

Academic Publishing Buoyancy During War:

mapping international initiatives to support scholarly communication in Ukraine

Background

Knowledge production and its timely dissemination are central to shaping a state's geopolitical standing and projecting its intellectual influence internationally. However, countries affected by armed conflict face severe challenges in sustaining research activities and maintaining the infrastructure required for effective scholarly communication. While international support for research has established mechanisms, initiatives tailored at sustaining scholarly communication remain fragmented.

Key challenges

The war has severely disrupted scholarly publishing and journal operations, causing editorial displacement, interrupted workflows, delays in peer review and publication, and infrastructure breakdowns, including frequent blackouts. It has also placed a significant emotional toll on editors, reviewers, and authors.

Preservation

- **Electronic Preservation Project for Ukrainian Open Access Journals (EPP-UA)**, launched by TIB – Leibniz Information Centre for Science and Technology, to create a long-term archive of Ukrainian OA journals. 44 journals preserved 20,391 articles archived.
- **PKP Public Knowledge Project** supported more than 500 Ukrainian OA journals through its open-source Open Journal Systems publishing platform by taking extra steps to ensure the preservation of, and continued open access to, the research published in these journals by providing online backup services for them.

Financial & infrastructural support

- **SUES (Supporting Ukrainian Editorial Staff)**, initiated by OPERAS, OAPEN, DOAJ, EIFL, IBL PAN, and the Association of European University Presses, along with over 30 French university presses, ran a crowdfunding campaign that raised €73,000, which was distributed among 45 journals to support operations, staff salaries, publishing platform upgrades, and server maintenance.
- Major publishers (Springer Nature, Elsevier, Taylor & Francis, American Chemical Society etc), temporarily waived APCs for authors affiliated with Ukrainian universities and research organisations.
- ORCID waived membership fees and supported the formation of national consortia. A total of 57 institutions joined the initiative.

Training & mentorship networks

- **SUPRR (Supporting Ukrainian Publishing Resilience and Recovery)** aims to provide support mechanisms to the Ukrainian publishing industry by building virtual bridges between the Ukrainian and Western publishing communities.
- Through SUPRR advocacy, the Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers (ALPSP) offered free membership to Ukrainian-based scholarly publishers. The Society for Scholarly Publishing (SSP) waived fees for webinars and training materials.
- The “University Press Publishing for Ukraine: Policy and Practice” programme at Oxford equipped Ukrainian academic editors, publishers, and policymakers with the skills and knowledge necessary to enhance publication quality.

Visibility & Access

- **Research4Life** provided Ukrainian institutions with access to scholarly books, journals, and databases to support research and education. Over 500 institutions gained access to full-text electronic resources via the Research4Life portal.
- **DOAJ** fast-tracked review process for applications from Ukrainian journals.
- **The Giving Voice project** was initiated by Prof. Damir Sapunar (University of Split School of Medicine) to document war-related evidence and capture the experiences of Ukrainian scholars, students, librarians, and other stakeholders who are not recognised as established experts and may face barriers to publishing their work.

