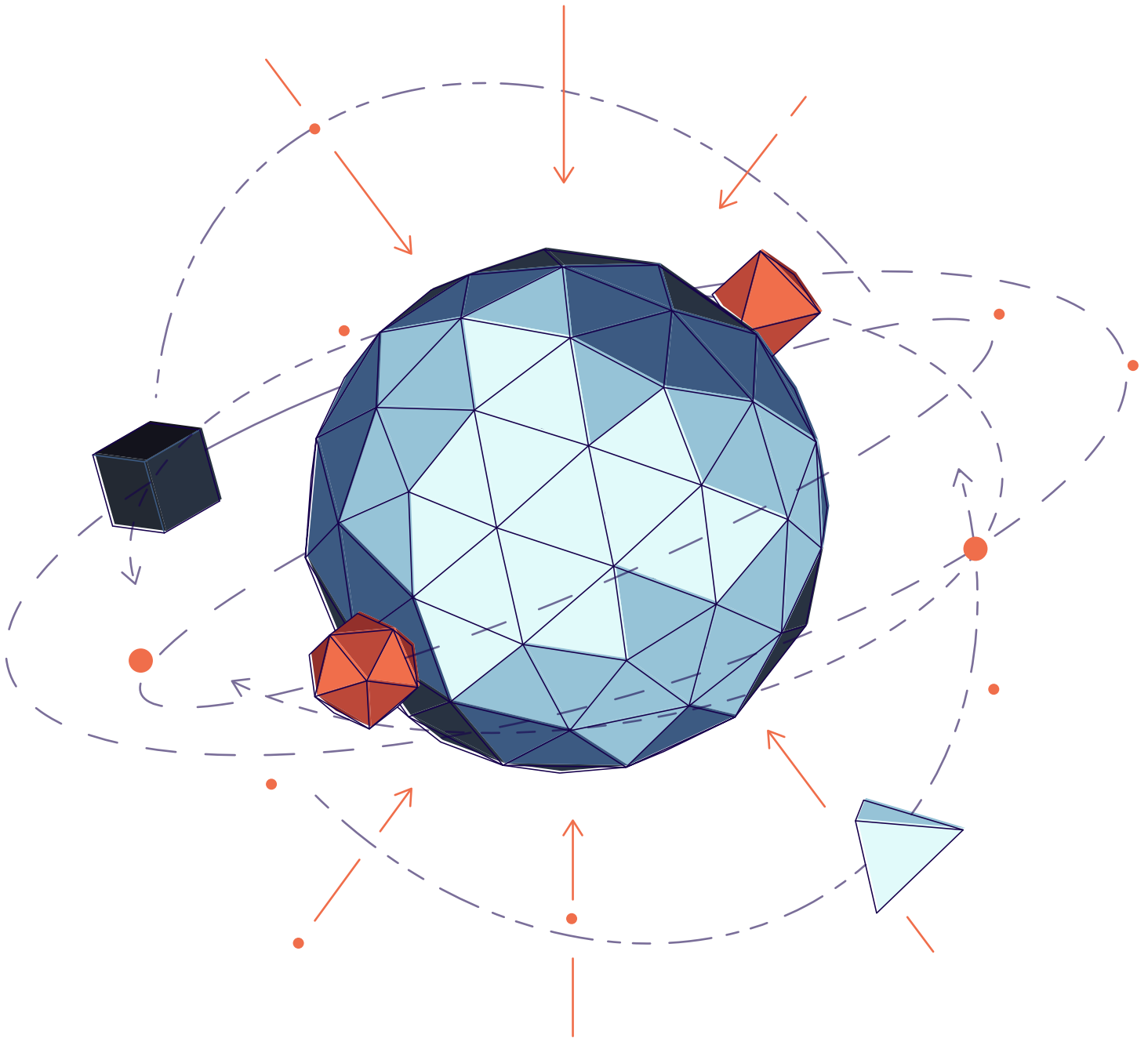


Open movement's common(s) causes

Report from a Wikimania 2024 side event



November 2024

1. Introduction

This publication outlines current threats and opportunities facing the open movement based on the ongoing work of the organizations behind the Common(s) Cause event, the findings from the event itself, and takes a first step towards linking different advocacy efforts and activities to create a baseline for a shared advocacy strategy for the Knowledge Commons.

The Common(s) Cause event was organized by [Creative Commons](#), [Open Knowledge Foundation](#), [Open Future](#), and [Wikimedia Europe](#) in collaboration with the Wikimedia Foundation and took place on the 6th of August, the day before the Wikimania 2024 conference in Katowice, Poland. The event gathered 55+ participants from 20 countries, most of whom traveled to Katowice to attend the Wikimania conference. The majority of the attendees were from open advocacy communities.

The report identifies a few common causes that can be found at the intersection of open movement organizations' strategies, the socio-technological zeitgeist, and current policy opportunities, such as **1)** advocating for the regulation of AI, which would make it work for creators and the Commons, **2)** further defining and advocating for open digital public infrastructure, and **3)** making the case for the Knowledge Commons within the Global Digital Compact implementation. This report is a starting point and serves as an invitation to the wider open community to join these causes as well as to formulate their own, which could then be backed by the organizations. The next step in this process will be disseminating its findings, hopefully resulting in further backing and refinement of the causes and additional feedback from the wider community, which this small convening could not fully represent.

