

Collective action to sustain open infrastructure

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PUB IN Conference, April 2026

<https://doaj.org>





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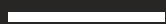
languages

140

countries

More than
22,800

journals



A landscape problem





Levada do Bom Sucesso, Madeira" – photo by Arbol01, Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 3.0

How are levadas relevant to open scholarly publishing infrastructure?

The levadas only work if

- The community maintains them
- Users respect the rules
- Everyone contributes


Otherwise: the water stops flowing and the system fails

The collective action problem


Everyone benefits
from shared open
infrastructures



Only few
contribute



Communities can govern shared resources



Elinor Ostrom showed that communities DO have success in governing shared resources when certain conditions are present.

She identified a number of design principles that enable communities to work together to support “common pool resources”

What makes communities
support shared infrastructure?



1. Communities support
infrastructures they
trust



Building trust at DOAJ

- Transparent evaluation criteria
- ◀ Rigorous review process
- ◀ Active work to keep bad actors out of the index

DOAJ's transparent evaluation criteria



Our criteria have become a gold standard in open access publishing



Our criteria are developed in consultation with our Editorial Policy Advisory Group to ensure equity



We update the criteria quarterly to include new requirements: special issues, AI policy, Subscribe2Open

DOAJ's rigorous review process





DOAJ's Editorial statistics 2025

Almost **8900** applications & nearly **4000** update requests from journals

~**25%** of applications accepted for inclusion

14 editorial staff, plus over **100** volunteer editors

DOAJ's Integrity & Ethics Team

- Developed several years ago in response to the increase in questionable behaviours we were seeing in applications
- Concerns are flagged as part of the evaluation process or by members of our community
- The team make evidence-based decisions based on quantitative and qualitative measures
- They request additional information from publishers where necessary



Integrity & Ethics Team statistics 2025

Conducted
401
investigations
into journals
and publishers

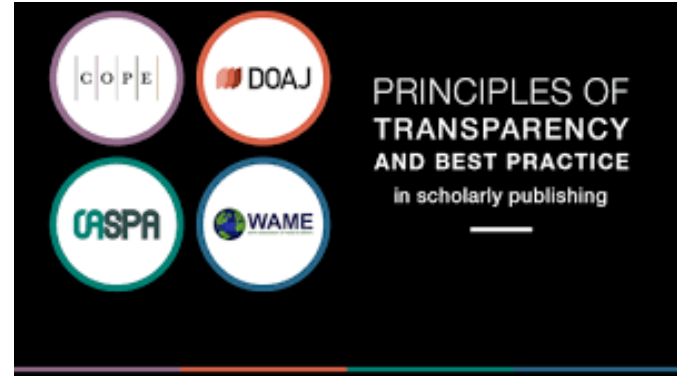
Investigation
time over **730**
hours

71% of
investigated
cases led to
exclusion of
between 1 and
3 years

Team of 6
experienced and
specialized trained
Managing Editors

Supporting community standards

Partners of





DOAJ and Portugal

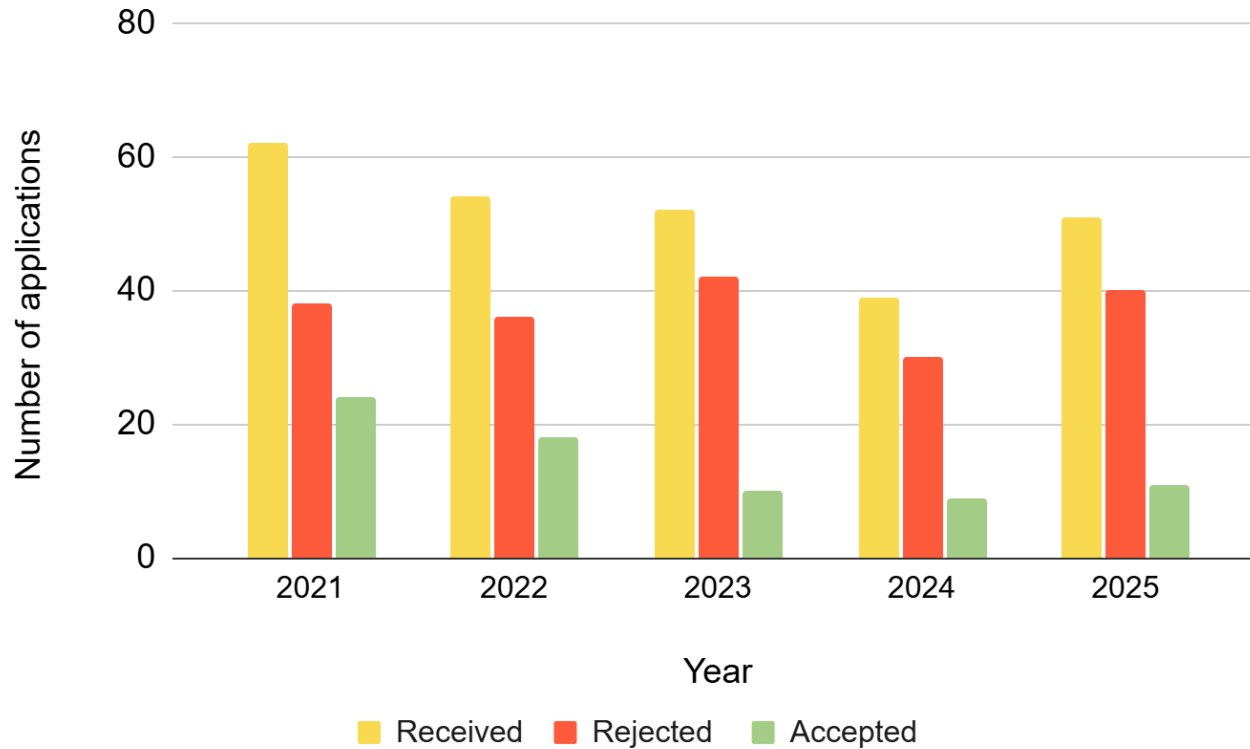
DOAJ contains **167 journals** from Portugal, **147** of which charge no fees

