Diamond OA: Needs Must or Disruptive?
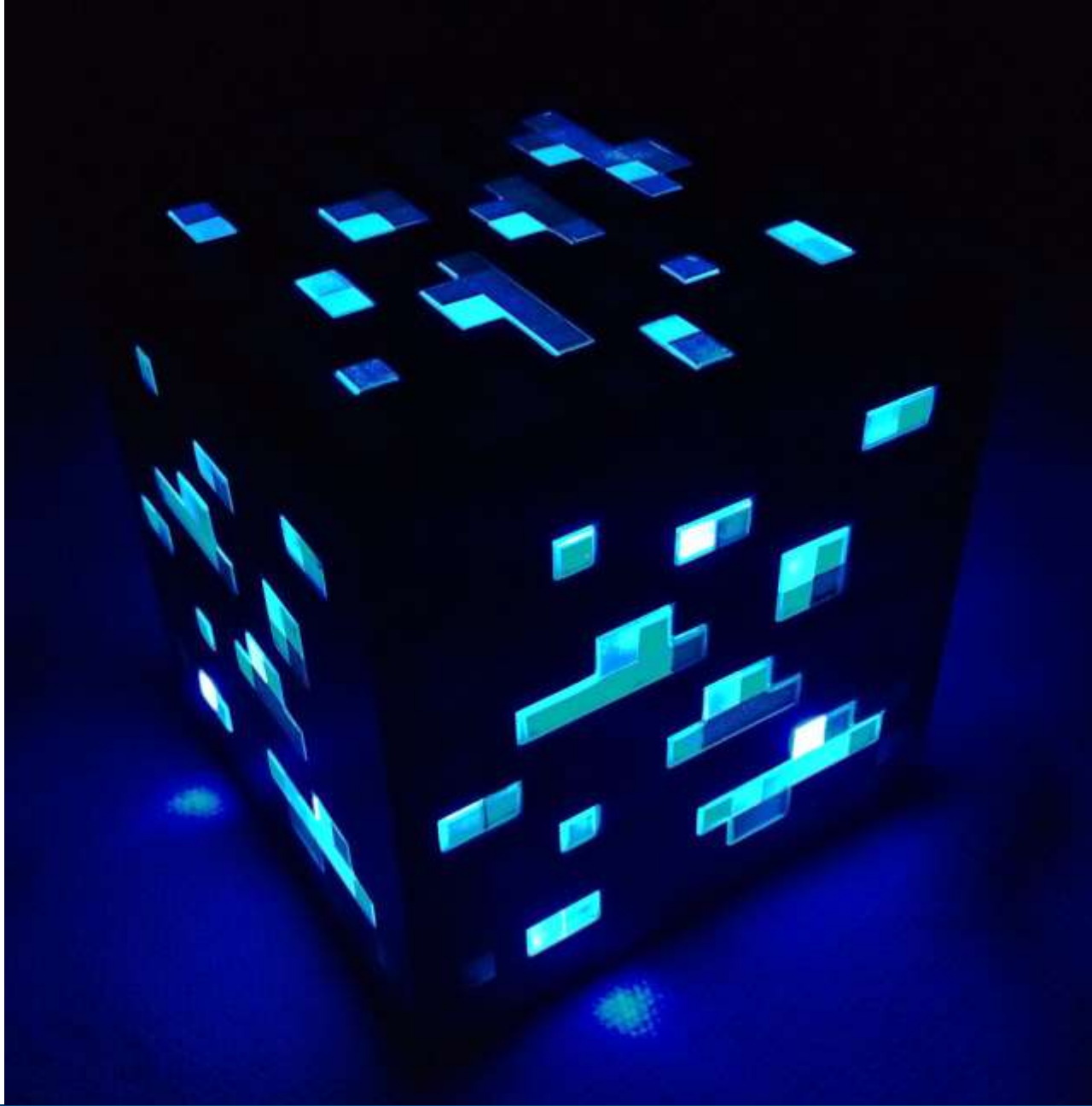
Dr Meg Westbury, Academic Skills Librarian (Human and Social Sciences)

mw528@cam.ac.uk

Outline

- Overview of Diamond Open Access

- Example of the Journal of Information Literacy

- Reflections on running the journal and diamond open access generally

Minecraft diamond ore https://www.flickr.com/photos/olivierh/11664812845

UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE
Cambridge University Libraries

1 **Diamond Open Access**

Diamond Open Access

- Definition: Not charging money for authors to read or authors to submit manuscripts

- Diamond OA in numbers:

  - 17K-29K currently in existence (likely an undercount) and 2/3 of journals in DOAJ

  - 8-9% of global scholarly output (APC-OA journals are at 10-11%)

  - Comprise 44% of all articles in fully OA journals

- Relatively small journals, concentrated in the humanities and social sciences, serving diverse scholarly niches

Motivations for Diamond OA

- **Ethical**: It's the right thing to do

- **Activist:** Rejecting big publishing

- **Novice:** Low-threshold starting point; might want to get more formal later

- **Labour of love:** Crafting the perfect journal and/or filling a disciplinary niche

Usually it's a combination of factors

Benefits of Diamond OA

'Equitable, community driven, and academic-led and -owned.'