The authors - Jocelyn Miyara (Creative Commons), Alicja Peszkowska (Open Future) and Lucas Pretti (Open Knowledge Foundation) - would like to thank all the Common(s) Cause participants for their priceless contributions to this document as well as Alek Tarkowski (Open Future), Renata Avila (Open Knowledge Foundation), Anna Tumadóttir (Creative Commons), and Anna Mazgal (Wikimedia Europe) for their invaluable feedback.



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2. Join in!

In these cross-movement conversations at Common(s) Cause and Beyond, we were able to build and strengthen relationships between hosting organizations and attendees. Feedback received from attendees included comments about how the social aspects of the day were some of the most important, and that participants were eager to continue conversations with the new contacts they had met.

We wish to reiterate that despite trying to make the workshop inclusive, an event with 50+ attendees in Europe cannot possibly purport to be representative of the global open movement. That is why we would love for you to share this report, along with the findings, and reach out to us with feedback and suggestions, including other causes and more touchpoints, where the movement could come together to discuss and build on this.

We would love to see you there and hear from you.

3. *Common(s) Context*

In this report, we refer to “the open movement” despite no general agreement or clarity on how it is defined and whether it exists¹. Some activists prefer to talk about the Digital Commons, free knowledge or software, or access to knowledge. When we use the term “open movement” in this exploration, our starting point is a definition of this movement as a sum of “people, communities, and organizations who (1) contribute to shared resources online that are available for everyone to use and reuse, and/or (2) advocate for non-exclusive access and use of information resources²”. We add to this definition those who provide tools and standards for open sharing.

In the past two decades, the open movement has been continuously working towards a more democratic digital future as a driving force behind initiatives that have contributed to the democratization of knowledge and information. However, between its origins in the early 2000s – marked by a belief in the emancipatory potential of open sharing of content and data – and the current moment, in which the ideals of the open web have been surpassed by the economic might of a few privately-owned profit-driven “sharing” platforms, the issues surrounding openness in the digital space have changed. The current concentration of power in the hands of a few information intermediaries has led to a situation in which open is not just a challenge, but also an enabler of concentrations of power³. Contemporary critics of the open movement say that it is lacking in new, younger, and more diverse voices and has not adapted to the challenges of today⁴. For example, the open movement doesn’t incorporate post-colonial perspectives or a deeper reflection on societal polarization, raising authoritarianism, and the looming climate catastrophe into its strategy⁵.

Another struggle for the open movement has been that while many of its achievements, including Wikipedia and several open source software projects, have now evolved into essential infrastructures for our societies, there exists a lack of institutionalized funding dedicated to their maintenance. Meanwhile, we see the first-generation activists growing older, communities shrinking, and maintainers burning out. As core tasks of some well-established communities, such as Wikipedia or open source software, are institutionalized and much more technical, newcomers have fewer opportunities to innovate, experiment, and learn from failures⁶.

¹ Tarkowski, Alek, Paul Keller, Zuzanna Warso, Krzysztof Goliński, and Jakub Koźniewski. “Fields of Open. Mapping the Open Movement.” Open Future, July 6, 2023. <https://openfuture.pubpub.org/pub/fields-of-open/release/2>.

² Tarkowski, Alek, Aleksandra Janus, and Zuzanna Warso. “Shifting Tides: The Open Movement at a Turning Point.” Open Future, June 7, 2023. <https://openfuture.pubpub.org/pub/shifting-tides/release/2>.

³ Keller, Paul, and Alek Tarkowski. “The Paradox of Open.” Open Future, March 5, 2021. <https://openfuture.pubpub.org/pub/paradox-of-open/release/1>.

⁴ Avila, Renata. “Updating the Open Definition to meet the challenges of today.” Open Knowledge Foundation, March 16, 2023. <https://blog.okfn.org/2023/03/16/updating-the-open-definition-to-meet-the-challenges-of-today/>

⁵ Tarkowski, Alek, Aleksandra Janus, and Zuzanna Warso. “Shifting Tides: The Open Movement at a Turning Point.” Open Future, June 7, 2023. <https://openfuture.pubpub.org/pub/shifting-tides/release/2>.

⁶ Jan Krewer, Open Future. “On Public Support and Community Responsibility for Digital Infrastructures.” Accessed September 11, 2024. <https://openfuture.eu/blog/on-public-support-and-community-responsibility-for-digital-infrastructures>.

We, the authors of this report, and the organizations behind Common(s) Cause, think that if the open movement is to reinvent itself and preserve its achievements and values in the current socio-economic ecosystem, it must work towards a common strategy, which would be reflected in shared advocacy efforts and take concrete form in shared or coalition initiatives. Defining common principles and a shared advocacy strategy can help revive and strengthen the movement, reconcile internal differences and disagreements, and strengthen its voice and position in an increasingly polarized context.

