publishers will not likely take the lead. Presentations were given by Katarina Bernhardsson, Thomas Neidenmark and Karin Henning (overview of the project, its objectives and the role of bibliometrics for researchers), Jakob Christensson from Atlantis (a publisher's perspective on OA for books) and Lisbeth Söderqvist (SRC) and Britta Lövgren (RJ) (funding agency perspectives on OA books). Although the publishers' views differed, the resulting discussion was positive. The dominating response from the publishers present was that collaboration in the academic book world would be highly desired; smaller publishers do not have the expertise or the networks to implement a peer-review process. Swedish academic publishers are also typically small, with only a small number of employees. There was even a positive reaction to making an electronic version of a manuscript freely available on the internet from some of the publishers. Additionally, the fact that at least anecdotal evidence at this point shows that a free, electronic, version of a book can lead to increased sales of a printed version, means that some publishers are willing to look at the possibilities of OA. There was also an interest from the publishers to, if possible, not only be allowed access to the consortium's peer review, but to take part in the consortium as stakeholders. If this would be advisable depends on how the consortium is structured.

A follow up meeting, on invitation from two of the publishers, Makadam förlag and Nordic Academic Press was held in Lund. The purpose was to continue discussion and for the project to get feedback on a proposed workflow. Interest was still strong for a collaborative approach in which academia was responsible for quality control issues (peer review) and publishers

focused on, e.g., design, layout and distribution. Concerns were raised about the potential increase in the publishing time resulting from a peer-review process: this needs to be kept as short as possible. It was also clear that the details of a workflow would need careful consideration to meet both the requirements of this project and a publisher. For example, a manuscript that has been through peer review cannot undergo significant changes, meaning that language checking needs to be done prior to the final peer review, or, there needs to be shared specifications on what kind of changes are allowed after the peer review has been done. The publishers thought it was unrealistic for them to organize proof-reading too early in the publishing process. The general opinion was that licensing of an OA version of a book would need to be left up to publishers and authors to agree upon in the short term; ideally, a Creative Commons license would be used, but it seems like this could be a contentious issue to begin with.

4.2 Participation in the EU project “Going for Gold” development

Through contact with Eelco Ferwerda, OAPEN⁹, we were invited to participate in the development of a project for submission to a EU funding program. The project, tentatively entitled “Going for Gold”, led by Paul Ayris, University College London, initially aimed to set up a European-wide infrastructure to allow university presses to publish academic books OA without having to develop local solutions for the publishing process, particularly the formatting, electronic version creation, printing, distribution and marketing phases. The existing infrastructure of Amsterdam University Press and OAPEN were to provide the core for the proposed European infrastructure. Acquisition and quality control would be the responsibility of local university presses. Some 14 partners expressed interest in participating in the project (OAPEN, Amsterdam University Press, Leiden University Press, Freiburg Open Book Publishers, University of Barcelona, University of Edinburgh, Ubiquity Press, University College London, University of Helsinki, LIBER¹⁰, Utrecht University, University of Nijmegen, Karlsruhe Institute of Technology, and University of Manchester). From Sweden we have participated in two planning meetings: David Lawrence attended one 2012-04-10 and David Lawrence and Jörgen Eriksson attended a second 2012-09-06/07.

The thinking for the EU project is over three years to put a network of infrastructure in place (based on mainly existing components) and publish a number of books (30 is a tentative number, which seems a little low given the number of partners involved and the size of the project). To make this work, local participating universities were asked to identify 3-5 series, based on local research strengths, that they would host and publish relevant books in. Series would be non-overlapping and all books in a given subject area, independent of source would end up in a given specialist series. Each series would be responsible for organizing peer-review of submitted manuscripts. The initial thinking with setting up these series was that it would facilitate quick set up of networks of reviewers and hence allow books to be published relatively quickly in the project (the series being based around leading research groups, which

⁹ Open Access Publishing in European Networks, <http://www.oapen.org/>. Eelco Ferwerda is director of the recently established OAPEN Foundation, which is dedicated to Open Access books in Humanities and Social Sciences.

