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DOAB Foundation: toward a quality label for academic books in open access

Academic publishing has undergone a revolution in recent years with the development of open access, which enables anyone to freely access academic articles or books. Yet in this free environment, readers and librarians should have the ability to be guided toward works of quality certified by the academic community. Europe will now have a foundation that provides peer certification for open access academic books, a project driven by the CNRS, Aix-Marseille Université, and the Dutch foundation OAPEN. The new foundation, which was named *Directory of open access books* (DOAB), has just been launched.

It is impossible to think of the diffusion of academic knowledge today without raising the question of open access, a publishing practice that allows anyone to freely access academic production shared on open archives or publishing platforms. However, the increase of initiatives in this field calls for constant vigilance: how to be sure of the quality and relevance of academic content in an increasingly open environment?

To meet the challenge of open access that has been certified and recognized by European actors, OpenEdition (CNRS/Aix-Marseille Université/EHESS/Université d'Avignon et des pays de Vaucluse) and the Dutch foundation *Open access publishing in European network* (OAPEN) have continued their cooperation, which began in 2015, by creating a foundation dedicated to this purpose.

Called the *Directory of open access books* (DOAB), it will establish quality criteria with actors in European research, in an effort to certify academic books available in open access. It offers readers and librarians a tool for identifying open access publications recognized by the scientific community.

Before becoming a foundation, DOAB was a project launched by OAPEN in 2012. This directory now includes 17,000 open access academic research books written in a number of languages. This new autonomy in the form of a foundation will enable DOAB to extend its activity in Europe and worldwide, while ensuring that the variety of academic practices in different European countries are taken into consideration.

Over the long-term, DOAB will eventually join OPERAS – *Open access in the European research area through scholarly communication* – of which OpenEdition and OAPEN are founding members, along with seven other European partners.

The creation of the DOAB foundation is one of the actions included in the national plan for open science presented in 2018 by Frédérique Vidal, the French Minister of Higher Education and Research.





Directory of open access books logo

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