



AUTHORS
ALLIANCE

ANNUAL REPORT

2025

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Year in Review

This was the year AI's legal reckoning began in earnest. We saw a blockbuster \$1.5 billion settlement in *Bartz v. Anthropic*, the attempted firing of Register of Copyrights Shira Perlmutter, and 20 new copyright AI lawsuits filed in the US—bringing the total to 59.



Amidst this chaos, with the Internet Archive, we launched “Future Knowledge,” a podcast that builds on our popular book talk series featuring authors who have thought deeply about how technology affects the future of knowledge. With Knight Foundation support, we also launched “AI, Authorship and the Public Interest,” a project to clarify copyright questions posed by AI and explore how law and policy can be shaped to best support this technology serving the public interest.

We continue to advocate for authors in court. For example, in *Bartz v. Anthropic*, we explained to the Ninth Circuit that the certified class would bind authors with views different from those of the lead plaintiffs. And in *Thomson Reuters v. Ross*, we highlighted that upholding the lower court's ruling would hamper researchers' ability to create new tools and conduct research.

While big tech AI has dominated the headlines, incredible AI and text data mining research that advances knowledge and learning is happening every day on university campuses. But those researchers face significant barriers and have few of the advantages of large commercial AI companies. We have worked to help lower those barriers through our “Public Interest Corpus” project, supported by the Mellon Foundation this year and run collaboratively with Northeastern University, bringing together authors, publishers, librarians, technologists, and lawyers to make research library collections available for academic AI research.

Equally significant was our work on Open Access. When NIH announced its accelerated public access policy, we partnered with SPARC to develop resources, host events, and create feedback mechanisms helping authors navigate publisher pushback. Our legal white paper series clarified how the Federal Purpose License enables agencies and universities to implement these policies.

The tensions between technological innovation and authors' rights require vigilant advocacy and practical guidance—work that will define our mission in the years to come. Thank you for standing with us as we advocate for a future where knowledge remains accessible and authors' voices continue to shape our world.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'David Hansen'.

David Hansen
Executive Director

About Authors Alliance



Founded in 2014, Authors Alliance is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that advocates for the interests of authors who want to serve the public good by sharing their creations broadly. With over 3,000 members, our vision and voice are unique among organizations participating in debates about copyright, free expression, fair use, and other public policy issues affecting authors.

While several non-profit organizations represent the interests of libraries and of the public at large, Authors Alliance is the only non-profit, membership-based organization that brings a public-interest author's perspective to bear on issues of information policy. We provide an alternative to the protectionist positions of entertainment and big media lobbyists that represent only a limited perspective on the interests of authors.

This mission sometimes leads us to pay attention to areas of that law that may seem arcane to many, and largely escape public attention. Yet entities with a vested interest in maximizing their control over creative works, often at odds with the public interest, are certainly paying attention, and often claim to speak for all authors when they in fact represent only a small subset.

These positions do a disservice to authors who prioritize seeing their knowledge and creations reach as many readers as possible. Without a countervailing voice, legislators and policy makers can all too easily conclude that maximalist copyright positions promote the best interests of all authors. Authors Alliance provides that countervailing voice. We consistently show up and speak up—through briefs, testimony, regulatory submissions, and other outreach designed to provide a more balanced perspective on how copyright and related policies impact authors in the digital age.

Where We've Been

Part of our commitment to supporting authors and people who support authors, like librarians, is creating opportunities to interact with our members by hosting webinars and workshops, and attending conferences and similar events.



This year we've been privileged to present at CNI, Association for Recorded Sound Collections, Charleston Conference, ai4libraries, Geological Society of America, Haverford College, UNC Wilmington, University of Michigan, UC Berkeley, UC San Diego, Rockefeller University, Harvard University, Seattle University, and many others. If the issues that we work on are particularly important to your institution, we would be delighted to work with you on developing a workshop or event.



Contractual Override Workshop at UC Berkeley [resulting in this paper](#).

