Principles of Open Scholarly Infrastructure

Comparison between version 1.1 and 2.0

Governance

- **Coverage across the scholarly enterprise** – research transcends disciplines, geography, institutions, and stakeholders. Organisations and the infrastructure they run need to reflect this.
- **Stakeholder Governed** – a board-governed organisation drawn from the stakeholder community builds confidence that the organisation will ~~take~~make decisions driven by community consensus and a balance of interests.
- **Non-discriminatory participation or membership** – we see the best option ~~as~~to be an "opt-in" approach with principles of non-discrimination and inclusivity, where any ~~stakeholder~~relevant group may express an interest and should be welcome. Representation in governance must reflect the character of the community or membership.
- **Transparent governance** – to ~~achieve~~foster trust, the processes and policies for governing the organisation and selecting representatives to governance groups should be transparent (within the constraints of privacy laws).

Change: expanded this principle to include making the policies and processes for governing the organisation available.

- **Cannot lobby** – infrastructure organisations should not lobby for regulatory change to cement their own positions or narrow self-interest. However, an infrastructure organisation's role is to support its community, and this can include advocating for policy changes.
- **Living will** – ~~a powerful way~~ to ~~create~~build trust ~~is to publicly describe a plan addressing~~, organisations should establish and communicate clear commitments regarding their long-term stewardship responsibilities, including the ~~conditions under~~ principles by which ~~an~~ assets, data, resources, services, and staff would be responsibly transferred to a successor or the organisation or service ~~would be~~ wound down. ~~It~~The commitments should address future governance, with defined criteria for acceptable successor organisations. This should include ~~how this would happen and how any assets could be archived and preserved when passed to a successor organisation or service. Any~~

~~such organisation or service must adopt~~continued alignment with POSI and ~~honour the POSI principles~~any legal or structural constraints.

Change: expanded principle to apply not just when an organization is wound down but to any transfer of assets, data and services to another organization whether planned or not, and to cover future governance, the criteria for successor organisations, and more information about constraints dependent on types of legal entities.

- ~~**Formal incentives to fulfil mission & wind-down** – infrastructures exist for a specific~~**Regular review of purpose and** ~~that purpose can be radically simplified or even rendered unnecessary by technological or social change.~~**community value** – Organisations and services should regularly review their relevance, effectiveness, and the level of community support ~~and the need for their activities. If it is possible,~~to determine whether their continued operation is necessary. If no longer needed, they should take responsible steps to transition or wind down operations in consultation with the ~~organisation or service (~~community and ~~staff) should have direct incentives to deliver on the mission and wind down~~in alignment with their living will.

Change: revised to focus on having organisations and initiatives regularly reviewing their purpose, effectiveness, and community value, with a transition or wind down if necessary. Removed reference to having 'direct incentives to deliver on the mission and wind down' since there is no definition of what such 'direct incentives' would be and we aren't aware of any examples of something like this that currently exists.

Sustainability

- **Transparent operations** - to enable organisational accountability and openness, the operating policies and procedures, detailed financials, sustainability models, fees, strategic and product roadmaps, organisational charts, and other appropriate operational information should be made openly available (within the constraints of privacy laws). Information should be available for investigation and reuse by the community.

Change: the 1.0 principle was 'Transparent operations' but referred to governance and was in the governance section of the principles but mentioned operations, which was confusing. The 1.1 principle was updated to 'Transparent governance' and the reference to operations removed. Transparent operations, encompassing aspects such as financials, business models, fees, operating policies and procedures, and product roadmaps, are important for fostering trust, organisational accountability, and assessing sustainability, so this new principle was added.

- **Time-limited funds are used only for time-limited activities** – operations ~~are~~should be supported by sustainable revenue sources~~ –~~, whereas time-limited funds are used only for time-limited activities. Depending on grants to fund ongoing and/or long-term ~~infrastructure~~ operations fully makes ~~them~~organisations fragile and distracts from ~~building~~maintaining core infrastructure.
- **Goal to generate surplus** – ~~organisations (or services) that define sustainability based merely on recovering costs are brittle and stagnant.~~ it is not enough to merely survive; organisations and services have to be able to adapt and change. Organisations and services that define long-term sustainability based only on recovering costs risk becoming brittle and stagnant. To weather economic, social and technological volatility, ~~they~~organisations and services need financial resources beyond immediate operating costs.