Some of the threats outlined below can also be seen as opportunities for the open movement to reinvent itself. Interviewees in Open Future’s “Shifting Tides: The Open Movement at a Turning Point” research process named the need for new voices, new narratives, relevance, and maintenance as central in such a process⁷. The same happened in the recent review process of the Open Definition and the Open Data Commons⁸, two historic initiatives of the Open Knowledge Foundation that helped shape the movement two decades ago. Participants in the Common(s) Cause event echoed these views. It referred to the protection of digital rights and social justice issues and biases reflected in technology and the development of a more equitable strategy for the movement going forward as a must. Another issue brought up in conversations at the event was the need to reimagine the Commons as ecosystems and work towards mitigating and regulating their environmental impact. These challenges, and possible paths forward, are mapped out in more detail in this report’s “Mapping the field” section.

⁷ Tarkowski, Alek, Aleksandra Janus, and Zuzanna Warso. “Shifting Tides: The Open Movement at a Turning Point.” Open Future, June 7, 2023. <https://openfuture.pubpub.org/pub/shifting-tides/release/2>.

⁸ Pretti, Lucas. “Debriefing the Open Definition workshop at RightsCon.” Open Knowledge Foundation, June 26, 2023. <https://blog.okfn.org/2023/06/26/debriefing-the-open-definition-workshop-at-rightscon/>

4. Common(s) Cause Event

Wikimania is a global gathering and celebration of free and open knowledge and the people creating and maintaining Wikimedia resources. Wikimedians and Wikimedia are an essential part of the open movement and one of its most remarkable achievements.

This year's Wikimania, under the theme "Collaboration of the Open," invited Wikimedia collaborators, including other open movement organizations, to join the program and the event. It provided an infrastructure for Knowledge Commons advocates and practitioners to meet and connect.

Creative Commons, Open Future, Open Knowledge Foundation, and Wikimedia Europe took advantage of this opportunity to organize a Day Zero event dedicated to advocacy work. Each of these organizations have different but overlapping perspectives in their advocacy of a shared commons.

- Creative Commons (CC) is focused on building advocacy infrastructure and raising awareness for open access. It is also interested in legal and policy interventions when it comes to copyright, especially in the face of AI. CC is also exploring the development of a preference signals framework to help cultivate a more responsible and participatory AI landscape.
- Wikimedia Europe engages in Policy and Advocacy in the EU, addressing legislative challenges and how they impact Wikipedia & its projects. They also engage with local communities in advocacy efforts around these issues.
- Open Knowledge Foundation (OKFN) advocates for openness as a design principle and commons-based governance models for all aspects involving digital technologies for the public interest. OKFN also develops open tech standards, specifications and software in collaboration with many communities and supports key multilateral organizations and governments with open digital public infrastructure. They also maintain and support a network with like-minded individuals and organizations in more than 40 countries.
- Open Future (OF) works to develop shared advocacy strategies in collaboration with open organizations, researchers, and academics. These focus on supporting Digital Commons and Digital Public Space. One of its focus areas has been the development of principles for AI and the commons, in collaboration with Creative Commons and other organizations.

Together, the gathering of these organizations along with key stakeholders in the Wikimedia Movement and broader open movement was an important step in building the relationships necessary to sustain an effective movement advocacy strategy.

Interested participants were invited to apply to attend the event, and we selected 50+ people who were already attending Wikimania and who we believe are well positioned to have high impact in the Open Movement as collaborators with each organizing institution.

Agenda Overview

During the day of the event, we started with a couple of ice-breaker activities to warm up and meet each other. We invited participants to place a dot on a physical world map to indicate where they came from and we saw attendees indicate nearly every continent, although we recognise that the majority were located in the USA and Europe. We acknowledge this as a recurring problem of the movement's representativeness⁹.

We then invited participants to do a social warm up exercise followed by a temperature check on a few polarizing questions:

- “Are the Commons under threat more than they were 10 years ago?”
- “Is it ok to limit openness for the social benefit?”



Figure 1: Location of Common(s) Cause Event Participants

⁹ In the specific case of Wikimania 2024, various EU embassies vetoed the presence of many participants applying for a visa, mainly from African and Asian countries. Unfortunately it is a recurring practice that affects dozens of events around the world. By denying open activists and practitioners the necessary visas to enter the continent, the EU hinders the free circulation of knowledge and has a profound effect on our movement. It's a real shame.

After our warm up, we broke into groups for our main morning activity: mapping the playing field. In this exercise groups were tasked with identifying key threats, opportunities, and events in the open movement. After lunch, groups came back together for a report-out to show how our attendees view the state of the movement.

For the second half of the day, we were joined by a Wikimedia advocacy group led by Franziska Putz, Senior Advocacy Manager at the Wikimedia Foundation, who spent the morning discussing topics focused on Wiki projects and policy advocacy.

In the afternoon, groups split out into 4 break-out discussions on some areas of potential shared policy advocacy.

1. Principles for regulating AI for the Commons (CC, OF)
2. "Community-led model" and Digital Public Goods in the Global Digital Compact (Friederike from Wikimedia Deutschland)
3. A Progressive Agenda for Digital Public Infrastructure (OKFN)
4. Green Technology and Open Climate (Jan Ainali)

5. Mapping the Field: Threats and Opportunities

The mapping exercise was conducted in breakout groups that then came together to share what was discussed. The exercise structure was built around the threats and opportunities facing the open movement.

The full, interactive visualization of the mapped threats and opportunities, which will be subject to updates, is available [here](#). The post-event version can be seen below.

