

# Open Access in the Balance: the future of scholarly online content



Dr Dale Peters

DISA: Digital Innovation South Africa



# Discussion Framework

1. DISA background
2. Open Access and the privatisation of knowledge
3. Digital Commons in African HE



# DISA OA success story



- Pilot feasibility study
- Technological advancement
- Skills development
- Open Access - Open Source - Open Content
- Policy, professional development, technology development
- Support knowledge communities
- New mechanisms of scholarly communication in public domain





# Digital Innovation South Africa

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Digital Innovation South Africa

Digital Innovation South Africa (DISA) is a non-profit making initiative for co-operation among research libraries and archives in Southern Africa, sponsored by the [Andrew W. Mellon Foundation](#).

The aim of DISA is to make Southern African material of high socio-political interest accessible to scholars and researchers worldwide. This material would otherwise be difficult to locate and use. DISA undertakes digital imaging projects in Southern Africa, which result in this important historical material becoming universally accessible, while at the same time developing knowledge and expertise in digital imaging technology in the library and archival community in the region. We work in partnership with [Aluka](#) and [Ithaka](#).

### Our Partners



# Southern African Freedom Struggles 1950 - 1994



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Forty periodical titles have been selected from a very comprehensive list, with a view to presenting not only a wide spectrum of political views published during these years, but also a diversity of subjects such as trade unions, religion, health, culture, and gender. Publications reflecting both black and white viewpoints are included, and an attempt has been made to represent distinctive regional variations. Some of the publications were short-lived and, by necessity, of limited distribution. These factors lend a certain rarity value in that the publications are generally not well represented in research collections.

DISA has just released **Contact**, the Journal of the Liberal Party of South Africa. One of the founding members of this party, Mr Peter Brown, passed away in July this year.

Alan Paton described him in his autobiography, *Journey Continued* as "A man with a social conscience about justice, equality, and the rule of law... that was going to cost him dear."  
Peter Brown 1924 - 2004

Link to [Contact Journals](#)



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# Open Access and the privatisation of knowledge

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sivulile



open access  
south africa

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# Challenges

- Ownership
  - Collaborative content development
  - Dissemination of Open Content
  - Appropriation
- Intellectual Property Rights Management
  - Permissions
  - Attributions
  - Privacy vs political interests



# Interventions

- Brief to HESA, CHELSA and University Legal Advisors' Forum
- National Heritage Council discussions





# Vulnerability

- Secure funding investment
- Aggregation of online content
- Sustainability



# Social contract of digital scholarship

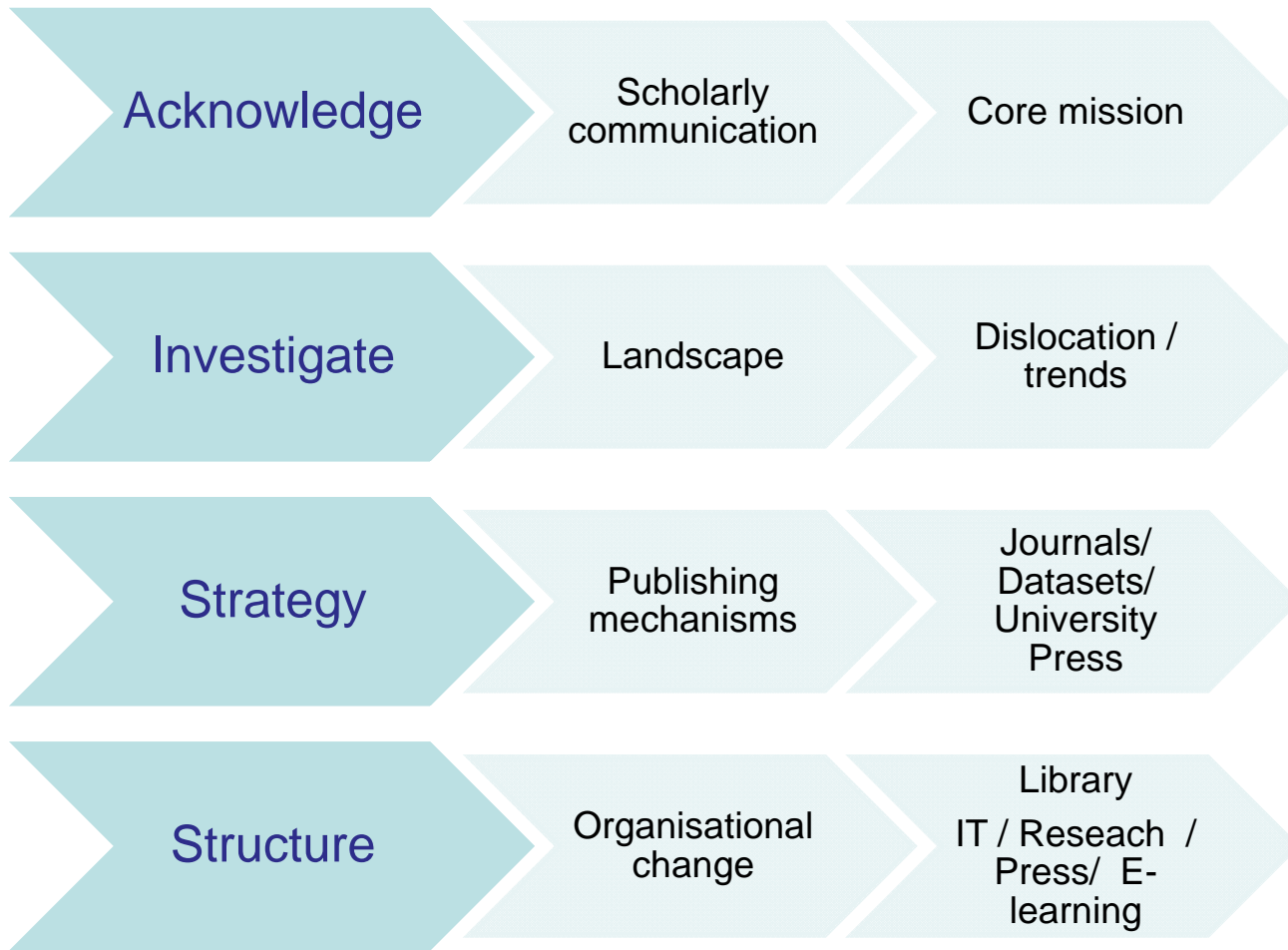
- Open Access, open source, open content
- North- South Divide in scholarly communication
- Challenges
  - Uneven access
  - Privacy and security
  - Ethical partnerships
- Future in the balance



# Digital Commons in the African HE context



# Digital Commons



# African Commons

- Shared / third party information infrastructure
- Scalability
- Expertise
- Support
  - Repository development
  - Digital curation practice
- Funding





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