Association of Writers & Writing Programs (AWP) 2025 Conference & Bookfair

American Library Association (ALA) 2025 Annual Conference & Exhibition

Authors Alliance Partner Program

The Authors Alliance Partner Program helps us support academic authors by fostering close collaboration with their universities—most often through their libraries—to develop quality resources, advocacy, and tools that support a more open and equitable information ecosystem. For many academic authors, their library is the first place they turn to for advice on publishing, copyright, and scholarly communications. Through the Partner Program, universities are able to draw on Authors Alliance’s deep legal and publishing expertise to expand support for their authors. Universities that are part of our Partner Program support Authors Alliance in publishing authoritative, open access guides to legal issues facing authors; collaborating on workshops, book talks, and other programs that give authors an opportunity to better understand why information law matters for their work and how they can take action to support good information policy; and by supporting our direct intervention with and on behalf of academic authors in support of fair use, the public domain, and access to knowledge. For 2025, we have been proud to include among our partner program members the following institutions, and we thank them for their support:



Harvard
Library



McLAUGHLIN
LIBRARY



CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Library

UC Berkeley
Library



University Libraries
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

ISU Library



Princeton University
LIBRARY



UCLA Library



We were pleased to welcome our newest member in late 2025, the University of Michigan Libraries. For 2026, we are excited that the Partnership for Academic Library Collaboration & Innovation (PALCI) will join us to pilot a consortial partner model, along with Allegheny College, New York University, Lehigh University, and the University of Pittsburgh as individual members. We are welcoming new partner members for 2026 and would be pleased to hear from institutional representatives with interest. You can learn more about the Partner Program [on our website](https://authorsalliance.org/partner-program).

Legal Pathways To Open Access



Legal Pathways to Open Access ("LPOA"), our collaboration with SPARC, had a successful first year. As federal agencies finalize their plans for implementing the 2022 OSTP Memo, Ensuring Free, Immediate, and Equitable Access to Federally Funded Research, (the "Nelson Memo"), the project, which has support from Arcadia, is proving to be very timely. LPOA is spearheaded by Eric Harbeson, our Scholarly Communications and Copyright Strategist.

Our white paper series has featured in-depth legal research on a series of questions surrounding the public access license, which every federal grant requires as a condition of funding. The first two papers discuss the source of that license, often called the "federal purpose license". The first paper examines the history and meaning of the license and what the license does and does not permit. The second paper reviews the legal basis for the public access policy, and shows how the policy and the federal purpose license are well within the executive agencies' constitutional and statutory authority.

The third paper addresses whether faculty scholarship constitutes work made for hire under the 1976 Copyright Act. The question is a critical one for the federal public access license because to be valid institutions must somehow have the authority to license grant-funded work to the federal government. The paper makes recommendations to institutions for how to ensure they can comply with their grant obligations. The fourth paper will address the copyrightability of various contributions made during the development of a scholarly article, such as collegial review, reviewer suggestions, and publisher formatting and typesetting.



Eric at American Library Association (ALA) 2025 Annual Conference & Exhibition

As part of the LPOA project we also worked with SPARC and several experts within the scholarly communications community to revise and update the SPARC Author Addendum. We anticipate the new version to be released in 2026. Ongoing projects include more white legal papers, a collaborative project to develop a framework for bringing backlist books into an open access format, and ongoing community-building work.

The Public Interest Corpus

Authors Alliance and Northeastern University's effort to develop a community-vested plan for The Public Interest Corpus is drawing to a close. With support from the Mellon Foundation, Authors Alliance and Northeastern University have produced a plan which can practically support the implementation of a library community-led, public interest aligned, books data development and access solution for AI training and computational research more generally. The plan will be released this December.