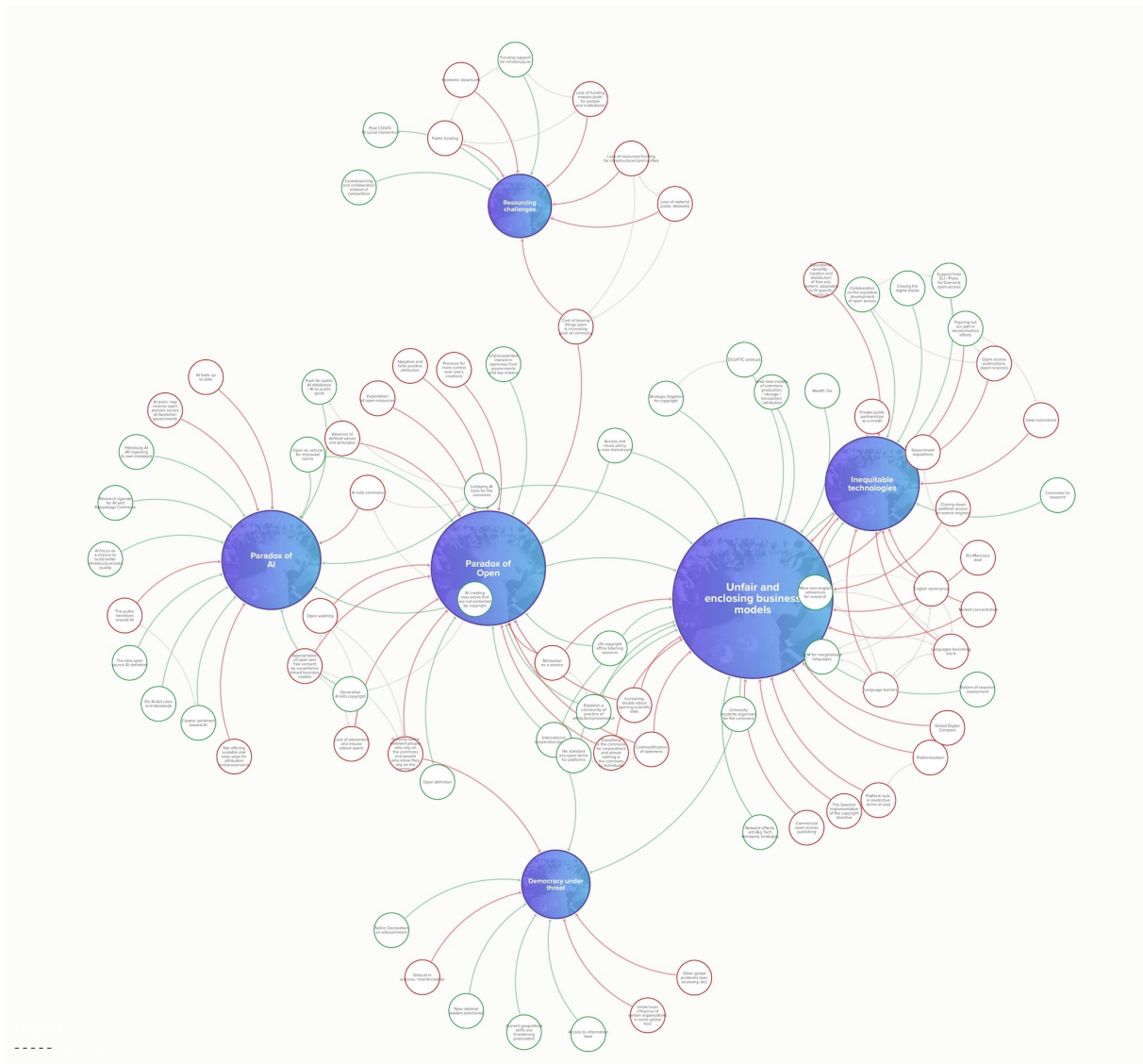


Figure 2: Mapping the playing field

In the interactive visualization and the tables below, red items indicate threats, while the green ones speak to opportunities—all linked to the bigger themes we defined while visualizing the inputs. Each item refers to an individual contribution shared during the time when we divided into groups. The authors of this report have compiled these results while recognizing that this is knowledge generated openly and collaboratively with no authorship attribution. The classification of the themes, along with brief explanations and supporting voices, are outlined lower down.

The Paradox of Open

This first category of threats to the open movement are those that propel us to question the very benefits of openness that the open movement has always stood for. The core one can be referred to as the “**Paradox of Open**” – the fact that in the modern digital economy, openness serves as both a challenge to and an enabler for those who wish to control digital resources. That is why the map reveals many connections between the “Paradox of Open” and the “**Unfair and Enclosing Business Models**” bubbles.