Portuguese is the **third most common language** used by journals in DOAJ

We received 51 applications and **added 11 journals** from Portugal to the index in 2025

We have 2 Managing Editors with **Portuguese language** skills and 3 volunteer editors from **Portugal** to support journal reviews

Applications to DOAJ from journals published in Portugal



Common reasons for rejection for journals from Portugal

- Lack of clear OA statement
- Inconsistent copyright and licensing
- Unclear peer review process
- Endogeneity (more than 25% articles authored by editorial board members)

2. Communities support
infrastructures they help to
shape

—



DOAJ's new governance model

In 2025, we moved DOAJ's legal entity from a UK CIC to a **Danish non-profit Foundation**

Governed by a **global community board** with expertise from funders, libraries, publishers and other infrastructures

A larger advisory board with 27 members from **all regions and stakeholder groups** provides input and advice

Accountability to the community



DOAJ adopted the **Principles of Open Scholarly Infrastructure** in 2022

- Transparent stakeholder governance
- Sustainability
- Insurance

We reevaluated our organisation against POSI in 2025

Listening our community

We received 1700 responses to our 2024 community consultation, which resulted in

- The removal of the DOAJ seal
- Changes to our application form
- Reaffirming our position around mixed access model journals

3. Communities
support infrastructures
that are actively cared
for

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We actively curate the journals in DOAJ. Last year...



We handled 100 **journal transfers** to new publishers



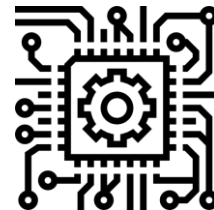
We re-reviewed 3,000 journals that had been indexed in DOAJ the longest



Our Helpdesk team maintains journal records based on **community feedback**



We generated **CSVs** for larger publishers to update their records at scale



Continuous investment in our technology and metadata

This year, we are starting a major project to **redesign our editorial system** and improve the experience for journals applying

We will also implement a **new classification scheme** to support the diversity of the journals we index and enhance discoverability

We will enhance our article metadata to support multiple author affiliations; PIDs, including ORCID and ROR; multilingual abstracts, as well as enhance our article metadata harvester

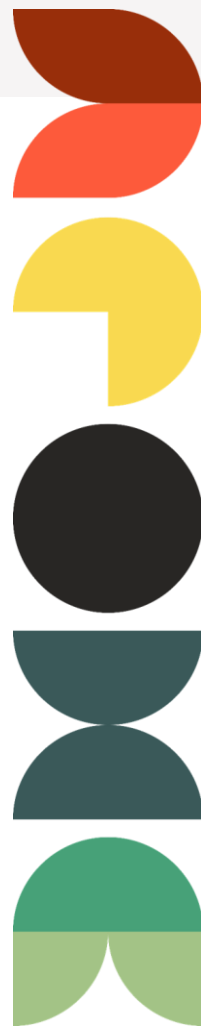
4. Communities support infrastructures they benefit from, and contribute to, fairly




Who supports DOAJ?

In 2025, DOAJ received just over €1.5m in contributions from the community:

- 71% Libraries and institutions
- 26% Publishers and aggregators
- 3% Research funders





In 2025, DOAJ received support from **673 public institutions** (universities, libraries and research funders) in **27 countries**.

