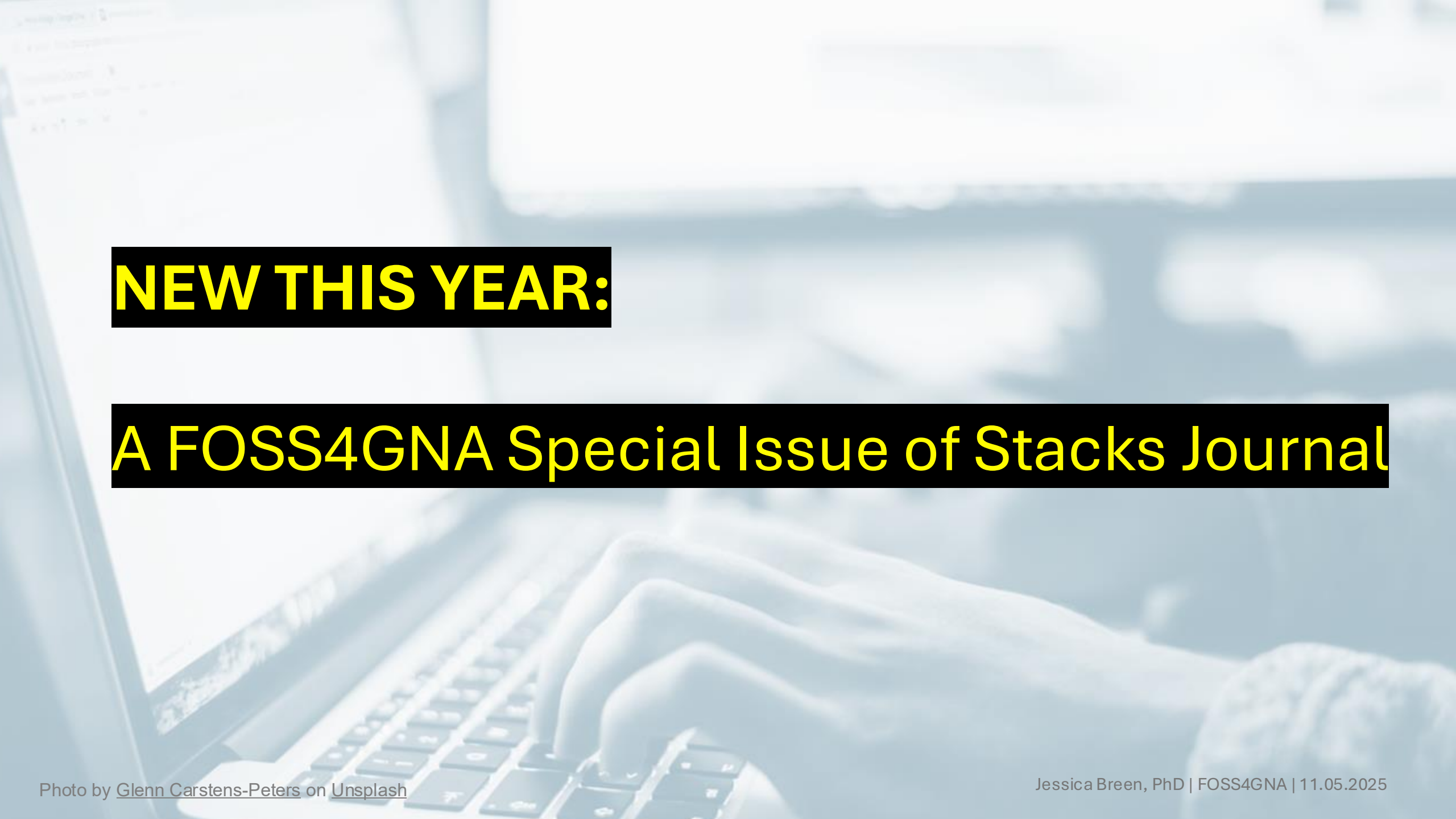
OPENACCESS FOR OPENSOURCE: WRITING AND PUBLISHING FOR THE FOSS4GNA COMMUNITY

Jessica Breen, PhD | FOSS4GNA | 11.05.2025

NEW THIS YEAR:

