Developing tools and protocols relating to the collection, aggregation, and dissemination of usage data about digital monograph publications

A Publishing Analytics Data Alliance

We invite publishers, libraries, research centers, societies, funders, aggregators, and other scholarly communication stakeholders to join *Project Meerkat* to develop guidelines and standards for digital scholarly monograph usage data and to construct a neutral organizational apparatus for the ongoing collection and aggregation of data about these scholarly publications.

Statement of need

Collecting, aggregating, and analyzing data to produce metrics is easier than ever before. In the realm of academic research, data on the digital distribution of scholarly content provides new opportunities to understand the publishing ecosystem. A range of stakeholders currently generates and collects this data, often as products of content usage or sales.

There is growing concern about the ownership of, access to, and analysis of this data for "predictive bibliometrics." Despite the growing demand for rich data and predictive analytics, the high costs of providing or purchasing data-related services are reinforcing inequities in the academic publishing landscape. Furthermore, the challenges associated with gathering, integrating, interpreting, and reporting usage data limit the ability of individual publishers, libraries, and other stakeholders to identify—much less predict—important usage trends and opportunities through which these organizations might extend their impact.

Based on institutional contributions that would be used to seed-fund this project (at $1K and $5K levels), *Project Meerkat* will gather a diverse community of scholarly communication stakeholders, including authors and editors, to jointly develop governance, sustainability, and ethical frameworks for how usage data is gathered, analyzed, and shared, building upon the NISO Privacy Principles. The project team will also scope and develop analytic and benchmark reports to meet the identified needs of libraries, publishers, aggregators, and other stakeholders. The resulting Publishing Analytics Data Alliance will work to sustain the outcomes of *Project Meerkat*, providing its members with shared governance of collected data. Member organizations will agree to a code of practice as a condition of membership.

Estimated budget

Project Meerkat (2017–2020): $480,500
To cover the costs of project facilitation, development, and in-person convenings of experts to complement virtual working groups.

Publishing Analytics Data Alliance (2020 forward)
On-going revenue streams will be established to cover the costs associated with continued support of shared infrastructure and services.

Current conveners for *Project Meerkat*

Christina Drummond (Educopia Institute)
Martin Paul Eve (Birbeck, University of London & Open Library of Humanities)
Kevin Hawkins (University of North Texas)
Sarah Melton (Emory University)
Lucy Montgomery (Curtin University & Knowledge Unlatched)
Cameron Neylon (Curtin University)
Lisa Schiff (California Digital Library)
Katherine Skinner (Educopia Institute)