From Portugal, we receive support from **UMinho** and **FCT-FCCN**

Our approach to sustainability

We are seeking to improve our sustainability by:

- Increasing the number of contributors overall, rather than our supporter rates
- Increasing the number of supporters from countries with low numbers, and targeting new regions
- Ensuring that commercial users of our metadata contribute through our newly launched Premium Metadata Service



Sustaining wider community infrastructure

Contributors to



For Academics.
For Libraries.
For Publishers.



Sustainability is more than funding



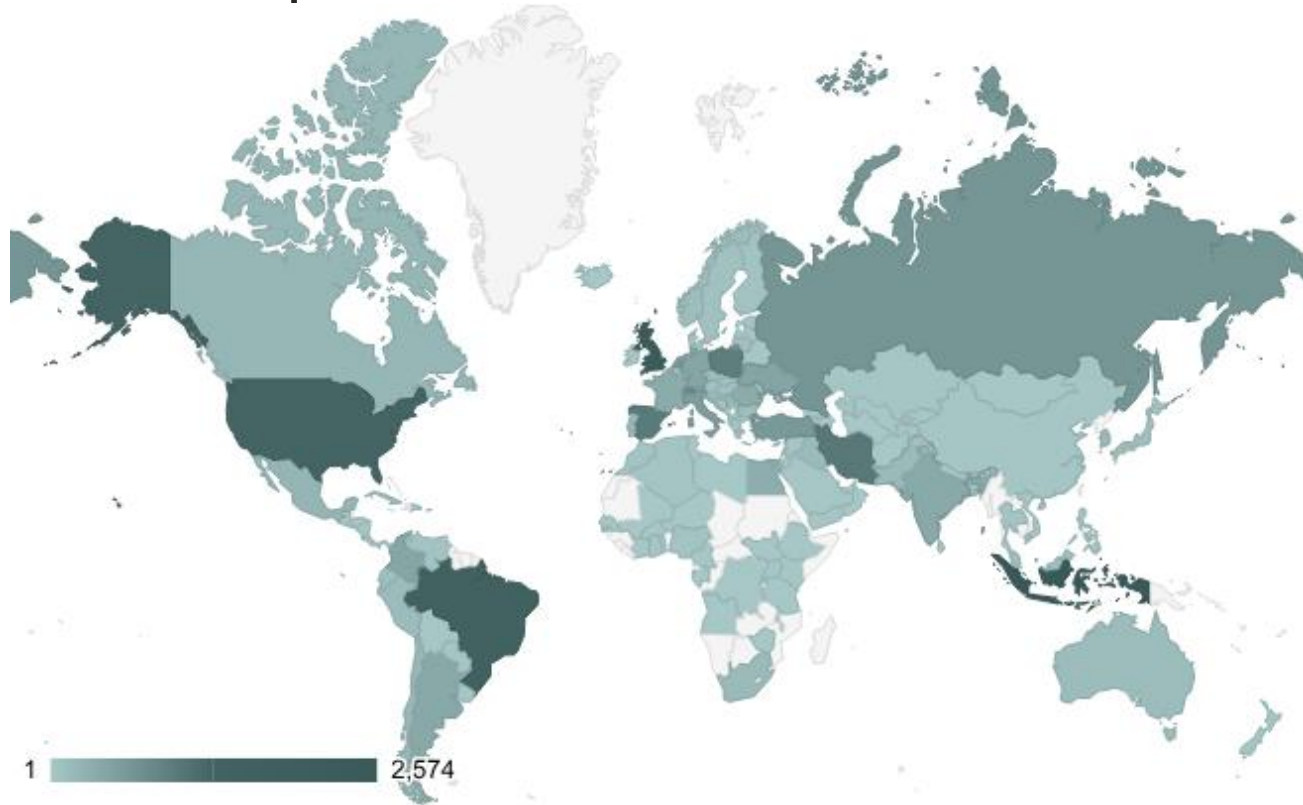
Over 100 **volunteer editors** worldwide **contribute their time, expertise and local knowledge** to support DOAJ's editorial work.

Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Brazil, Canada, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ethiopia, Georgia, Germany, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Italy, Mali, Mexico, Moldova, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russia, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, Tunisia, Ukraine, UK, USA, Venezuela

5. Communities support infrastructures that share their values



Overview of publisher countries indexed in DOAJ



FCCN estabelece parceria estratégica para a promoção do acesso aberto diamante em Portugal

24/09/2025

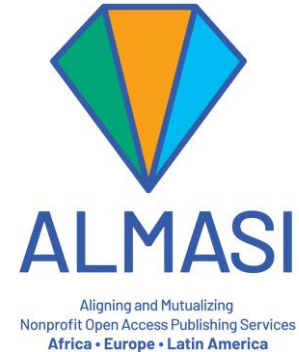
Our criteria and communications are in multiple languages

A FCCN, unidade de serviços digitais da Fundação para Ciência e Tecnologia (FCT), que serve a comunidade académica e científica em Portugal, irá apoiar a missão do DOAJ – Directory of Open Access Journals (Diretório de Revistas de Acesso Aberto) em Portugal.

A FCCN, unidade de serviços digitais da Fundação para Ciência e Tecnologia (FCT), que serve a comunidade académica e científica em Portugal, irá apoiar a missão do DOAJ – Directory of Open Access Journals (Diretório de Revistas de Acesso Aberto) em Portugal. Desenvolvido pela Universidade do Minho e pela FCCN, o PUBIn tem como objetivo fortalecer e profissionalizar as revistas em acesso aberto através da partilha de boas práticas, formação e apoio às equipas editoriais. O DOAJ e o PUBIn estão a trabalhar em conjunto para auxiliar as revistas portuguesas a alcançar padrões internacionais, a aprimorar a qualidade, a visibilidade e a descoberta, e, assim, ampliar o impacto

<https://blog.doaj.org/pt/2025/09/24/fccn-to-support-doaj-to-strengthen-diamond-open-access-in-portugal/>

DOAJ contributes to the European Diamond community



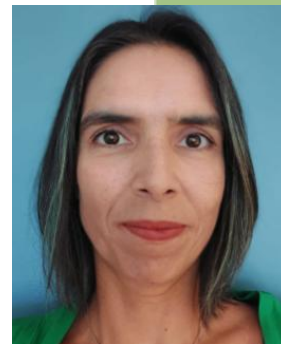
+ Relationships and partnerships with National Capacity Centres

Our ambassador programme

DOAJ's ambassador programme celebrates its 10th anniversary this year

Our 14 ambassadors work with communities in LMICs to...

- promote journal quality and the importance of standards
- advocate for open access
- promote DOAJ
- support DOAJ indexing for local journal editors and publishers



Brazilian Ambassador,
Carolina Dias

Communities will support and sustain infrastructures...

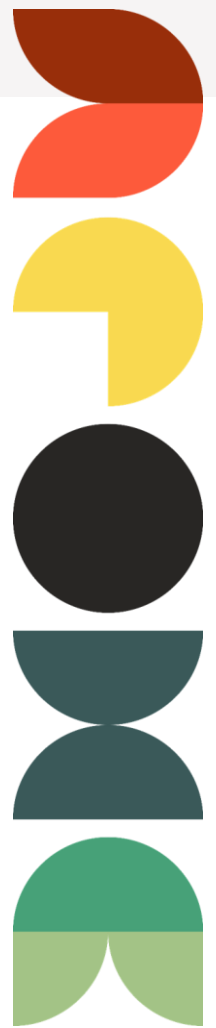
they **trust**

they help to **shape**

that are actively **cared for**

they benefit from and contribute to **fairly**


that share their **values**





Why collective support matters now




The context for open infrastructure is changing

 Government funding freezes are affecting research infrastructure

 Cuts to higher education and library budgets

 Managing an increasing volume of bot traffic

 Growing commercial consolidation of infrastructure

Without collective support for infrastructures like DOAJ...

Journal quality checks will be managed by commercial systems

Visibility for multilingual journals will decline

Publication standards will be set by commercial actors, not the community

Less targeted support for diamond, vulnerable journals

Call to action

Fund

Infrastructures depend on collective funding from the communities they serve

Provide financial support at the institutional level for initiatives like DOAJ.

Implement consortial funding systems, that provide a scaleable and efficient way for infrastructures to increase their income.

Redirect funds from closed systems and content to open infrastructure and content.

Participate

Community infrastructure works best when the community helps to govern and run it.

Community governance distinguishes open infrastructure from commercial platforms.

Contribute by

- Serving on boards and advisory groups
- Providing your expertise to working groups
- Participating in community consultations
- Taking on a volunteer role
- Supporting institutional journals with the DOAJ indexing process



Advocate

Institutions and researchers can strengthen infrastructure by advocating for it

Advocacy helps to ensure open infrastructure remains recognised and supported.

Contribute by

- Encouraging funders to recognise infrastructure as core research systems
- Promoting open infrastructure in open science policies
- Ensuring infrastructure is included in national research strategies

If we want scholarly communication to remain open, equitable, and community-governed, we need to build and sustain it together.



Thank



you