¹⁰ Ligue des Bibliothèques Européennes de Recherche - Association of European Research Libraries.

presumably would have extensive international networks of people to draw upon for reviewing). Discussion within the EU project tended to get a little focused on the series *per se* and that was a little problematic in our opinion. We were rather skeptical to the idea of setting up (mainly) new series and getting them up and running so that they published more than a very small number of books in the three-year time-frame of the project. From a Swedish perspective we also had concerns about local branding issues (e.g. the Acta series are important at various Swedish universities). Furthermore it was unclear how a non-Swedish organized series will be able to handle manuscripts written in Swedish (according to SwePub, some 60% of Swedish books published in 2012 were written in Swedish).

An extra “bonus” from being involved in the EU project is that it has allowed discussion with other European players in the OA book movement (particularly OAPEN and Amsterdam University Press) and to gain from their experiences.

The EU project underwent a number of changes over the period of this project at the point of writing appears to be heading towards an increased focus on business models, particularly for convincing non-OA publishers to make books available OA. In the end, only Stockholm University is continuing its involvement in the EU project.

4.3 Meeting with Funding Agencies

The Swedish funding agencies which have OA requirements (or are contemplating requirements) for the work that they fund have formed a network, under the initiative of SRC, and meet periodically to exchange experiences. Project members were given the opportunity to participate at a meeting, with the objective to explain the thinking in terms of a national consortium and to get feedback. SRC, RJ, FAS (Swedish Council for Working Life and Social Research), the Swedish Research Council Formas, Vinnova (Swedish Governmental Agency for Innovation Systems - is Sweden's innovation agency), The Foundation for Baltic and East European Studies and SSR (the Swedish Foundation for Strategic Research) participated but only SRC and FAS were able to continue to give feedback. The overall response to the ideas in the project (implementation of peer-review and a resulting OA version of Swedish academic books) was positive. Much of the discussion focused on who could take responsibility for a national consortium. While there are arguments for SRC, at FAS they wondered whether it would feel a little strange that books from projects funded by FAS would go through an evaluation process organized by SRC. However, at the same time it was recognized that any connection with SRC need not be strongly emphasized. The Swedish National Data service (SND) which is funded to a significant extent by SRC and is a national service for making research data available has been raised as a working example of a service which has connections with SRC but is seen as at least semi-independent. In any case, it was also not clear that SRC would be prepared to volunteer to take the role of coordinator for a national consortium for book peer review and a suggestion was to contact the Swedish government via the Ministry of Education and Research, to get backing for the idea at that level and possibly a directive to, e.g., SRC to have the overall responsibility for a national consortium. Contact was taken with the Ministry of Education and Research and the suggestion returned to SRC (the General Director and those that work directly with OA

issues) was that SRC should consider issues around OA and academic books in their assignment for 2014 to develop forms and national guidelines for OA. This suggestion has also been incorporated in the 2013 remit for SRC.

4.4 Meeting with the Austrian Science Fund (FWF)

A joint workshop was held with FWF¹¹ in Vienna, at their invitation; they have been working with a programme for funding OA books including a requirement for independent peer-review and were interested in the Swedish situation. The first part of the workshop involved also participants from the Austrian government's Department of Education; the latter were interested in the broad picture of Sweden's work with OA issues and even bibliometrics. The second part of the workshop was an exchange of ideas and experiences between our work in this project and FWF's programme for supporting OA books¹². The FWF, on their own initiative, to ensure the highest distribution and standards, has implemented something very similar to what is proposed here as a national consortium for open academic books in Sweden:

- Authors apply for funding and then are free to choose publisher. A publisher must agree to allow an electronic version of the book to be made freely available via FWF's repository;
- Books must undergo a peer-review process with international reviewers;
- Basic grant of up to Euro 18 000 for production of a book + OA version. FWF organizes peer review but there is an allowance of an additional Euro 2 000 if the publisher organizes peer review.
- FWF is responsible for approving the quality and language check.

4.5 Meetings with Researchers

Quite a bit of feedback was obtained from researchers via informal meetings and via the seminars (listed in Appendix B) that the group participated in, particularly as active speakers.