Change: revised for clarity.

- ~~**Goal to create financial reserves** – a high priority should be having ring-fenced financial reserves, separate from operating funds, that can support implementing living will plans, including a complete, orderly wind down or transition to a successor organisation, or major unexpected events.~~

- **Establish and maintain financial reserves guided by policy** – organisations and services should have a clear policy on maintaining financial reserves, including the purpose, minimum and maximum level, and governance of these funds. The actual level of reserves should be determined and periodically reviewed by the governing body, ensuring that resources are available to support Living Will implementation, including an orderly wind-down, transition to a successor, or response to major unforeseen events. A financial reserve policy might include how funds will be held, under what circumstances they will be used, and how much would be necessary for an adequate wind-down or transfer of assets, given the complexity of the organisation's infrastructure.

Change: strengthened by focusing on the purposes of financial reserves and that the governing body of an organisation or initiative will establish and maintain reserves with clear policies. This recognises the legal responsibilities of many governing bodies.

- **Mission-consistent revenue generation** – revenue sources should be evaluated against the infrastructure's mission and not run counter to the aims of the organisation or service.
- **Revenue ~~based on~~generated from services, not data** – data related to the running of the scholarly infrastructure should be community property. Appropriate revenue sources might include value-added services, consulting, API Service Level Agreements, or membership fees.
- **Volunteer labour** - organisations that rely on volunteers and their labour should recognise this as a valuable resource for the organisation's long-term viability, and factor it into sustainability planning and risk management.

Change: added a new principle to address issues around volunteer labour.

- **Transition Planning** - organisations that are heavily dependent on a limited number of individuals should take steps to reduce their dependence on these individuals, including via transition and succession planning, so that the organisation is not at risk of collapse in the event of their departure.

Change: added a new principle to address issues around transition and succession planning.

Insurance

- **Open source** – all software and non-physical assets required to run the infrastructure should be available under an open-source licence. This does not include other software that may be involved with running the organisation.
- **~~Open~~Ensure open and secure data ~~(~~accessibility within legal and ethical constraints ~~of privacy laws) – For an~~** – To support potential forking or replication, infrastructure should aim to ~~be forked (reproduced), it will be necessary to replicate~~make all relevant data~~. The CC0 waiver is the best~~

~~practice in making data~~ openly ~~and legally~~ available~~. Privacy and~~ , following best practices such as applying a CC0 waiver where appropriate. This must be balanced with compliance with privacy, data protection ~~laws will limit the extent~~ , and security requirements. Organisations should have a clear policy outlining how private or sensitive data will be handled—particularly in the event of a transfer to another organisation—to ~~which this is possible~~ensure continuity, legal compliance, and responsible stewardship.

Change: revised and expanded to maintain the goal of open data but address issues around privacy, data protection, and security.

- **Available ~~data (within constraints of privacy laws)~~and preserved** – it is not enough that ~~the~~content, data, and software be "open" if there is no practical way to obtain ~~it. Underlying data~~them. These resources should be made easily available ~~via periodic open data dumps~~with clear public documentation about where they are and how to access them, as well as an open licence where possible. It is not enough that "open" resources are available. In line with the Living Will, it is essential to deposit content, data, and software with at least one trusted third-party digital archive.

Change: expanded beyond data to include content, data, software, and documentation and licenses, to be made openly available and to use a trusted third-party archive.

- **Patent non-assertion** – the organisation should commit to a patent non-assertion policy or covenant. The organisation may obtain patents to protect its own operations, but not use them to prevent the community from replicating the infrastructure.
- **Prioritise interoperability and open standards to ensure continuity and resilience** - infrastructures should adopt and support widely accepted open standards—both formal and de facto—to ensure that systems, data, and services can be replicated, migrated, or integrated with minimal disruption without the use of proprietary extensions or software. Where relevant, organisations should document dependencies on standards.

Change: added a new principle about interoperability and following de facto and formal standards.