A FOSS4GNA Special Issue of Stacks Journal



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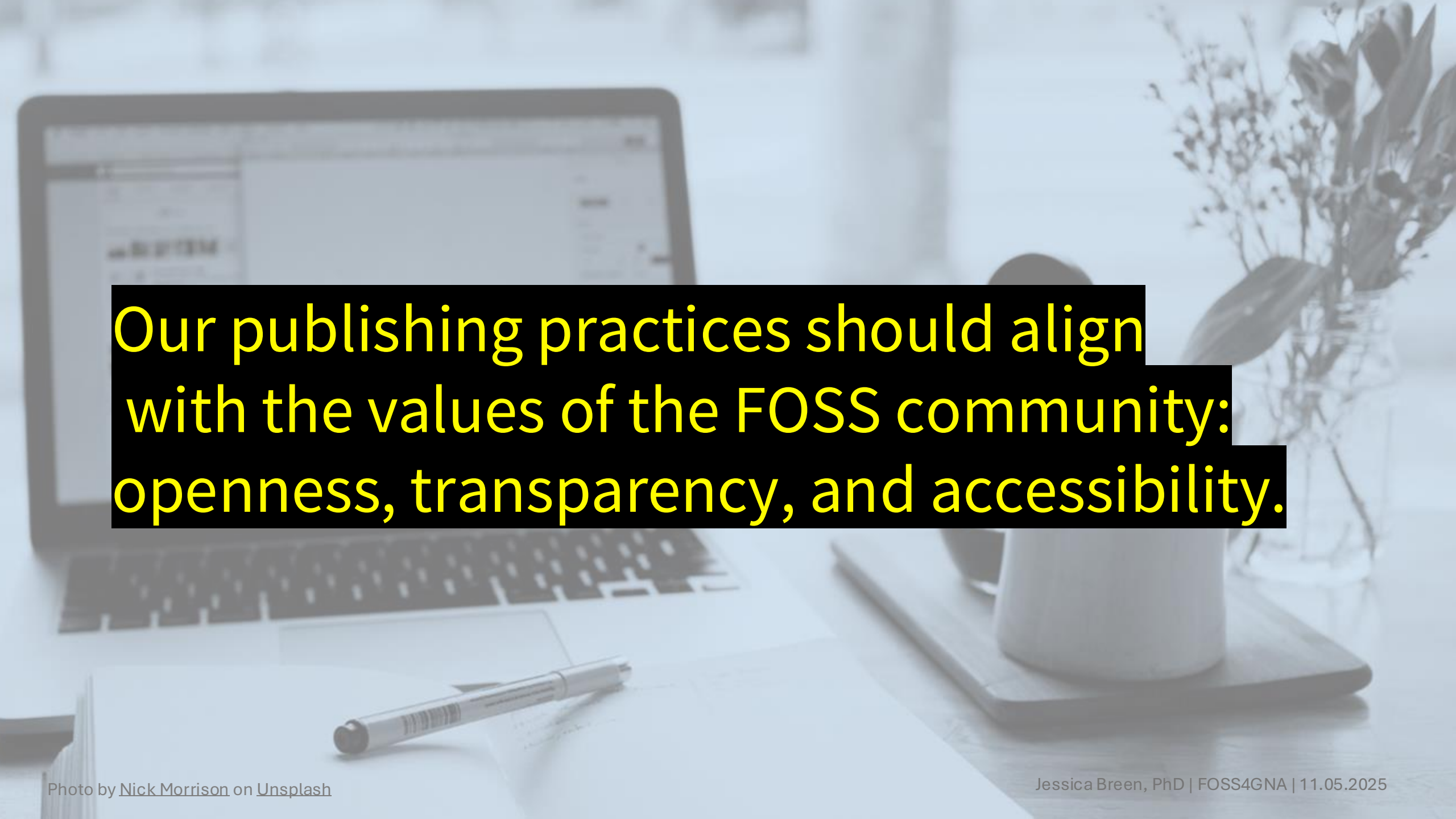

Our publishing practices should align with the values of the FOSS community: openness, transparency, and accessibility.