- Accessibility of research

- Editorial control

- Nimble operations

- Ability to innovate

Satisfaction of making research accessible and available

Photo by Magda Ehlers: https://www.pexels.com/photo/diamond-on-top-of-a-disc-4198822

Drawbacks of Diamond OA

- Few supporting resources

- Labour intensive

- Infrastructure limited

- Difficult to scale and sustain

Photo by journaway Rundreisen on Unsplash

2 **Journal of Information Literacy**

The journal

- Founded in 2008; publish 2-3 issues per year (8-12 articles per issue); peer reviewed

- Focus on information literacy (IL)

- Envisioned as a researcher-practitioner journal and a way of disseminating best practices

- Affiliated with the Information Literacy Group (ILG) of the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP)

- Part of IL maturing as a discipline

- Good rankings, especially with regard to our competitors, and key journal in our field

JOURNAL OF INFORMATION LITERACY

Vol 16 No 1 (2022): Journal of Information Literacy

Editorial

A difference that matters: Disability activism, scholarship and community

Alison Hicks

1-3

pdf   Word

Research articles (peer-reviewed articles)

Unsettling information literacy: Exploring critical approaches with academic researchers for decolonising the university

Frances Marsh

4-29

pdf   Word

Integrating information practices into everyday teaching

Jonathan William Phillips, Andrew Whitworth

30-49

pdf   Word

Reading between the lines: An examination of first-year university students' perceptions of and confidence with information literacy

Beverly J Dann, Dr, Anne Drabble, Dr, Janet Martin, Dr

50-69

pdf   Word

JIL and Diamond OA

- Diamond from the beginning (explicitly referencing the Budapest Open Access Initiative)

- Use of CC BY-SA licences

- Ethical standpoint

- Financial position

- Social aspects of librarianship

Photo by Viktor Forgacs on Unsplash

JIL operationally

- Hosted on OJS by Loughborough University since 2008

- Moving to Edinburgh Diamond in late 2022

- Editorial Board, Editor in Chief, Managing Editor, Production Editor, Book Review Editor, Statistician/Bibliometrician, Digital Comms Officer and several copy editors

- None of our positions are paid

- We do it all: Peer review management; metadata; ISBN registry; DOI assignment; copy editing; type setting; analytics; promotion and social media

- Most money has come via database royalties, though starting in 2022 we'll receive funds through CILIP

Photo by Marvin Meyer on Unsplash

Benefits of Diamond

- Flexibility to chart our editorial direction, particularly through special issues

- Ability to innovate:

  - Anti-racist policies; inclusive language, removal of ableist language, mentoring scheme

  - Open peer review and explicit recognition of our copy editors and peer reviewers

- We have a long way to go to meet our aspirations, but we couldn't get there without the Diamond model

UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE
Cambridge University Libraries

Drawbacks of Diamond

- Hidden labour – huge amount of volunteer time. Requires commitment and the sustained/collective effort of many people

- Struggle to be seen as a 'real' journal in the eyes of big indexers (e.g., Clarivate/Web of Science)

- The precariousness of archiving

Summary

- Similar pros and cons as Diamond OA

- Huge learning experience that makes us better information professionals

- It's been great to see the journal become more influential over time

- The goodwill of volunteers is a risky model for sustainability

- Excited about the move to Edinburgh Diamond

3 **Looking Ahead**

Needs must or disruptive?

- Why choose Diamond OA?

- Many motivating factors

- 'Diamond' as a descriptive term

- 'Diamond' as a critical lens

Photo by Omar Gattis on Unsplash

Looking ahead

- The ideal of a publishing model that is 'equitable, community driven and academic led' **is** worth working for!

- Building capacity, efficiency, visibility, quality standards and overall scalability and sustainability of Diamond OA is crucial

- Consideration of other funding models? Sponsorship, donations, crowd funding, advertising, freemium, consortia, state funds, etc.

- More university/library-based publishing with the resources to support Diamond OA, reaching out particularly to emerging sub-disciplines

https://www.flickr.com/photos/bails70/7548975930

Thank You

Meg Westbury

mw528@cam.ac.uk