Open washing	Blurring the concept of open.	Global
Appropriation of open and free consent by surveillance based business models	Used for societally harmful purposes with no social return on free labour.	Global
Lack of awareness and misuse (about open)	Mistrust (creators not using the licenses), unintentional infringement, violation, and legal disputes.	Local
Exploitation of open resources	Some actors (mostly companies) use open resources but do not give back (time, resources, money) to the open community.	Global
Commodification of openness	Open infrastructure used by monopolies need to combine openness with economic gain.	Global
Global Digital Compact	States meddling/defining the meaning of openness to suit their political/cultural agenda.	Local / Global
Attribution as a service	"Code not law".	Global
Absence of defined values and principles	Without shared principles is difficult to make shared decisions.	Global
Self-inflicted pain	The community of creators arguing for extended control of the creations.	Global
No standard pro-open terms for platforms	CC is not a ToS.	Global
Unprecedented interest from governments and law makers	How many politicians knew what "open" was, besides "open bar", 10 years ago?	Global
US Copyright Office listening sessions	Make case for the Commons to important policy agency	Local
Open Definition	We need to retake its foundational role.	Global
Establish a community of practice of attribution/provenance	Already embedded in the conversation to support information integrity.	Local / Regional / Global
Access and reuse policies are now mainstream		Global

Unfair and Enclosing Business Models

Participants talked about how some actors, mostly companies, exploit open resources but do not give back (time, resources, money) to open communities. They also mentioned the opportunities connected to how the network effects generated by the Big Tech monopoly increase the societal need for alternative, open approaches.

What	Why	Impact
Closing down platform access to search engines	E.g. Reddit vs Google access changes in terms of service for scrapping.	Global
Platformization	Big Tech controlling Terms of Service and content sharing.	Global
EU-Mercosul deal	Copyright / Other causes?	Regional
Network effects, Big Tech monopoly	Lower acceptance for the "open" model among key stakeholder groups.	Global
Increasing doubts about opening scientific data	Imaginarities of misuse, commodification, and extraction.	Global
Commercial Open Access publishing	APCs create new barriers for creators to publish.	Regional / Global
Platform lock-in (restrictive terms of use)	Keeps materials stuck on one site, no remix, disappears if site goes down.	Global
Government regulations		Global
Private-public partnerships as a model	Corporate capture/enclosure.	Local / Regional / Global
The Swedish implementation of the copyright directive	Freedom of panorama is limited.	Local
Other global problems (war, economy, etc)	People don't have time/attention for less pressing issues (like the Commons).	Global
Everything is the Commons for corporations and almost nothing is the Commons to individuals		Global
Wealth Tax	Less incentives for rent-seeking.	Global
DOJ/FTC antitrust, Google	Competition in the field of search.	Global
Lead new models of Commons production / storage / transaction / attribution	If we do not discuss it now, we'll loose the timing.	Local / Regional / Global
Strategic litigation for copyright	It could get certainty around the Commons.	Global
Reform of research assessment	To counter the naive simplicity of just counting citations and patents as "scientific performance".	Regional / Global
Network effects, Big Tech monopoly strategies	Increases the societal need for alternative, open approaches.	Global

Paradox of AI

The third theme, perhaps a more specific embodiment of the aforementioned paradox is: artificial intelligence (AI) and specifically, generative AI. One participant stated, “Policymakers are affected by the heavy marketing from corporations, which are the ones creating the narrative around AI.” This implies that the movement’s voice should play a larger role in this conversation. What is the movement’s exact position on it, though? Does the fact that proprietary AI systems get trained on open content (and then generate income for those able to invest huge sums of money into creating those models) change the open game? Should the Commons remain open for AI to use/exploit? Should we license the open content in a way that restricts its use by machines?

The participants of this event stood divided on these questions, which seem to pose both potential benefits and risks to the movement, hence the theme’s title: “**Paradox of AI.**”

What	Why	Impact
Not offering scalable and easy ways for attribution and provenance	Because there will just be a lot more content (junk and good) on the web because of AI.	Global
The public narratives around AI	Policy makers are affected by marketing and scary stories from corporations, as they create the narrative.	Global
AI tools up to date	No legislation, no good practices.	Global
AI eats Commons	Because large language models use the Commons.	Global
AI panic may reverse open policies across all Australian governments	Concern about AI abuse (taking without sharing).	Local
AI creating new works that are not protected by copyright	A source of works that enter the Commons at an unprecedented scale.	Regional / Global
Open as vehicle for improved norms	Norms around sharing are changing rapidly because of AI.	Global
EU AI Act rules and standards	There is an opportunity to influence the process and expand the Commons.	Regional / Global
Generative AI kills copyright	If creative work is abundant there is no need for restrictive laws.	Global
The new Open Source AI Definition	If can add new areas to the Commons.	Global
Research agenda for AI and Knowledge Commons	Because there is already good momentum around it.	Global
Creator sentiment toward AI	We can shift the focus to shared resources and community models.	Global
AI tools	It is hot topic. It is time to lobbying for the Commons.	Global

Push for public AI databases / AI as public good		Local / Regional / Global
AI-focus as a chance to build better infrastructure/data quality (that is needed)		Local
Habsburg AI (AI ingesting its own mistakes)	Promises and challenges of AI fall apart.	Global

Inequitable Technologies

Another category of themes voiced by the participants is broader societal issues that the open movement has to address to stay relevant in social justice and digital rights debates. The absence of these themes in the explicit open movement agenda is a lost opportunity, as a focus on these themes could allow us to form alliances with other, like-minded movements and activities. This category includes “**Inequitable Technologies**,” which encompasses issues such as data colonialism, language barriers, and the digital divide. Technology does not exist in a vacuum. It is built by people and fueled by data, which is far from being equitable and objective. The need to address the issues of power, bias, and discrimination in how and what technologies are being built and implemented seems to be something that many in the open movement care about and speak about.