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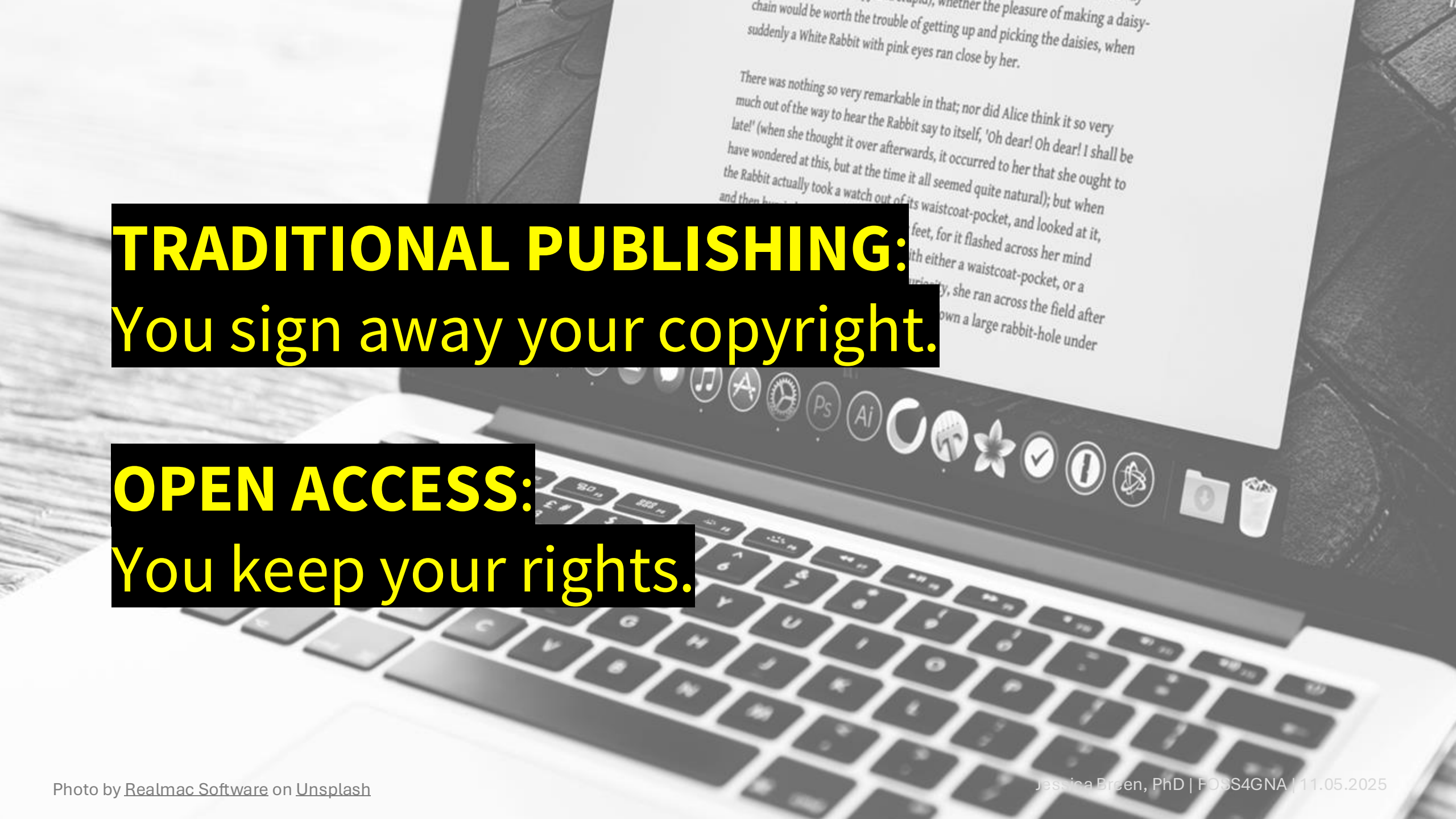
TRADITIONAL ACADEMIC PUBLISHING

VS

OPEN ACCESS PUBLISHING

TRADITIONAL MODEL:
Readers (or libraries) pay to access research.

