

## Professional Stephen Pinfield – Keynote – Wednesday 24 June 2026

**Title:** Effective and Equitable Global Open Access

**Abstract:** This presentation will explore some of the key conditions that are necessary to deliver global Open Access (OA) in a way that is effective and equitable. Often assumed to be a self-evident good, the OA movement began with the best of intentions. However, in recent years, OA has been subjected to growing criticism for perpetuating global inequities and epistemic injustices. It has been seen as imposing exploitative business and publishing models and as exacerbating exclusionary research evaluation cultures and practices. It has been criticised as promoting a narrow view of knowledge, based on what are seen as Western scientific norms, derived exclusively from STEMM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine) disciplines. Engaging with these issues, it is important to recognise that the global OA debate is now not just about publishing business models and academic reward structures, but also about what constitutes valid and valuable knowledge, how we know, and who gets to say. The presentation will argue that for OA to deliver its potential, it first needs to be associated with ‘epistemic openness’, a wider and more inclusive understanding of what constitutes valid and valuable knowledge. It also needs to be accompanied by ‘participatory openness’, enabling contributions to knowledge from more diverse communities. The presentation will interact with relevant theory and current practice, discussing the challenges in implementing these different forms of openness, the relationships between them, and their limits.

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### **Biography:**

Stephen Pinfield is Professor of Information Services Management at the University of Sheffield and Senior Research Fellow at the Research-on-Research Institute (RoRI). He has a particular interest in scholarly communication, open research and research evaluation. He has been involved in national and international policy development in these areas, and the creation of open systems and services since the early 2000s. His work takes place at the interface between theory and practice, stemming from his practice-based experience. Before becoming an academic in 2012, he was an information professional, latterly Chief Information Officer at the University of Nottingham, where he managed library and IT services. At Nottingham, he was the founding Director of Sherpa from 2002 to 2012, an initiative managing projects and providing services to support the global open access community (now run as part of Jisc Open Policy Finder).