

Scholarly journal ownership

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Webinar for HRČAK editors on DDH Criteria, 20 October 2026

The selection of Diamond Open Access journals in the DDH is based on the following “operational criteria for Diamond Open Access”:

1. Persistent identification
- 2. Scholarly journal**
3. Open Access with open licences
4. No fees
5. Open to all authors
- 6. Community-owned**



Source: Armengou, C., Bargheer, M., Gingold, A., Holsinger, S., Laakso, M., Mitchell, D., Mounier, P., Pölönen, J., Rooryck, J., Ševkušić, M., Souyioultzoglou, I., & Varachkina, H. (2024). Operational Diamond OA Criteria for Journals. Zenodo.
<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.12721408>



What do we mean by “community ownership” of a journal?

6. Community-owned

“The journal title must be owned by public or not-for-profit organizations (or parts thereof) whose mission includes performing or promoting research and scholarship. These include but are not limited to research performing organisations (RPOs), research funding organisations (RFOs), organisations connected to RPOs (university libraries, university presses, faculties, and departments), research institutes, and scholarly societies. The journal should explain its ownership status on its webpage.”

Practical recommendations (summarized):

- Check ownership, governance and mission at journal or publisher level.
- Do not rely on legal status alone; consider the organisation’s purpose and practices.
- Review mission statements, publisher information, editorial board composition and affiliations.
- Where unclear, assess whether publishing primarily serves scholarly/community interests rather than commercial or political goals.

Source: <https://ddh.edch.eu/docs/diamond-open-access-journal-verification-guidelines/>

What do we mean by “scholarly journal”?

2. Scholarly journal

“The journal should be a scholarly journal that selects papers via an explicitly described evaluation process before and/or after publication, in line with accepted practices in the relevant discipline (See also DOAS <https://doi.org/10.58121/Z15S-JY03>).”

DOAS on Peer Review (summarized):

4.2. Peer Review

- Peer review. All submitted manuscripts undergo a rigorous evaluation process before and/or after publication that is in line with accepted practices in the relevant discipline. This evaluation process can involve peer review, or another type of evaluation by more than one competent person who has no conflict of interest with the author(s).
- Peer-review policy and procedures. All journal websites publish a policy describing the evaluation or peer review process (...) specifying the tasks expected of reviewers. (...) It also specifies the type of manuscript evaluation process.
- Avoid endogeny. Minimize “internal publishing”: manuscripts being reviewed and published by a closed circle of people who are well acquainted with each other or work in the same institution.

**What are the practical
difficulties encountered by a
DDH Trusted Source to identify
journal ownership?**

What are practical challenges and answers to handle journal ownership?

**What mechanisms can help
balance potential tensions
between editorial independence
and ownership?**

**How can we define what assets
are “owned” when “journal
ownership” is discussed?**

Bundle of Tangible and Intangible Journal Assets

Tangible Assets

- Financial reserves and agreements
- Buildings, equipment, etc.

Intangible Journal Assets

- The journal title
- The journal's ISSN
- The Aims & Scope of the journal
- The journal's database of reviewers and authors
- The journal archives (e.g. reviews, editorial decisions, editorial correspondence, if available and as applicable).
- The governance/ organisational structure and organisation of the journal (Editorial, team, editorial board, ownership, internal regulations, selection procedures for editors and board members, etc.)(governance)
- The journal's editorial policies
- The journal's publishing policies
- The goodwill and trust amongst the community supporting and supported by the journal (social capital).



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Questions & Discussion

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