Furthermore, a total of 8 researchers and 2 research groups at Gothenburg, Linköping, Lund or Stockholm University were interviewed about their general responses to OA and peer review and the details in the consortium approach. These meetings with researchers had as objective to get feedback from a range of researchers in Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS) areas, to get an indication of how researchers feel about the ideas that this project has come to. The disciplines included were Political Science, Religious History, Linguistics, Industrial economy, Gender Studies, Ethnic and Migration Studies, Global Studies and Culture Science, Literature Studies, English and History of Ideas.

While this was not a formal study in any way, a common set of questions was used as a starting point for discussions (see Appendix A (in Swedish)). Detailed results are not presented here, rather a summary of common themes.

¹¹ Austrian Science Fund, <http://www.fwf.ac.at/>

¹² For details, see http://www.fwf.ac.at/en/projects/stand_alone_publications.html

Overall, contacted researchers generally supported the idea of increased quality control of academic books in the form of a peer-review system. Detail such as precise instructions to reviewers is something that would have to be worked out in an implementation stage, where HSS researchers would be included in the discussion and international comparisons would be made. Several researchers pointed out that instructions would need to be flexible enough to take into consideration differences between fields. It is also important that the peer review process does not add significantly to the length of time required to publish a book. The feeling was that an honorarium of around 5-10 000 SEK to do a review might help. It was also felt that it would help if peer-review became an activity in the academic world that “counted”, in terms of career progress. Newer forms of peer-review, e.g. open peer-review, were met with a degree of skepticism. There was not a clear demarcation when it came to whether peer-review should be single or double blind¹³ (single was slightly more “popular”, for the practical belief that in a small country one would most often be able to guess who an author was, in double blind review), with two or three reviewers (clearly more than one). An interesting comment that came up several times was that, as a reviewer it would be important to feel that one’s contribution really was used and lead to improvements in a manuscript. As such, even a discussion (presumably anonymous from the reviewer’s side) with the author would be desirable. International reviewers would be desirable as much as possible; a prevailing fear was for “power concentration”: a fear that a small number of reviewers would be making decisions about a significant portion of academic output in Sweden; even that a centralized consortium approach might put too much “power” in the hands of a small number of people.

In some ways OA for books was more controversial. Nearly all researchers admitted not being particularly aware of OA as pertaining to books. When the advantages (increased visibility, distribution, searchability etc.) were explained there was often support for an OA version. However, many are still skeptical to how easy it is to read an electronic version and as such felt that a print version was also still very important. Many also still had the view that an electronic version has lower “quality” than a printed book (particularly if the former is freely available). Further, there was a very strong feeling that books published with “elite” international publishers were very important (critical even) for one’s career and international credibility as a researcher.

5. Quality Control of Books

Historically, quality control of academic books has been widely varying. Some of the international publishers use a peer review system similar to that used for journal articles, however, as was pointed out by one of the interviewed researchers, it is often left to the editor of anthologies to decide on the degree of peer review (and to implement it) of contributions. As such, even within the larger international publishers, it is not necessarily true that all academic books undergo the same quality control process. Most Swedish publishers do not apply peer review, but instead have an editorial review, concentrating on style and readability, and sometimes copy-editing. The differences between Swedish publishers are substantial, and

¹³ Single blind peer review means that the reviewers are anonymous, whereas the authors are known to the reviewers. In double blind peer review, both reviewers and authors are unknown to each other.

there has been a move toward academic books being published by small publishers with a small staff, more or less specializing in academic publishing, but without systematized peer review.

Beyond peer-review, editorial committee review has been popular for books (a committee reviews books and judges their quality and suitability for publishing) but there appears to be a move away from this internationally. It is important to keep in mind that for many publishers, particularly the international ones, the economic aspect of a decision to publish is very important; the book has to sell enough copies to cover its costs. OAPEN requires that participating book publishers have a transparent peer review process conducted by independent academics. FWF also requires independent peer review of books that they fund. In the latter case, reviewers must be international. OASPA¹⁴ is a little vaguer, but requires “some kind” of peer review process.

