PRESS RELEASE

Open Research Community launches, connecting experts worldwide

Berlin, 7 April 2020 – The Open Research Community (ORC), an interactive platform which launched today after a test phase, offers users worldwide the opportunity to expand their professional networks on the topics of Open Access (OA), Open Research and Open Science.

In addition to blog posts and up-to-date information in the form of policy papers and research reports, the ORC offers the opportunity to interact with other experts in the network (e.g., via video panels). An initiative of Knowledge Unlatched (KU), the ORC is free to use. Its mission is to support the worldwide exchange of information on future-oriented research and OA publishing by bringing together libraries, publishers and researchers.

“Even before the spread of the coronavirus, our colleagues in libraries, publishing houses and research funding organizations have been asking for better forms of collaboration beyond conference visits,” said Dr. Pablo B. Markin, ORC’s Manager. “With the ORC, we want to provide the infrastructure and a forum for this purpose.”

Powered by Zapnito, the ORC seeks input from key stakeholders, features expert-driven content in the form of articles, discussion pieces and commentary, and aims to reflect the backgrounds and expertise of various user groups. Through its community, research and university involvements, the ORC focuses on knowledge sharing and informing users on OA-related topics, including publishing industry developments.

“We have been aware of Zapnito for a few years and understood the need for a dedicated community platform that could drive engagement and foster collaboration amongst our different user groups,” said Dr. Sven Fund, Managing Director at KU. “With the launch of the ORC, that vision will become a reality, as we leverage Zapnito’s technology to bring together librarians, publishers, researchers, authors and institutions under a united goal.”

Charles Thiede, CEO of Zapnito, added, “Zapnito is thrilled to be working with KU to further increase access to leading research and content, and facilitate connections within the expert community. The ORC represents a new chapter in publishing — one of greater collaboration, knowledge sharing and connection between the world’s greatest minds.”

The ORC's Advisory Board consists of experts from around the world who are actively involved in Open Access and Open Research. These experts will initiate virtual discussion groups, write exclusive blog posts, and interact with users as contacts within the platform. The Advisory Board includes (in alphabetical order): Toby A. B. Green, Managing Director, Coherent Digital, France; Matthew Ismail, Director of Collection Development, Central Michigan University, United States; Christian Kohl, Independent Consultant and Instructor, the Academy of German Book Trade, Germany; Alice J. Meadows, Director of Community Engagement, National Information Standards Organization, United States; Dirk Pieper, Library Director, the University of Bielefeld, Germany; Lara Speicher, Head of Publishing, UCL Press, United Kingdom; Charles Watkinson, Director, the University of Michigan Press, United States; and Alicia Wise, Independent Consultant, Information Power, United Kingdom.

The launch of the ORC is supported by specialist media, including journals *buchreport* and *b.i.t. online*. The Charleston Conference and the specialist journal *Against the Grain* are also involved with the ORC.

About the Open Research Community

The Open Research Community (openresearch.community) connects professionals in libraries, publishing houses and the scientific community worldwide who are involved in Open Research, Open Science and Open Access. The platform makes selected content available free of charge and enables direct exchange between individuals and groups of users.

About Knowledge Unlatched

Knowledge Unlatched (KU) makes scholarly content freely available to everyone and contributes to the further development of the Open Access (OA) infrastructure. KU (www.knowledgeunlatched.org) has built a network of over 1250 librarians, 350 publishers and about 500 researchers worldwide. With the help from over 575 libraries, it has made 1500 books and 23 journals Open Access to date and available to over four million users. Additionally, KU offers various tools and services for stakeholders in the OA community.

About Zapnito

Zapnito (https://zapnito.com) is a Software as a Service (SaaS) provider of networking software for expert communities that transforms how organizations harness expertise. It helps its customers to connect with the people that matter in an owned space, away from the noise of social media, in order to learn, connect, collaborate and contribute back to the community.

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