What	Why	Impact
English dominance	Excludes research, etc.	Regional
Languages becoming silo'd	Search engine language specialization.	Regional / Global
Data colonialism	Big Tech business model don't value citizen-centered data generation - we don't have funding for commons cause data & Big Techs earn a lot with our data.	Global
Market concentration	Apple, Google, Alibaba, Amazon, Getty, Adobe - those companies own a lot of the Commons and act as gatekeepers.	Global
Language barriers	Communities want to access info in their own language and don't understand if there's no representation of languages.	Local / Regional
Collaboration on the equitable development of Open Access	Much energy in the Global South and North to focus on equity.	Local / Regional / Global
Open Access publications (open science)	Opening the scientific "metaverse", open citations, change of the reputation system.	Global
Support from EU / Plans for Diamond Open Access (Open Research Europe, Gates Foundation...)	More "accessive" scientific information.	Regional

Figuring out our part in the decolonization effort	Opportunity to be of service and expand ethical responsibilities in practice now.	Local
Educational benefits - creation and distribution of free educational content, adaptable to fit specific curricula	Acessibility, collaboration, lost savings.	Global
LLM for marginalized languages	To develop LLM for smaller indigenous languages, e.g. Mozilla Common Voice.	Local
Closing the digital divide	Incorporating "open" education within the onboarding of the excluded.	Local / Regional
University students organized for the Commons	Unprecedented organization level at global universities.	Global
More foreign language (non-English) references for research	Machine translation gives access to English speakers to different sources.	Local / Regional / Global
Commons for research	As new research is excluded on wikis.	Global

Democracy Under Threat

"Democracy Under Threat," another thread in this category, encapsulates some of the externalities facing the movement regarding global politics. We are seeing a rise in populism and nationalism, continued threats to free and fair elections, and concentrations of power that work against the public interest. In the current socio-political reality, widespread misinformation paired with low digital literacy fuels distrust in knowledge and science and sabotages democracy. One participant said "With so much distrust in science and the spread of misinformation, it's difficult to make informed decisions." How could open, verified knowledge be prioritized and acknowledged as an important part of the digital public infrastructure? Could it help in attracting a new generation of Knowledge Commons volunteers and ensure the sustainability of the movement?

What	Why	Impact
Distrust in science / misinformation	Difficult to verify info and make informed decisions.	Global
Growing space between people who rely on the Commons and people who know they rely on the Commons	A Commons that is taken for granted will not grow.	Global
Under/over influence of certain organizations in some global fora	Some big organizations can send representatives and influence but are not necessarily aligned with the movement.	Global
Current geopolitical shifts are threatening divisions	As a global community, we are able to bridge the gaps.	Global
International cooperation/projects	Share knowledge across countries.	Global

National elections	New legislators without established agendas/ loyalties.	Global
Erosion of trust/democracy	New values, participation, new models.	Global
Access to information laws	Horizontal adoption of open standards.	Global
Tallinn Declaration on eGovernment	Government commitment to key principles: open by default, interoperability by default, open source. Use it to push the global digital public goods agenda.	Regional / Global

Resourcing Challenges

One last category of issues that was very specific to the nature and perseverance of the open movement, as voiced by many participants, were the **resourcing challenges**. One of the core elements of the Commons is the process of “the commoning” – volunteers and activists creating and sharing resources in the open. However, not everyone can afford to do such work at their leisure. Common(s) Cause participants mentioned both the current lack of funding and interest from the grantmakers and the difficulties related to the sustainability and equitability of volunteer-dependent projects.

What	Why	Impact
Lack of resources/funding for infrastructure/communities	People need to pay rent, eat, etc.	Global
Cost of leaving things open is increasing (cost of Commons)	E.g. bulk downloads.	Global
Public funding	Governments not dedicating sufficient budget/ investment.	Global
Lack of funding models (both for people and institutions)	Major source of precarity.	Global
Economic downturns	People don't have extra resources to contribute to others.	Global
Loss of material (code, datasets)	Not archived, only archived on git. Software heritage is building universal code archive - not yet.	Global
Post-COVID-19 social momentum	We are in a special moment where gathering and working together feels more possible and exciting.	Global
Funding support for infrastructure	Need to get governments to fund the Commons.	Local / Regional
Crowdsourcing and collaboration instead of competition	The need to crowdsource the knowledge in more decentralized and localized ways.	Global

Timeline

The mapping exercise included a timeline focused on future milestones and touchpoints that could help the movement come together and refine its new strategy. You can find the list of events listed at [the end of this document](#).

Towards a shared advocacy strategy

Advocacy work is hard. One of the insights from the breakout session on Wikimedia Foundation's participation in the United Nations' Global Digital Compact process, echoed during the later panel discussion, was that advocacy work at an international level is challenging both for activists and for organizations. It demands time, background knowledge, and long-term knowledge about the often very long processes that are rarely present within the organizations and resources. Even more resources are needed to cover travel costs, build and keep relationships, and make valuable contributions. That is why the authors of this report think it is important to gather around existing initiatives by organizations involved in this conversation.

