Institutions can now participate in collaborative OA funding in media studies and social sciences

HANNOVER, 1 June 2022 – Project KOALA https://projects.tib.eu/koala/ ("Konsortiale Open-Access-Lösungen aufbauen", Building consortial solutions for Open Access) has launched its first pledging phase for publications in the fields of media studies and social sciences. The project is funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), and the aim of the two project partners, the TIB – Leibniz Information Centre for Science and Technology and the Communication, Information and Media Centre (KIM) of the University of Konstanz, is to jointly establish sustainable, collaborative financing of open access journals and book series, which will enable them to operate without costs for authors.

In the so-called pledging phase, supporters – libraries, research institutions, foundations, museums, associations, companies and even individuals – commit to contributing to the costs of financing OA publications. If the targeted number of supporters is reached, they contribute according to their size and the volume of the bundled publications. If not enough supporters are found, the KOALA funding will not come into effect.

How does the KOALA model work?

Traditionally, scientific and scholarly journals and book series are financed through (mostly institutional) subscriptions or the sale of single copies, which excludes a large number of potential readers from access. On the other hand, some open access journals let authors pay for publishing open access, charging so-called article processing charges (APCs). “We think that access to scientific and scholarly knowledge should be free and without financial barriers. This is why we strive to establish sustainable and fair open access models,” says Marco Tullney, overall project lead for KOALA at the TIB.

Professor Dr Sören Auer, director of TIB, adds: “Collaborative open access funding by diverse consortia taps into the long and comprehensive experience libraries have had with consortia. We are now adapting this well-established model for open access publications.”

“We see a great need for open access funding beyond APCs, but so far there are not enough solutions. I firmly believe that with KOALA we can establish funding models that can contribute to publication diversity and cost reduction,” explains Dr Anja Oberländer, sub-project leader and deputy director of the Communication, Information and Media Centre (KIM) at the University of Konstanz.

The KOALA pilot portfolio includes the following two bundles:

KOALA Media Studies 2023
What are suitable journals and book series for KOALA?

Potential candidates for funding by KOALA consortia are journals or publication series that are planning to provide direct access to full texts without charging publication fees, or already do so. This includes journals that are already open access as well as journals that are currently only accessible to subscribers and want to change their model. Journals or series that currently charge APCs but are willing to stop doing so can also participate.

Besides publishing open access, KOALA requires journals and book series to adhere to a set of standards: These are based on Plan S, a strategy to promote open access to publicly funded scientific knowledge, and other relevant initiatives. The publishers and editors participating in KOALA receive extensive support in implementing these standards.

How are the prices determined?

The prices for the individual bundles are determined on the basis of the financial requirements the journals and book series specify to KOALA in order to sustainably operate their publication. For each bundle, there is a pricing scale with several tiers to which participating supporters can assign themselves according to their size. The journals and book series will then receive funding from the KOALA consortium for a period of three years.

How can I or my institution participate in the funding?

The majority of the acquisitions departments of academic libraries in Germany will receive information about participation in the KOALA consortium by email within the next few days. Other interested parties are welcome to contact the project team by email at koala@tib.eu or attend one of the information events.

Can other journals be included?

The bundles for the current pledging phase have been finalised. However, preparations for the next funding round starting in 2024 are already underway; interested journals or book series are welcome to contact us.

Project KOALA is funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) for a period of two years.

Further information on the KOALA project: https://projects.tib.eu/koala/

About TIB

As the German National Library of Science and Technology, TIB provides science and industry with literature and information on technology, architecture, chemistry, computer science, mathematics and physics. TIB is the world’s largest specialist library in its fields, and has an outstanding collection of basic and highly specialised technical and
scientific information. This also includes objects such as 3D models, research data and audiovisual media. TIB is committed to openness, i.e. open access to information, publications and scientific data: It aims to ensure that information and knowledge are more transparent, accessible and reusable.

TIB continues to expand its role as a German information centre for the digitisation of science and technology and conducts applied research and development to generate new services and optimise existing ones. The focus is on Responsible Data Science, non-textual materials, Scientific Data Management, Open Science and Visual Analytics.

The TIB supports specialist and research communities at www.tib.eu with scientific content and digital services in the various phases of scientific work. The TIB’s AV-Portal (av.tib.eu) allows users to search the large stock of scientific videos based on semantic analysis methods. By assigning DOI names (Digital Object Identifiers), the TIB ensures the quality as well as the permanent availability and referencability of scientific objects.

As a regular host of international conferences and specialist forums, the TIB offers platforms for networking and exchange at the crossroads of research, industry and information science.

TIB is a public-law foundation of the Federal State of Lower Saxony. The library is a member of the Leibniz Association.

URL for press release: https://av.tib.eu – Go to TIB AV-Portal