YOUR BOOK TO THE WORLD

A practical guide to open-access book discoverability via the Directory of Open Access Books (DOAB)

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INTRO

Publishing an open access book is an important first step. But making a book freely available online does not automatically mean that readers, researchers and libraries will find it.

WHY DISCOVERABILITY MATTERS

Discoverability is about helping the right people find, identify, access and assess your book. Good book metadata, clear licensing, persistent identifiers, trustworthy publishing information and links to the full text all help make this possible.

THE BIG PICTURE

In the BookHub ecosystem, different services have different jobs. BookHub supports the authoring and publishing pathway. RUMBU is the repository where published books are deposited. Thoth Open Metadata helps manage and distribute book metadata. DOAB makes eligible open access scholarly books easier to discover through a global directory used by libraries, researchers and discovery services.

A USEFUL DISTINCTION

DOAB is not a publisher, a publishing platform or a repository. It does not publish your book or host the full text. **It is a directory and discovery service**: it provides a structured record and links readers to the book wherever it is openly available.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOU

Think beyond the manuscript itself. As you develop your book, it is important that the information describing it is accurate, complete, public and easy to reuse. This handout explains what happens next and what to prepare.

AUTHORING >PUBLISHING >>METADATA >>>DISCOVERY

HOW THE PATHWAY WORKS

From publication to wider discovery

1 | BOOKHUB: THE AUTHORING AND PUBLISHING PATHWAY

You develop your book through the BookHub programme, with support from FUTO, the South-East Academic Publishing Centre (APC-SE) and the wider BookHub ecosystem. The programme has provided you with structured editorial development and a quality-assurance pathway, including the BookHub Reviewing Board framework. The workshop's intended outcome is a manuscript or proposal that can progress through editorial review and publication.

2 | RUMBU: THE REPOSITORY

After the relevant editorial and review processes are complete and the book is published, it is deposited in the RUMBU national repository. The publication pathway includes a DOI through Crossref and an ARK persistent identifier through WACREN PIDsLink, alongside repository deposit and long-term preservation.

3 | THOTH: THE METADATA HUB

Thoth is the open metadata service connected to the BookHub National Catalogue. It helps make book information usable beyond the platform where it was first created. In the BookHub workflow, metadata can be prepared for reuse in different standards and systems—for example, ONIX, MARC21 and KBART—so that libraries, catalogues and discovery services can work with it.

4 | DOAB: THE GLOBAL DISCOVERY SERVICE

DOAB will then make the book discoverable as part of its global index of peer-reviewed open-access scholarly books. A DOAB record helps readers and libraries find the book and **follow the link to its full text, either hosted in the OAPEN library or on the publisher's or repository's platform**. DOAB also makes structured **metadata available for reuse** by library and discovery systems.

HOW AUTOMATION FITS IN

BookHub, RUMBU and Thoth are being connected through COAR Notify, an open protocol that lets scholarly systems send each other structured messages when something happens to a record. When a book is ready for publication, BookHub deposits the files and metadata into RUMBU. RUMBU then reports each step back to BookHub: the record has been

created, an ARK has been assigned, and the files are accessible. BookHub adds these details to the book's metadata. Once the record is complete, RUMBU signals that it is ready for dissemination, and Thoth passes the metadata on to DOAB and library discovery systems.

For authors and editors, this means metadata is entered once and carried through every stage instead of being retyped, which reduces errors and delays.

The integration is still being built. Until it is finished, some hand-offs may be handled manually, and the BookHub team will confirm the arrangements for each book.

HE IMPORTANT POINT

The book travels through a publishing and repository workflow; its metadata travels through a discovery workflow. Both matter. **A book can be openly available but still difficult to find if its descriptive information is incomplete, inconsistent or not shared with discovery services.**

Discovery, publisher assessment and peer-review transparency

DOAB'S ROLE

DOAB provides a **trusted, curated index of open access scholarly books and publishers**. It increases the visibility and discoverability of eligible books; it does not replace the publisher's editorial responsibility, peer review, repository or preservation arrangements.
Books are submitted to DOAB by publishers, not directly by individual authors.