The Public Interest Corpus plan was developed iteratively with multiple rounds of stakeholder engagement (authors, librarians, technologists, publishers, researchers). In addition to virtual meetings, The Public Interest Corpus held in-person workshops at Northeastern University, New York University, and the University of California across 2025. Each workshop evolved based on the prior stakeholder engagement. Topics at these workshops included but were not limited to discussion of target audiences, training data needs, potential partnerships; legal and policy challenges; business model, sustainability, and governance; documenting research and service use cases; and envisioning the future of the public interest corpus (years 1-3, years 4-6). In addition, the project team sought feedback on the planning effort from conference audiences at the Coalition for Networked Information, Chief Collection Development Officers of Large Research Libraries Interest Group, Charleston Conference, and ai4libraries.



The Public Interest Corpus (NYC Edition)

The Public Interest Corpus

This work would not have been possible without hundreds of multistakeholder community contributions. We thank organizations including but not limited to the following for contributing to The Public Interest Corpus planning process:

AI2
Association of Research Libraries
AVPreserve
Boston Public Library
California Digital Library
Carnegie Mellon University
Columbia University
Cornell University
CSU College of Law
CUNY
EleutherAI
ReCAP
Harvard University
HathiTrust
Howard University
ITHAKA
Johns Hopkins University
Library Futures
Library of Congress
Mellon Foundation
MIT

Mozilla Foundation
New York Public Library
New York University
Nomic AI
Northeastern University
NYU
Princeton University
Proteus Strategies
San Jose State University
Schmidt Sciences
SPARC SUNY Stony Brook
Temple University
UC Berkeley
CU Boulder
UC Davis
UC San Diego
UNC Chapel Hill
University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign
University of Michigan Ann Arbor
University of Washington Seattle
Yale University

We look forward to sharing more details on next stage implementation for The Public Interest Corpus in Q1 2026.

AI, Authorship, and the Public Interest

At the beginning of 2025, Authors Alliance received generous funding from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, in support of our Artificial Intelligence, Authorship, and the Public Interest project. Over the past year, we have advanced that project through a wide range of activities spanning research, litigation, and public education.



"Snow Crystal" By Wilson Alwyn Bentley

Early in 2025, we welcomed our first AI Legal Fellow, Justin Bonfiglio, and together we quickly engaged with emerging policy issues. Authors Alliance submitted comments to both the U.S. National AI Action Plan and the United Kingdom's Copyright and AI Consultation, helping to shape public discussions around AI governance and copyright.

In May, we convened a ten-member advisory board, drawing on leading scholars and practitioners from law, libraries, and academia. Their insights have informed the project's research priorities. That same month, we launched a competitive call for research mini-grants at the intersection of copyright, AI, and the public interest. The response was extraordinary. We received over 160 proposals and we selected five projects for funding. These projects are now underway.

We have published a steady cadence of blog posts, interviews, and issue briefs, providing timely insights on AI and copyright issues related to fair use, licensing, and litigation developments. These include posts related to the copyrightability of AI authored works, Frequently Asked Questions on Generative AI, and the recent *Bartz v. Anthropic* settlement. Authors Alliance also contributed directly to key national conversations through amicus briefs filed in *Doe v. GitHub*, *Thomson Reuters v. Ross Intelligence*, and *Bartz v. Anthropic*.

Throughout the year, we presented at academic and professional gatherings, including events hosted by SPARC, the Association of Research Libraries, and the University of Michigan's Center for Academic Innovation. Looking ahead, in 2026 we will focus on convening experts for a February workshop in Berkeley on DMCA §1202 and attribution and prepare for a capstone symposium that will showcase the full body of research supported by this project.

Future Knowledge



This past summer we launched Future Knowledge, a new podcast from the Internet Archive and Authors Alliance, and a continuation and expansion of our popular Book Talk webinar series. Since launching our Book Talk series in 2022 we've had over 7,000 live attendees and tens of thousands of viewers of the recordings. Our hope is that the podcast format allows us to reach even more participants, and we're thrilled to carry this momentum into 2026.