The shortlist of those we are currently running that we talked about during the breakout sessions at the event is to be found below. The meeting served as an opportunity to discuss several advocacy strategies relating to topics of shared interest.

6. Break-out Sessions

AI and the Commons principles (CC and OF)

In 2023, a group of stakeholders drafted a set of [7 key principles](#) to inform decisions and policies around generative AI and its impact on the commons. Open Future and CC have since conducted an [analysis on alignment](#) with these principles and found 85% alignment, along with additional perspectives and considerations on the principles.

Identified as an outcome of the Common(s) Cause event, the principles are now undergoing an interactive process to continue their development and test their coherence and agreement within the open community. Based on feedback during a breakout group at Common(s) Cause, CC and Open Future continue to revise and consider the principles, and will be working toward an updated publication in the coming months.

"Community-led model" and Digital Public Goods in the Global Digital Compact

The negotiations of the Global Digital Compact (GDC) offered a steep learning curve. This can be used for preparations of the upcoming WSIS+20 conference in May 2025 in Geneva. A call for proposals is already open. We should support each other and activate our national/local communities.

The Global Justice Forum is centralizing the information and connections. If there are specific needs, the Wikimedia Foundation is offering support. The group agreed to connect. The participants' list of the Zero Day would be a good starting point for the Global Justice Forum.

A milestone that could be used for commenting on the importance of Free and Open Source Knowledge was a High Level Event during the Action Days in preparation for the Summit of the Future on 21st of September that Wikimedia organized as a lead organization: "The Power of the Commons: Digital Public Goods for a More Secure, Inclusive, and Resilient World".

A Progressive Agenda for Digital Public Infrastructure (OKFN)

This breakout session focused on the development of Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI), highlighting concerns over the rapid digital transformation initiatives driven by nationalist governments and funded by big philanthropy. The main narrative around DPI was established by India in 2023, when the country hosted the work of the G20. The topic soon became mainstream among government agencies, multi-stakeholder initiatives, and open technology funding agencies (both public and philanthropic), making its way to being included in 2024 as a high-level recommendation in the Digital Global Compact (DGC).

Such massive adoption at record speed can be read as a response to real demands in a process of uneven digital transformation, but at the same time it also raises concerns about

surveillance and control, community participation and potential shady relationships between governments and the private sector, particularly in precarious democracies. These systems, while positioned as alternatives to Big Tech, are being designed and exported by entities with commercial interests, and have the potential to reinforce a top-down, extractive approach similar to what has happened with cloud services dominated by major corporations. Although some initiatives are open source, they are still opaque, limiting transparency and public participation in decision-making.

The session also discussed opportunities for shaping digital commons in a more democratic and rights-based framework. Examples of alternative approaches exist, where Digital Public Infrastructure can advance human rights, but more strategic collaboration is needed to push this agenda forward. There is a growing concern about underfunding and the lack of long-term sustainability in open source DPI projects, as well as the need for more inclusive governance. Participants stressed the importance of engaging civil society in these discussions, particularly through legal avenues, data governance (especially regarding children), and coupling public services with infrastructure. They called for mapping key actors and pushing for commons-based governance models that prioritize accountability and participation at local, regional, and global levels.

Green Technology and Open Climate (Jan Ainali)

Through Creative Commons' (CC) Open Science program, it is focusing on augmenting the impact of open access (OA) to address the world's most urgent needs. CC believes that open access is a prerequisite to mitigating the climate crisis, while at the same time both meeting and measuring the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Over the last two years, CC has provided support to institutions globally on developing and implementing open access policies that drive ON adoption for climate research. CC also works directly with publishers and researchers to ensure OA to the most important climate research. In addition to increasing the accessibility of climate research, CC has also published a set of licensing recommendations for the largest climate datasets to ensure that other institutions, researchers, and individuals have access to critical climate data, which increases transparency and the potential for collaboration. By working with a broad range of stakeholders, including international organizations, researchers, and open access advocates, CC aims to build a global movement that champions the open sharing of climate knowledge. We believe that making climate data open, accessible, and user-friendly is vital for empowering everyone to understand, address, and build upon existing climate knowledge.

During this small-group breakout session, discussions focused on opportunities and threats to advocacy for open climate advocacy. Some key opportunities included: collecting and sharing best practices in accelerating the release of open data, open source solutions that enable "cleaner" storage of data, and embodying best practices in the work of the open movement while addressing the risks of openwashing and sustainability. Notably, this discussion also provided increased collaboration on a grassroots initiative called [Open Goes COP](#). By providing organizational support to regional climate advocates via the Wikigreens initiatives, CC, the Open Knowledge Network, and the Open Data Charter are championing bringing open practices and principles to the UN Climate Change conferences. The full notes from the session can be found [here](#).

7. *The Next Steps*

As we mentioned at the beginning of interpreting this mapping exercise and describing the visualization, many of the current threats facing the movement could also be treated as potential opportunities to inform a new, refined strategy for collaboration.

One of the calls that jumped out for us was **a call for defining new open principles** – principles that could clarify what *openness* means in the context of today's digital space and ensure its pro-public, democratic potential. Formulating such principles could help against several challenges, e.g. open washing.