Various new models for peer review are under development in the academic world, e.g. open peer review, peerage of science... However, the clear feedback we have received from researchers regarding books, is that peer review is a good idea but (for now) in the traditional sense.

We recommend that while new developments be monitored, that OA books be peer-reviewed by two independent reviewers (inclusion of an international reviewer would be positive), single blind (i.e. reviewers are anonymous to authors but not vice versa). Beyond what is normal for journal articles, it would be desirable for the consortium to mediate a discussion between authors and reviewers (maintaining the reviewers’ anonymity), so that authors do not perceive that reviewers have absolute power over a manuscript. It will be important for the consortium editor overseeing the process to make an informed decision about the fairness of a review and how well an author responds to critique. In cases of doubt, assistance from a further reviewer should be sought.

6. Organization and Workflow for Open Academic Books in Sweden

A practical objective for this project was to propose an organization and workflow for a publishing process for academic books that results in an OA version. The idea has been to develop as little “new” as possible; instead making use of all the strengths in the current publishing system. The publishing system is in effect a partnership between publishers, funding agencies and universities/researchers, each of which has strengths or definite roles:

- Publishers: author support, editorial work flow, print distribution, marketing¹⁵;
- Funding agencies: financing, policy influence;
- Universities/researchers: academic quality control, e-distribution.

¹⁴ Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association, <http://oaspa.org/>

¹⁵ Note that marketing is not always a strength in Swedish publishers; this is one of the areas where they do not always manage to live up to the expectations of researchers. This is therefore an area where the consortium on a central level could contribute, by supplementing the work of the publisher with a central marketing of the titles published.

In other words, there is not a need for a new publisher, a “Swedish University Press”, but rather an organization that ensures the possibility for OA versions of academic books and organizes a quality control process. To make publications available OA can appear to be relatively easy: make use of a university’s institutional repository to “publish” a book. However, a very common impression about freely available and even self-published material is that it is not of academic quality¹⁶. From the report from DOAB¹⁷, User Needs Analysis¹⁸:

The issue of quality was one of the main topic points during the online discussion. It was suggested that it would be valuable to have the evaluation procedure available/visible within the book as well as in the books metadata and in digital repositories, making the review practices visible and clear, for instance using some sort of icon system for peer review like Creative Commons uses. Although this kind of transparency is not very common in printed books, it was felt that Open Access books would profit from this, as they are often perceived of being of less quality. Next there is the issue of vanity publishing and the rise of predatory publishers, which also tend to influence the quality perception with respect to Open Access books.

One way to give an OA book a chance to be considered credible is to have a quality control process which certifies that the book meets academic standards.

Hence, the current publishing system needs the addition of consistent peer-review (independent, single blind) of book manuscripts and the publication of an OA version of the resulting book. The most effective way of implementing this would be via a national consortium with members from academia, comprising those that understand the peer-review process and OA issues, that works with commercial publishers, Acta series and university presses. Figure 1 gives an overview of an organization for a national consortium for open academic books in Sweden. It has deliberately been kept as simple and small as possible. The core of the structure is the managing committee, a group of about 5 people (from academia, part-time, e.g. 20% each (with one person with perhaps 50%)) with support from an administrator and technician (again part time). The role of the managing committee is to be the contact point for publishers and authors while organizing a peer-review process. With the help of an advisory board comprising senior researchers in HSS (one natural source can be the editorial functions of the Acta series run through a number of Swedish universities), a database of potential reviewers can be built up. One could envision that the role of the advisory group will be particularly important to begin with when it may be necessary to check with specific members on a manuscript-by-manuscript basis as new ones come in: “who would be suitable to review?”. Overtime, the contact could become more seldom.

¹⁶ See for example Dallmeier-Tiessen et al. (2011) Highlights from the SOAP project survey. What Scientists Think about Open Access Publishing, <http://arxiv.org/abs/1101.5260>

¹⁷ Directory of Open Access Books, <http://www.doabooks.org/>

¹⁸ Janneke Adema (2012) DOAB User Needs Analysis – Final Report – <http://doabooks.files.wordpress.com/2012/11/doab-user-needs.pdf>

A steering committee is necessary to provide overall guidance for the consortium concept. Representative membership from the major groups involved (universities, researchers, funders, publishers, university libraries) would be desirable.