Hosted by Chris Freeland, librarian at the Internet Archive, and Dave Hansen, our executive director, the podcast brings together authors, librarians, policymakers, technologists, and artists to explore how knowledge, creativity, and policy intersect in today's fast-changing world. In each episode, an author discusses their book or publications and the big ideas behind it—paired with a thought-provoking conversation partner who brings a fresh perspective from the realms of policy, technology, libraries, or the arts. We always welcome ideas for future book talks—many of our best talks have been the result of suggestions from Authors Alliance members—so be in touch!

[Listen and subscribe wherever you get your podcasts.](#)

[Watch past and future Book Talks at the Internet Archive.](#)

Interns & Fellows

We've been so pleased this year to be able to work one-on-one with a number of excellent law students and recent grads who have a passion for working on ways that the law can support authors who want to benefit the world and advance knowledge.



Syn at AWP 2025

Syn **Ong** joined us from UC Berkeley Law as a law intern for the spring 2025 semester and then as our AI Policy Researcher through October 2025. Syn's work included the development of a project to examine the legal landscape for text and data mining and AI research across different jurisdictions, including the UK and Singapore. Her research also addressed issues around plagiarism, open access, and authors' use of AI systems under their Terms of Service. Most significantly, Syn produced this report, "Beyond the Exception: Licensing, Access, and the Realities of Text and Data Mining in the US, UK, and Singapore".

Maria **Crusey**, now a graduate of Wash U Law in St. Louis, joined us in the fall 2024 and spring 2025 semesters. Maria's main contributions included research on the double scienster required to successfully bring a claim under Section 1202 of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA), and a published a widely read paper, "Section 1202(B) and AI: Implications for Copyright Infringement Lawsuits and Considerations for Digital Creators" in the Journal of the Copyright Society.

We're also grateful to JP **de Mello Barreto**, a Harvard Cyberlaw Clinic student supervised by Professor Michael Rosenbloom, for his exceptional work researching the fourth fair use factor and evidence related to market harm. Working in collaboration with Chris **Kang**, a law student at the University of Michigan, JP assembled did extensive research collecting relevant fourth factor cases and drafted practical guidance for defendants navigating this complex area of fair use. Based in the idea that IP litigation should be based in actual facts and evidence, JP's work focused on creating a resource for litigants on the types of evidence that are most useful in defending a

Finally, we worked with Hana **Khan-Tareen**, a Legal Research Fellow at Georgetown University Law Center on termination of contract. She specifically explored what terms authors should seek to include in their publishing agreement and how to leverage those terms to terminate the contract if they no longer want to work with a specific publisher.

Case and Policy Updates

Authors Alliance has continued to take an active role in shaping copyright policy for public interest this year, especially at the intersection of AI and authors' rights. We [blogged more frequently this year](#), explaining emerging issues as well as commenting on current affairs that impact authorial rights. We have also submitted comments, amicus briefs, and participated in regulatory processes. Some key highlights include:

We submitted several comments to relevant government agencies advocating for transparency and accountability. In our [comment about the CCB](#), we advocated for a system that is truly voluntary, transparent, and accessible to independent creators and other non-lawyer participants. We urged the CCB to improve data transparency, streamline procedures, and provide clearer educational resources and filing guidance to reduce unnecessary dismissals and defaults. We also called for a more flexible and meaningful opt-out system so that participants are not swept into proceedings without informed consent.

In our two comments to the FTC, we pointed out both how the DMCA Section [1201 triennial rulemaking](#) process unnecessarily burdens those who seek to make lawful uses of copyrighted materials, as well as platform-level copyright [enforcement systems](#)—shaped solely by private agreements between tech platforms and major rightsholders—harm independent creators, educators, researchers, and the public.

We continued to submit amicus briefs in cases that impact authors and creators. For example, in [Doe v. GitHub](#), we intervened to address a growing threat that could impose a de facto attribution requirement on secondary fair uses. Without clear limits on what must accompany downstream uses, Section 1202 could expose authors, researchers, and educators to liability even when their uses are lawful and transformative. Our advocacy on DMCA §1202 and attribution standards will continue, including through a workshop we are planning to host in early 2026.

