The Open Access Directory (OAD) was co-founded by Peter Suber (Faculty Fellow at the Berkman Center for Internet & Society, Harvard University) and Robin Peek (Professor at the Graduate School of Library and Information Science, Simmons College) in 2008. Around that time the open-access movement had already grown in size, and the creation of a one-stop reference tool would make the discovery of open-access information more effective.

The OAD was launched with only 6 factual lists and currently it counts 47 active lists and 6 lists under development. Currently we have approximately 1000 registered users, and almost 2.5 million hits. The assistance of the open-access community is essential to capture and organize all the scattered recent changes. If there was a single lesson to be learned from this process, is that it takes a dedicated core group to keep a good wiki going strong.