Figure 2 shows an overall schematic representation of the workflow. The process begins with an author contacting a publisher either with a ready manuscript or with a proposal to write a manuscript. The publisher and author work together until there is a manuscript which is ready for a peer review process. An important aspect of the consortium idea is that not all academic books would necessarily go through this peer review process. Many books are not suited for this kind of process – because of their content, genre, or the time pressure on the author. Additionally, the process is not designed for Ph.D. theses. This kind of time-consuming process would be impossible to attach to a Ph.D., though the feedback we have received shows that there should be a possibility for re-working, to change it from “thesis” to “book”, after which the latter could be submitted to a review process.

The issues of language checking and when it should happen raised a lot of discussion. Our view, from a manuscript quality point of view, is that once a manuscript has been through peer-review, it is undesirable for the manuscript to undergo what could be significant language alternations and as such language checking needs to be done prior to peer-review (either through a commercial service or by someone with the relevant language as mother tongue). Hence it is a language-checked manuscript, or a manuscript of equivalent quality, that (after the author and publisher agree that the book has the potential to undergo peer review) is submitted by the publisher to the managing committee of the national consortium. Whether the publisher or the author organizes language checking can be left up to authors and publishers to agree about. It can be that in cases where a manuscript requires major revisions that the language checking must be repeated. Again whether this is organized by the publisher or the author is up to them to agree upon.

Fig. 1: Overview of the organizational structure for a national consortium for open academic books in Sweden.

“Publisher” includes commercial publishers, university series and university presses; the consortium is not envisaged to be a publisher *per se* and it is seen as best that the initial submission of a manuscript comes from a publisher and not a “freelance” author. This is to make sure that the strengths we identified above with publishers (author support, editorial work flow, print, distribution) are present in the workflow, as these will not be something the consortium will contribute with.

Fig. 2: Overview of the workflow for a national consortium for open academic books in Sweden.

The managing committee checks the gross suitability of a manuscript for a peer review process (e.g. that language checking has been done, that it is an academic book (as opposed, perhaps, to a textbook)) and then either through an internal database or with direct contact of a member of the advisory board, approach reviewers. Reviewers would be asked to complete their review within a reasonable time and would be paid an honorarium of around 5 000 SEK. What is a reasonable time for the peer review of a book requires further investigation. The managing committee has the responsibility to see that timelines are held as much as possible. Once reviews have been received, the managing committee can coordinate a discussion between the reviewers and the author (maintaining reviewers’ anonymity, as desired) and mediate to reach an agreed list of corrections and modifications. If the latter are significant, a second round of feedback from the reviewers would be required (and perhaps even further language checking). In cases where there is strong disagreement between a reviewer and an author, an extra reviewer can be used. Otherwise, with clear documentation from the author, the managing committee takes the responsibility that the recommended modifications are made and takes the final step of certifying the manuscript as “peer-reviewed”. Details of the peer-review process and instructions for reviewers are things that would be set up in a start-up phase, with input from the advisory board. A certified manuscript is then passed back to the

publisher where it continues through the publishing process, e.g. copyediting, formatting, graphic design, printing, creation of an e-version (the latter which can be made OA, being a mandatory requirement). In cases where a manuscript fails to be certified, there is nothing stopping the book from being published; it just will not be marked as certified peer-reviewed. If the book is financed by a funder that requires peer review, then the funders would follow their policies for projects that do not deliver to the required standard.

It is desirable that publishers can offer a platform for an OA version of a certified manuscript and as such an important role for the managing committee will be to provide guidance about OA and how to implement it. Additionally, with virtually all universities having an institutional repository, the OA version of a book should be made available via that. It is also important that the consortium has a simple interface highlighting books that have been peer-reviewed. European channels for distribution of an OA book, such as DOAB and OAPEN can be explored during an implementation phase.