We also filed amicus briefs in two other major AI copyright suits. In [Bartz v. Anthropic](#), addressing whether a small group of authors can represent a large and diverse class of plaintiffs in their infringement suit against Anthropic. And in [Thomson Reuters v. Ross](#), we addressed the negative unintended consequences of a district court ruling that could affect the ability of authors to use copyrighted works in intermediate steps (e.g., copies to study from) in the production of new works.

Board of Directors



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New Board Members



Amanda **Levendowski Tepski** is a Professor of Law and founding Director of the Intellectual Property and Information Policy (iPIP) Clinic at Georgetown Law. She has written extensively on the intersection of intellectual property and privacy.



David **Bamman** is an Associate Professor in the School of Information at UC Berkeley, where he works in the areas of natural language processing and cultural analytics, applying NLP and machine learning to empirical questions in the humanities and social sciences.



Curtis **Brundy** is the Dean of Libraries at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. With over 15 years of leadership experience in academic libraries, he brings a passionate commitment to transforming scholarly publishing and advancing open science.

Staff Members



Dave **Hansen** is Executive Director of Authors Alliance. Prior to joining the Authors Alliance, Dave was an Associate University Librarian and Lead for Copyright & Information Policy at Duke University Libraries, where he was responsible for core research and collections support for faculty and students. You can reach Dave at dave@authorsalliance.org.



Yuanxiao **Xu** is Staff Attorney for Authors Alliance. She received her JD from the University of Michigan Law School, and has since served as Counsel at Creative Commons, Staff Attorney at the Dramatists Guild of America, and Copyright Specialist at the University of Michigan Library. You can reach Yuanxiao at xu@authorsalliance.org.



Eric **Harbeson** is the Scholarly Communications and Copyright Strategist for Authors Alliance. Eric previously worked as a librarian and archivist, focusing on music special collections and publishing. At Authors Alliance, Eric focuses on the law of authorship, especially at the intersection of academic research and federal grants. Eric holds a J.D. from the University of Oregon, an M.S.L.I.S. from the University of Illinois, and a Masters of Music in Music History from Cleveland State University. You can reach Eric at eric@authorsalliance.org.



Thomas **Padilla** is Public Interest AI Strategist at Authors Alliance. Thomas previously served as Deputy Director, Archiving and Data Services at the Internet Archive. He received his MLIS from the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign and his MA in History from San Francisco State University. You can reach Thomas at thomas@authorsalliance.org.



Justin **Bonfiglio** is the AI Legal Fellow at Authors Alliance. Previously, Justin was a Copyright Specialist at the University of Michigan Library's Copyright Office. Justin holds a BA from Dartmouth College, an MLIS from the University of Pittsburgh, and a JD from the University of Michigan Law School. You can reach Justin at justin@authorsalliance.org.



Caroline **Mort** is the Communications and Operations Manager at Authors Alliance and the OA Journals Managing Editor at UNC Press. Previously, Caroline was the project manager for the Library Copyright Institute. Caroline received a BA in Art History from Barnard College and an MLIS from Dominican University. You can reach Caroline at caroline@authorsalliance.org.



AUTHORS ALLIANCE

Authors Alliance has demonstrated that it can have a big impact with a small footprint. We rely heavily on individual donors like you to provide support for our core operations. While we have had successes in securing grant funding, those funds cover only a small portion of our operations, and can be difficult to use to support the kind of quick-response policy work that is sometimes needed, such as filing briefs or responding to government Notices of Inquiry. We also believe in lowering barriers to participation, and so Authors Alliance membership has always been free. Even so, a large number of our members give, but mostly through small gifts of \$100 or less.

To give, you can donate online at <https://www.authorsalliance.org/donate> or mail your check to our NEW mailing address at:

Authors Alliance
2108 N ST # 8898
Sacramento, CA 95816

If you have interest in other ways you can support Authors Alliance, we would be pleased to hear from you. You can reach Dave Hansen, Authors Alliance's Executive Director, at dave@authorsalliance.org.