

Open Access Button COVID-19 Response & Contingency Plan

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Relevant background

- The Open Access Button has key personnel in the UK, USA (D.C., Connecticut), New Zealand, and Costa Rica. Key services (e.g., servers and banks) reside in those places, as well as in mainland Europe. All are affected by COVID-19 at different severities and all are responding differently.
- Some of our key personnel, including the project director, are both vulnerable to COVID-19 and were exposed to the virus regularly by frontline staff. Infection is expected.
- We work remotely day-to-day. We have infrequent, but important, in-person meetings for planning and bonding.
- We're taking the risk of Coronavirus seriously, and we have been actively responding since early March. So far, its impact has been controlled.
- We have already conducted general purpose [contingency and succession planning](#), funded by Arcadia. This document will build upon that foundation.

Our mission in a time of crisis

We recognize that information-sharing will play a critical role in mitigating the crisis. We've been proud to see the role Open Access is already playing, but we think it can play a bigger role still.

Currently, our first priority is keeping existing critical operations in place and protecting our team. However, due to our prior work on preparedness, we hope to be positioned to pivot to a proactive response to the crisis without sacrificing critical operations.

Through our projects, we're uniquely positioned to help the global community respond to the crisis. We take this seriously, and we're actively working on:

- Releasing Shareyourpaper.org ahead of schedule to make legally sharing research easier than it's ever been—including all research relevant to COVID-19.
- Beginning a proactive effort to open up references of COVID-19 papers.
- Honing how InstantILL can be used to help campuses with off-campus access as libraries and campuses close.
- Turning our travel budget into a communications budget for this effort.
- Pausing work we consider non-essential (see [list](#)) during this crisis and focusing on the response to COVID-19.
- Publishing this plan to help other organizations in our community.

Risk & mitigation strategy

We feel we have already taken all the necessary and reasonable actions required to mitigate the risks and impact of COVID-19. However, we will continue to monitor the situation and either respond in line with our strategy or adjust when required.

All COVID-19 response responsibilities lie with the project director.

Risk	Severity / Likelihood	Mitigation Strategy	Action to Date or in Progress
Reduced capacity for critical functions, e.g., due to minor illness, preparation for self-isolation.	Low / High	Anticipate & prepare	• Monitoring government recommendations and those from our fiscal sponsor. • Communicating with the team. Taking time to check in. • Team given explicit license to reduce OAB hours to increase their personal preparedness, health, and support those around them. • Invested in supplies (e.g., food, power, cooking). • Reviewing contingency planning documents & readiness.
Frustrating partners as we shift plans to respond to COVID-19.	Medium / Low	Prepare	• In communication with key partners on our response plan. • Consulting with them on the impact of our decisions. • Pausing non-essential work, see list.
Getting ill / stuck while traveling.	Medium / Low	Avoid	• Halted work related travel on March 6th for the foreseeable future.
Short-term (~ 2 weeks) personnel time off due to	Medium / Medium	Delay & anticipate	• Protecting general health & wellbeing. • Practicing reasonable social

illness.			distancing inside & outside home, in line with government recommendations. • Preparing a buffer of work for the team, so that they can keep working on near-term essential projects. • Completing essential projects ASAP (e.g., releases, proposals).
Long-term time off (> 2 weeks) due to illness or caring duties.	High / Low	Prepare & react	• Discuss long-term, independent work that can be completed (e.g., refactors, essential regular tasks). • Prepare others to take over key tasks (e.g., server maintenance, security updates, financial management).
Long-term social distancing, e.g., 18 months of no travel, conferences, team meetings.	Medium / Medium	Prepare	• Monitoring situation. • Continuing planning. • Considering other modes of communication externally, e.g., webinars, more emails, 1:1 calls.
Critical external services (e.g., Digital Ocean, power, or internet generally) or processes we depend on, but are out of our control, stop functioning.	High / Low	Monitor & redundancy	• Monitoring current internet slowdown due to load. • Reviewing readiness to switch services, regions or restore from backup if required.
Loss of funding due to markets.	Catastrophic / Extremely low	Avoid, prepare & react	• Confirmed low probability. • Review system status / vulnerability. • Act on published plan if in effect.
Loss of personnel.	Catastrophic / Extremely Low	Avoid & reduce impact	• Act on published plan if required.
Long-term failure of basic infrastructure (e.g., power, internet).	Catastrophic / Low	Monitor & redundancy	• Monitoring COVID responses where we have essential staff and services. • Reviewing readiness to switch services or regions.
For any reason, we	Catastrophic	Prepare	• Act on published plan if required.

have to shut down.	/ Extremely Low		
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Inventory: Essential tasks

These are regular tasks that, if not conducted, would likely cause significant problems to critical services (anything publicly released or used to support an already launched service), customers, users, and personnel in less than one month. These do not include tasks required to do new work (e.g., releasing new features, doing new sales).

Task	Primary Person Responsible	Backup
Technical		
Request moderation	Natalia	Joe
Publisher policy monitoring & update	Joe	Natalia
Shareyourpaper.org file moderation	Natalia	Joe
Server maintenance	Mark	Cottage Labs
Security updates	Mark	Cottage Labs
Critical bug monitoring	Joe	Mark
Critical bug fixes	Joe	Mark
Operations		
Approving invoices	Joe	NVF Personnel
Paying bills	Joe	NVF Personnel
Account access	Joe	NVF Personnel
Task assignment & prioritization	Joe	Individual team members
Communications		
Notification of significant issues (on website and over email)	Joe	Mark
Technical support (to leaders)	Joe	Mark

Inventory: Non-essential projects during COVID-19

We don't make a habit of doing work that isn't important. This list reflects work that we feel isn't timely for the moment or likely to be effective given the focus of our surrounding communities.

- Sales
- InstantILL development
- New internal quarterly "Objectives and Key Results (OKR)" setting
- Transparency efforts (e.g publishing IOI census doc)
- Long-term planning
- Travel planning
- Expansion of permission system
- GetFTR analysis & response
- Non-critical bug fixing

We hope to return to these important activities as soon as possible.