

Publishing Collectives: Creations, practices, engagements

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In the spirit of the literary collective (Glinoyer & Lacroix, 2020), as a “distinct form of collective action,” the publishing collective is a space of reflection on and exploration of various ways of *doing publishing* by collaboration. This publishing space, whose identity is defined by the synergy of individual actions, evokes notions of collective intelligence, of a militant commons (Fredriksson & Sauret, 2019), of crystals of knowledge (Sauret, 2017; Stern et al., 2015), and of scholarly conversation (Merzeau, 2013; Sauret, 2020). The structure of collective publishing testifies to its integration with the technical environment, its resistance to institutionalization, and the harmonization of its chains of production with developments in digital culture. The practices of collectives, therefore, may be seen as constituting an engagement with dynamics such as the imposition of standard usage, the reproduction of mechanisms of domination and the planned obsolescence of tools and formats. And so it is with the making of books (Borsuk, 2021).

The present call for papers, therefore, is motivated by the following questions: how do the publishing practices of these collectives evolve, change, or stabilize as they come into contact with digital culture? How do collectives steer publishing in navigating between the determination of practices through digital tools (word processors and editors, annotation tools, DTP, writing software) and the free appropriation of those tools? Amidst the various reconfigurations of the ways of doing publishing that collectives put forward, can we identify the moment at which a specific chain of production becomes established as the new paradigm? To what extent do these collegial and independent structures legitimize and visibilize new practices while rejecting hierarchical models?

In the prevailing landscape, it appears that every social stratum must adopt the most recent technical developments, turning everything into *software* (Manovich, 2013), further destabilizing an already severely threatened ecology (Association pour l'écologie du livre, 2020), and increasing the uniformity of publishing professions and practices (the great majority of chains of production rely on software and platforms that cannot fully meet their needs). Although practitioners of collective publishing develop many original, alternative, innovative, and perhaps fringe, practices, they often struggle for legitimacy, especially within smaller collectives. In this context, and given their situated practices, how do publishing organizations and the collectives which allow them to function react to, act on, and conceive of new modes of textual creation and production? How do editorial identities adapt in response to the *publish or perish* productivity imperative while remaining mindful of the climatological impacts of the new technologies that underlie today's publishing chains?

Theories of publishing—including its processes, challenges, and forms—are the products of academia (Bhaskar, 2013; Bourassa et al., 2018; Epron & Vitali-Rosati, 2018; Murray, 2021; Ouvry-Vial, 2007; Sordet, 2021) and their notions are not always reflective of the reality of practices (Hazan & Moret, 2016). With the aim of uncovering the inner workings of the

publishing world and acknowledging practitioners' testimonies of their realities, the present initiative seeks to engage with publishing collectives in order to develop a fuller understanding of the ways in which editorial lines interact in practical and technical terms with current climate challenges. Ultimately, the overarching aim of this call for papers is to stimulate a dialogue between practitioners and theorists.

Call for Papers Guidelines

Foundational to the publishing collective is the principle of dialogue—between expertise, practices, and tools—which the present initiative seeks to exemplify and pursue in addressing current challenges. It is for this reason that it will place the dialogic approach at the very heart of its editorial process, as reflected in the following multistage structure:

1. Publishing collectives and individual researchers interested in contributing to the issue may respond to the present call for papers by submitting a brief profile outlining their practices and editorial lines, or research interests. We will also, during this initial stage, take the liberty of extending invitations to prospective participating collectives and researchers. Once the call for papers closes, a collective will be formed to oversee the issue, bringing together multiple organizations and researchers. The call for papers is also open to reflections and case studies on existing and historical publishing collectives.
2. The second stage will involve interviews with responding publishing collectives. Researchers will be invited to participate in this conversation on the condition that participating practitioners agree to their presence. Parallel to this, participating researchers will begin the writing process, complemented by a prior publication of the interview transcripts, in order to more fully embody the aim of dialogue between practice and theory, juxtaposing conceptual treatments—which may be developed at a remove from publishing spaces—with real-world publishing practice. Accepted submissions will be published in accordance with the journal's editorial policy: https://www.erudit.org/fr/revues/memoires/#journal-info-editorial_policy
3. The completed issue will present the results of the process outlined above, combining testimonies of practice from interviews with conceptual reflections informed by those testimonies.

This call for papers is open to researchers in all disciplines (e.g., literature, history, library science, economics, education, political science). Interested scholars are asked to send a 300-word proposal together with a 150-word biographical text to antoine.fauchie@univ-grenoble-alpes.fr and margot.mellet@usherbrooke.ca before September 30th, 2025.

Authors will be notified of acceptance or refusal by November 1st, 2025, at the latest. Completed papers, between 25,000 and 60,000 characters in length (including spaces and notes) should be submitted by March 1st, 2026, and will be published in Fall 2026. They will be submitted for blind peer review.

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