7. Economic Considerations

A gross budget for a consortium for open academic books in Sweden includes:

Activity/Cost	Fixed Cost per year
Personnel, Managing Committee, 4 people at 20%, one at 50% with salary 35 000 SEK/mth	850 000
Personnel, administrator (20%) and technician (10%)	200 000
Travel	50 000
Overhead	350 000
Total Fixed Costs	1 450 000
	Variable Costs per book
Reviewers (5 000 each)	10 000

A long-term solution obviously requires that these costs are covered. Several options are possible:

1. The full cost for the consortium is recovered from authors. This would entail a cost for authors of around 40 – 50 000 SEK per book for the peer-review process (the fixed costs are allocated over an estimated 50 books per year, a figure that would likely be difficult to meet in the first years). Because it is a large sum, this option would require changes in the current publishing subsidy system and as such would be harder to implement;
2. The fixed costs are included as part of a national infrastructure, e.g. by SRC, and authors pay for the costs specific for their book (i.e. the remuneration for reviewers, ca 10 000 SEK, non-refundable). It could also be that the variable costs are also included

as part of a national infrastructure, in which case, authors would not pay any extra. The disadvantage with the latter is that it can lead to manuscripts being submitted for peer review that are unsuitable, in effect, since authors have nothing to lose. A system where authors have to pay a small amount would effectively eliminate unserious submissions and as such is what we recommend.

3. Universities with publishing activity create an informal network and through in-kind contribution of personnel time, “donate” the fixed costs. Authors then pay the variable cost (it would not be unreasonable that authors from universities contributing resources would get their cost reduced or waived). This could be in collaboration with, e.g., SRC. We see the informal network as a short-term, pilot solution, which would transition to option 2 above.

It is worth noting that under the system we recommend here, working together with commercial publishers, that publishers do not receive an extra payment to make a version freely available. First, publishers will gain from having manuscripts peer-reviewed without cost and secondly, there is little evidence that sales of print versions of academic books decrease when an online version is freely available; in fact it is likely that the added visibility and searchability will lead to increased print sales. For cases where a non-peer-reviewed book is published OA, the cost of producing that book is similar to that for a non-OA print edition. This, together with the growing evidence^{2,3} that print sales are not negatively affected by an OA edition, would indicate that an increase of the current printing subsidy levels for this scenario over today’s level is not required.

8. Prestige

Prestige is a very important consideration for universities and researchers in where work is published. One objective of this project is to propose a quality certification process that is seen as prestigious. The challenge is to create “prestige” in OA as quickly as possible to make a consortium successful. Some example strategies which would allow prestige to be created quickly include:

- Transparent peer-review process
- Support from SRC /other funders
- Advisory group/editorial board composition
- Start in a small number of defined areas
- Actively solicit manuscripts from “top” names

9. Bibliometrics

The question of how a consortium approach would be aligned with bibliometrics has been thoroughly discussed. Bibliometric indicators for research evaluation are in constant change and as such we have not attempted to tailor a consortium structure too closely with one model. A citation-based model is used for allocating research funds nationally in Sweden, but some universities apply the national model of Norway for local evaluation. There is also suggested, in the research bill of 2012, that Sweden in the future should use peer review panels more than bibliometrics when evaluating research.

The Swedish bibliometric model does not give credit for books, whereas the Norwegian model does count books/chapters published in approved scientific publication channels (i.e. publishers). We suggest that publications published as certified peer reviewed by a national consortium be seen as having a double source (in this case a publisher and a consortium accreditation; much the same as books can be published in more than one series at the same time), which means that the consortium will be a publication channel with a guaranteed high quality peer review process. Without changing the whole publication landscape of Sweden to fit a specific model, this would be in line with the model that concentrates on *publication channels*, and this should make it possible for a peer reviewed book to be counted as published in an approved scientific publication channel. Additionally, it would fit with any future panel-based system.