Another clear call is the one confirming the assumptions behind the Common(s) Cause project: it is **the call for a shared advocacy agenda**, which could help ensure that Knowledge Commons are treated and sustained as critical digital infrastructures.

The organizations who partnered to structure the Common(s) Cause event will commit to ongoing collaboration and alignment of priorities in the coming year, to build on the momentum of having identified areas of shared concern and had them ratified by participants at this event.

While each of the organizers has slightly different areas of emphasis for their work, much of our work is complementary.

The event not only enabled the organizers to build stronger working ties with one another, but with the many other organizations who were represented at the event. The power of the open movement is only as strong as the bonds of the people working to advance an open, equitable agenda, and collective impact can only be achieved through individuals from different organizations working closely together.

In an ecosystem that is deeply lacking in resources, we look to the philanthropic space, government, and industry to recognize the importance of this work and join us in championing these ideals through direct, financial support for future convenings and collective impact initiatives, including but not limited to those defined above:

- (Re)defining openness in a new technological era.
- Creation of a shared advocacy strategy and enhanced regional and thematic cooperation across the organizations.
- Developing and testing governance approaches for our digital commons.
- Advancing openness and sustainability for the technology, data, content, and governance of Digital Public Infrastructure.

Timeline of Events

COP 29 - UN Climate Change Conference Baku

Organizer: UNFCCC

When: 11-22 November, 2024

Where: Baku, Azerbaijan

Website: <https://unfccc.int/cop29>

MozFest House Zambia

Organizer: Mozilla Foundation

When: 20-21 November, 2024

Where: Lusaka, Zambia

Website: <https://www.mozillafestival.org/en/>

América Abierta 2024 (Open America)

Organizer: OEA, ILDA, OGP, OECD, CEPAL

When: 3-6 December, 2024

Where: Brasília, Brazil

Website: <https://americaabierta.org/en/home/>

2nd Global Summit on Diamond Open Access

Organizer: Oversight Committee

When: 8-14 December, 2024

Where: Cape Town, South Africa

Website: <https://doasummit.uct.ac.za/>

19th Internet Governance Forum (IGF) 2024

Organizer: IGF

When: 15-19 December, 2024

Where: Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Website: <https://intgovforum.org/en/content/igf-2024>

38C3: Illegal Instructions – 38th Chaos Communication Congress

Organizer: Chaos Computer Club

When: 27-30 December, 2024

Where: Hamburg, Germany

Website: <https://events.ccc.de/en/category/38c3/>

World Economic Forum Annual Meeting

Organizer: World Economic Forum

When: 20–24 January, 2025

Where: Davos, Switzerland

Website: <https://www.weforum.org/events/world-economic-forum-annual-meeting-2025/>

Everything Open 2025

Organizer: Volunteers with Linux Australia

When: 20-21 February, 2025

Where: Adelaide, Australia

Website: <https://2025.everythingopen.au/>

FOSDEM 2025

Organizer: FOSDEM community

When: 1-2 February, 2025

Where: Brussels, Belgium

Website: <https://fosdem.org/2025/>

ORDEM: Open Research, Dev, Ethics & Mobilization

Organizer: Open Research Devroom / FOSDEM

When: 15 February, 2025

Where: Online

Website: <https://research-fosdem.github.io/>

2025 OGP Asia and Pacific Regional Meeting

Organizer: Open Government Partnership (OGP)

When: 5-7 February, 2025

Where: Manila, Philippines

Website: <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/events/2025-ogp-asia-and-pacific-regional-meeting/>

RightsCon 2025

Organizer: Access Now

When: 24-27 February, 2025

Where: Taipei, Taiwan

Website: <https://www.rightscon.org/>

Open Data Day 2025

Organizer: Open Knowledge Network

When: 1-7 March, 2025

Where: Everywhere

Website: <https://opendataday.org/>

EU Open Data Days 2025

Organizer: Publications Office of the European Union

When: 19-20 March, 2025

Where: Luxembourg City, Luxembourg & online

Website: <https://data.europa.eu/en/euopendatadays>

eLearning Africa

Organizer:

When: 7-9 May, 2025

Where: Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

Website: <https://www.elearning-africa.com/conference2025/>

Open Hardware Summit 2025

Organizer: Open Source Hardware Association (OSHWA)

When: 30-31 May, 2025

Where: Edinburgh, Scotland

Website: <https://2025.oshwa.org/>

Software Freedom Day 2025

Organizer: Digital Freedom Foundation

When: 20 September, 2025

Where: Everywhere

Website: <https://digitalfreedoms.org/en/sfd>

COP 30 - UN Climate Change Conference Belém

Organizer: UNFCCC

When: TBD November, 2025

Where: Belém, Brazil

Website: (still not available)

Digital Learning Week 2025

Organizer: UNESCO

When: TBD

Where: Paris, France

Website: <https://www.unesco.org/en/weeks/digital-learning>

Standing Committee on Copyright and Related Rights (SCCR): Forty-Sixth Session

Organizer: WIPO

When: TBD

Where: Geneva, Switzerland

Website: <https://www.wipo.int/policy/en/sccr/>

4th UN Open Science Conference 2025

Organizer: Dag Hammarskjöld Library

When: TBD

Where: New York, USA

Website: <https://www.un.org/en/library/OS>