WHAT DOES DOAB ASSESS?

DOAB's entry requirements focus mainly on the publisher and its publishing practices. The publisher's website and editorial process must be transparent; books must undergo independent external peer review before publication; licensing and copyright terms must be clear and consistent; and the catalogue must contain eligible scholarly open-access books. The current minimum catalogue requirement is three OA academic books, each with an individual ISBN. Books must be available online without registration.

A PRACTICAL VIEW OF THE CRITERIA

1. Scholarly scope: monographs, edited collections, book chapters, critical editions and other long-form scholarly works.
2. Peer review: the process is described publicly and is independent, external and

appropriate to the subject.

3. Publisher transparency: editorial processes, editors and relevant board members are identified.
4. Open access and rights: readers can access the book without registration; reuse terms and copyright information are clear.
5. Book identification: each book has an individual ISBN; publication date, licence and copyright information appear in the book record and metadata.
6. Publisher website: a maintained, accessible website with clear contact details and publishing information.

PRISM: MAKING PEER REVIEW VISIBLE

DOAB's Peer Review Information Service for Monographs (PRISM) adds structured information about a publisher's peer review processes. It uses a controlled vocabulary and can describe processes at publisher/catalogue level and book level. This helps readers, libraries, funders and others see what kind of review was applied, rather than relying on a general claim that a book is peer reviewed.

HOW DOES PRISM WORK?

A publisher participating in DOAB submits information about its peer review process or processes. The DOAB team checks the submission; disputes may be referred to the DOAB Scientific Committee. Once accepted, a PRISM record can be attached to relevant books in DOAB. PRISM information can be viewed alongside book records and accessed through the DOAB API; publishers can also use a PRISM widget on their own websites.

Peer review remains the responsibility of the publisher.

HOW DO YOU MAKE YOUR BOOK EASIER TO FIND?

A practical checklist for authors, editors and the publishing team

BEFORE PUBLICATION: CHECK THE BOOK ITSELF

- Title and subtitle are final and consistent across the cover, title page, repository record and metadata.
- All author and editor names are spelled correctly and consistently; affiliations are

included where appropriate.

- Abstract or description explains the book's subject, contribution and audience in clear language.
- Keywords and subject terms reflect the actual content and use terms readers are likely to search for.
- Language, publication date, edition and table of contents are accurate.
- The book has an individual ISBN and, where assigned through the programme, its DOI and ARK are recorded correctly.

BEFORE PUBLICATION: CHECK RIGHTS AND REVIEW INFORMATION

- The license is clearly stated in the book, metadata and landing page. The BookHub programme documentation specifies CC BY for books published through the programme.
- Copyright information is clear and does not contradict the licence.
- The publisher's peer review process is documented, including reviews and how independence is maintained.
- Any third-party content has been cleared, and its rights are stated accurately.

AFTER PUBLICATION: CHECK THE DISCOVERY RECORD

- The full text is available online without a registration barrier.
- The RUMBU record points to the correct full text and contains complete descriptive metadata.
- Persistent identifiers resolve to the correct book.
- The metadata passed to Thoth is accurate and consistent with the published book.

- The publisher or APC-SE team follows up on DOAB submission/indexing and checks that the DOAB record links to the correct version.

WHO DOES WHAT?

Authors: supply accurate names, affiliations, abstracts, keywords and rights information; check proofs and identifiers.

Editors and APC-SE: manage editorial development, peer review and publication information.

BookHub / technical team: support the platform and repository-to-metadata workflow. They: **ensure the publisher meets DOAB requirements and submits eligible books**.

DOAB: evaluates publisher applications, indexes eligible books and provides discovery metadata and PRISM services.

TAKE-AWAY

Discoverability is not a final upload step. It is built into the whole publishing process—from clear editorial and licensing information to accurate metadata, repository deposit, persistent identifiers and distribution to discovery services.

FIND OUT MORE

DOAB — Requirements and application: https://www.doabooks.org/en/publishers/join-doab
DOAB — PRISM: https://www.doabooks.org/en/publishers/prism
PRISM Flyer
BookHub: https://www.bookhub.ng