10. OA business models

Part of the role of a national consortium for open academic books in Sweden would be to provide guidance on implementing OA to publishers. While this report is not intended to be a how-to guide in itself, we have given some consideration to OA business models. A fear amongst commercial publishers is that a free, electronic version of a book would cause sales of a printed (or other) edition to reduce drastically. There is little evidence that this is true and in fact, preliminary results³ from a pair of on-going OAPEN studies show that an open electronic version increases distribution significantly and does not negatively impact sales of a printed edition. If one thinks about the current situation with academic books one can see that an on-line, searchable version is very likely to increase the distribution and visibility of a book very significantly. An academic book is often not something that one can summarize with a brief description and a title and is often not something that a reader starts at the beginning and reads to the end. For the researcher/reader it is often parts of a book that are of interest: it can be very hard to find out about the existence of partial content in a book when there is only a print version. There is also, still, a very strong preference, when it comes to reading, to do so with a printed book (rather than using a computer, tablet or e-reader). This means that there are commercial opportunities that are increased by the presence of an on-line version of a book. Example alternatives include:

- Freemium model: a PDF file is the OA version; one then sells different formats (e.g. epub, print);
- Author-side publication fees;
- Crowd funding: several/many libraries contribute small amounts to “release” a book;
- University support: (e.g. the Acta series model)
- University library presses (with subsidy from central university)

11. The Next Step

It would be ideal if SRC immediately takes responsibility for implementing a national consortium for academic books. If this does not happen, however, there are academic publishing activities, at e.g. Stockholm University Press, Linköping University Electronic Press, and Acta Series at University of Gothenburg, Uppsala, Lund and possibly Södertörn University in which there is a strong desire (even commitment) to implementing peer review

and open access. In light of the latter, the following is a proposed work plan which can be seen as a pilot, or start up, for a longer-term, more permanent solution.

In concrete terms the following steps are suggested (not all have to follow the sequence given):

1. Set up a managing group, to oversee the following process. Composition could follow closely the composition of the current project's active members, since to a large degree, they are involved with or well connected with the publishing activities outlined above;
2. Prepare a first draft of peer-review guidelines and instructions; prepare a first draft of OA guidelines for publishers;
3. Set up a reference group of senior researchers involved in academic book publishing (a natural source could be Acta series chief editors). The role of this group initially is to give credibility to the concept, to provide input on peer-review guidelines and other practical details. In the longer term this group can also provide guidance on suitable reviewers;
4. Organize a combined workshop in Stockholm with FWF, SRC, RJ, a number of editors in chief of Acta series;
5. Fix a name and graphic profile for the consortium and the peer-review certification;
6. Fix the details of the workflow;
7. Work with existing publishers to raise awareness and create partnership;
8. Proactively work to inform researchers of the opportunities with OA publishing;
9. Beginning accepting manuscripts; work with reference group to recruit reviewers;

12. Reference List

Adema, Janneke (2012) DOAB User Needs Analysis – Final Report –

<http://doabooks.files.wordpress.com/2012/11/doab-user-needs.pdf>

Austrian Science Fund, stand alone publications:

http://www.fwf.ac.at/en/projects/stand_alone_publications.html

Dallmeier-Tiessen et al. (2011) Highlights from the SOAP project survey. What Scientists Think about Open Access Publishing, <http://arxiv.org/abs/1101.5260>

Directory of Open Access Books, <http://www.doabooks.org/>

Ferwerda, Eelco (2012), Preliminary results from two OAPEN projects (<http://www.against-the-grain.com/2012/11/open-access-book-publishing-case-studies/>)

Francke, Helena (2013), *Publicera! Svenska forskningsbiblioteks arbete med publiceringsfrågor*, Svensk biblioteksförning

Hilton III, John and David Wiley (2010), The Short-Term Influence of Free Digital Versions of Books on Print Sales, the Journal of Electronic Publishing (DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3998/3336451.0013.101>)

Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste^{Database for statistikk om høgre utdanning.}
<http://dbh.nsd.uib.no/>.

Open Access Publishing in European Networks (OAPEN), <http://www.oapen.org/>.

Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association (OASPA), <http://oaspa.org/>

Swepub: <http://swepub.kb.se/>

Wellcome Trust, press release: <http://www.wellcome.ac.uk/News/Media-office/Press-releases/2013/WTP052746.htm>

Appendix A: Standard questions for researchers

Intervjuer med forskare

Projektet "Towards Quality-Controlled OA Monographs in Sweden"

Kort beskrivning av projektet som inledning till intervjun

Syftet med projektet är att undersöka möjligheten att etablera en infrastruktur för kvalitetsgranskning och open access-publicering av vetenskapliga monografier i Sverige. I takt med ökade krav på open access-publicering även för böcker är det viktigt att det ges möjlighet för författaren att få en form av kvalitetsstämpel genom att materialet granskas (peer review) innan det tillgängliggörs. Inom projektet undersöker vi olika tänkbara modeller för kvalitetsgranskning i form av ett nationellt samarbete.

Frågor

Nuvarande publiceringsläge inom ämnet:

- Hur ser det ut inom ditt fält/ämne när det gäller:
 - o Publiceringsutgivning, bok- tidskriftspublicering?
 - o Kvalitetsgranskning/peer-review? Hur går det till/vilken typ?
 - o Hur produceras en bok vanligen inom ditt ämnesområde (hur går det till att skriva en bok – från idé till färdig publikation)? Finansiering, val av förlag? Språkgranskning?

Kvalitetskontroll (peer-review):

- Kan du beskriva hur kvalitetskontroll/granskningsförfarandet går till för böcker inom ditt ämnesområde?
- Hur ser du på:
 - o double blind review (både författare och granskare är anonyma)
 - o single blind review (granskaren är anonym/eller författaren??)
 - o open peer review (granskningskommentarer publiceras med publikationen; anonymt, med namn)
 - o editorial review (redaktionsgranskning??)
- Hur många granskare (en eller två) bör det lämpligen finnas?
- Om du själv utför granskningsarbete/peer-review – vad är värdet av det? Varför utföra granskningsarbete?

Open Access:

- Hur ser du på open access-publicering i samband med bokutgivning (fördelar/nackdelar)?
- Vad innebär en övergång till en OA-modell för böcker?
- Erfarenhet av open access-publicering?

Beskrivning av modell B och arbetsflöde B (enligt vårt förslag):

- Hur ser du på arbetsflöde B?
- Hur ser du på modell B administration/olika aktörer?
 - o Finns det risk för maktkoncentration i en grupp?

- Tror du att det skulle fungera utifrån arbetstid/arbetsbelastning?
- Vem (eller var) bör ta ett övergripande ansvar för for a centralized approach to OA books?

Övrigt

- Hur borde meritering och utvärdering vara kopplat till kvalitetsgranskning/icke-kvalitetsgranskade böcker?

Appendix B: Meetings, Seminars, Workshops Conferences that project members were involved with

Project meetings	2012-02-21 2012-05-03 2012-09-13, 14 2013-01-24, 25 2013-05-02, 03	Norrköping Gothenburg Lund Uppsala Stockholm
Participation in EU “Going for Gold” project preparation	2012-04-10 2012-09-06,07	Amsterdam Amsterdam
<i>Meetings with Publishers, Funders, Researchers</i>		
Workshop with publishers	2012-08-28	Stockholm
Follow up meeting with Makadam förlag, Nordic Academic Press	2013-01-09	Lund
Meeting with OA funding agencies network	2012-11-14	Stockholm
Meetings with Acta-nämnden at University of Gothenburg	2012-05-04, 2012-12-12	Gothenburg
Meeting with Austrian national research funding agency and Austrian department of education	2013-03-05, 06	Vienna
Various meetings with researchers	Spring 2013	Göteborg, Linköping, Lund, Stockholm
<i>Presentations given</i>		
Mötesplats Open Access (presentation)	2012-04-14, 15	Norrköping
Workshop on Academic Monographs	2012-05-15	Södertörn (organized by Erland Jansson)
Participation in OA week activities	2012-10-23 2012-10-24	Stockholm Gothenburg
Mötesplats Open Access (presentation)	2013-04-17, 18	Gothenburg
<i>Conferences attended</i>		
COASP	2012-09-19, 21	Budapest
Berlin-10	2012-11-07, 08	Berlin
UNICA conference (with poster)	2012-11-25	Brussels
Bokmarknaden i Kris	2013-03-18	Stockholm