OPEN ACCESS MODEL:
Everyone can read freely —
costs are covered upfront.



TRADITIONAL PUBLISHING:
You sign away your copyright.

OPEN ACCESS:
You keep your rights.

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TRADITIONAL REVIEW:
Anonymous, opaque, and slow.

STACKS REVIEW:
Transparent and collaborative.

STACKS JOURNAL PEER REVIEW PROCESS:

1. Reviewer selection
2. Independent review
3. Collaborative phase
4. Voting
5. Transparency

A 2-PAGER IS TYPICALLY:

- Around 800–1200 words
- Includes 1–2 visuals
- Links to your code or data
- Focuses on what you did and why it matters

TIPS FOR FIRST-TIME ACADEMIC AUTHORS

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STRUCTURE: USE WHAT YOU KNOW

You don’t need a fancy structure — clear and simple is great.

Classic scientific-style outline works well:
- What was the problem or context?
- What did you do (tools, data, workflow)?
- What happened or what did you learn?
- What should someone else take away from this?

Think well-documented GitHub README but with more narrative.

VOICE AND CLARITY

- Write like you’re explaining your project to a smart peer from another field
- Use plain language and short paragraphs
- Avoid acronyms unless you explain them once
- Use an active voice where possible
- It's okay to write in your natural voice

CITATIONS (DON’T OVERTHINK IT)

- Zotero is great if you're citing multiple sources
- If you're only referencing a few things use Google Scholar cite button
- You can cite:
  - Software
  - Code libraries
  - Datasets
  - Documentation
  - Blog posts (yes, really — if they’re relevant and persistent)

PUBLISHING DATA

Publishing your data helps others build on what you've done and gives your work longevity.

Good data sharing options:
- Zenodo – integrates with GitHub, assigns DOIs
- Figshare – good for datasets and figures
- Dryad – often used in environmental sciences
- Institutional repositories — check with your library

PUBLISHING DATA

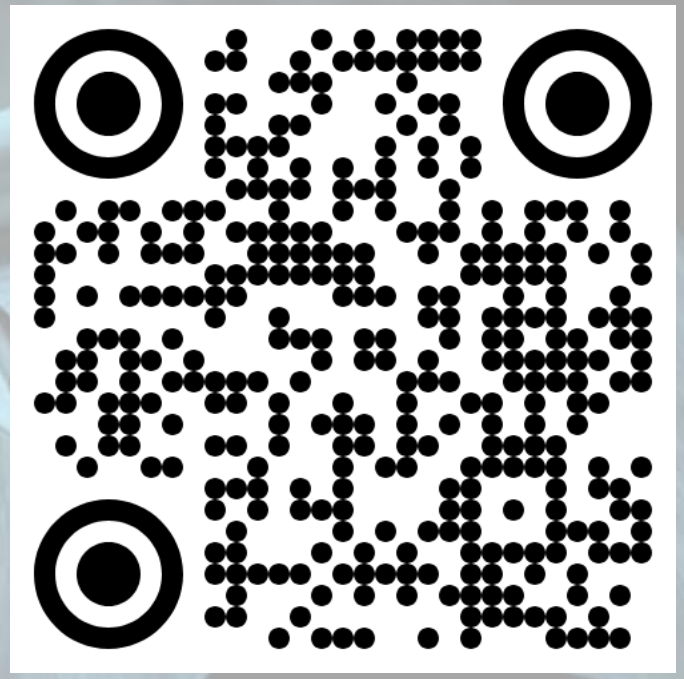
What to include:
- A **README** that explains what the dataset is, how it was collected, and how to
- A **license** (e.g. CC0, ODC-BY) so others know how they can reuse it
- A **citation** suggestion so you get credit

NEED HELP?

The Academic Committee is here to support you.

We can:
- Help shape your idea
- Review drafts
- Suggest structure or formatting tips
- Answer questions about the process

HOW TO GET INVOLVED:



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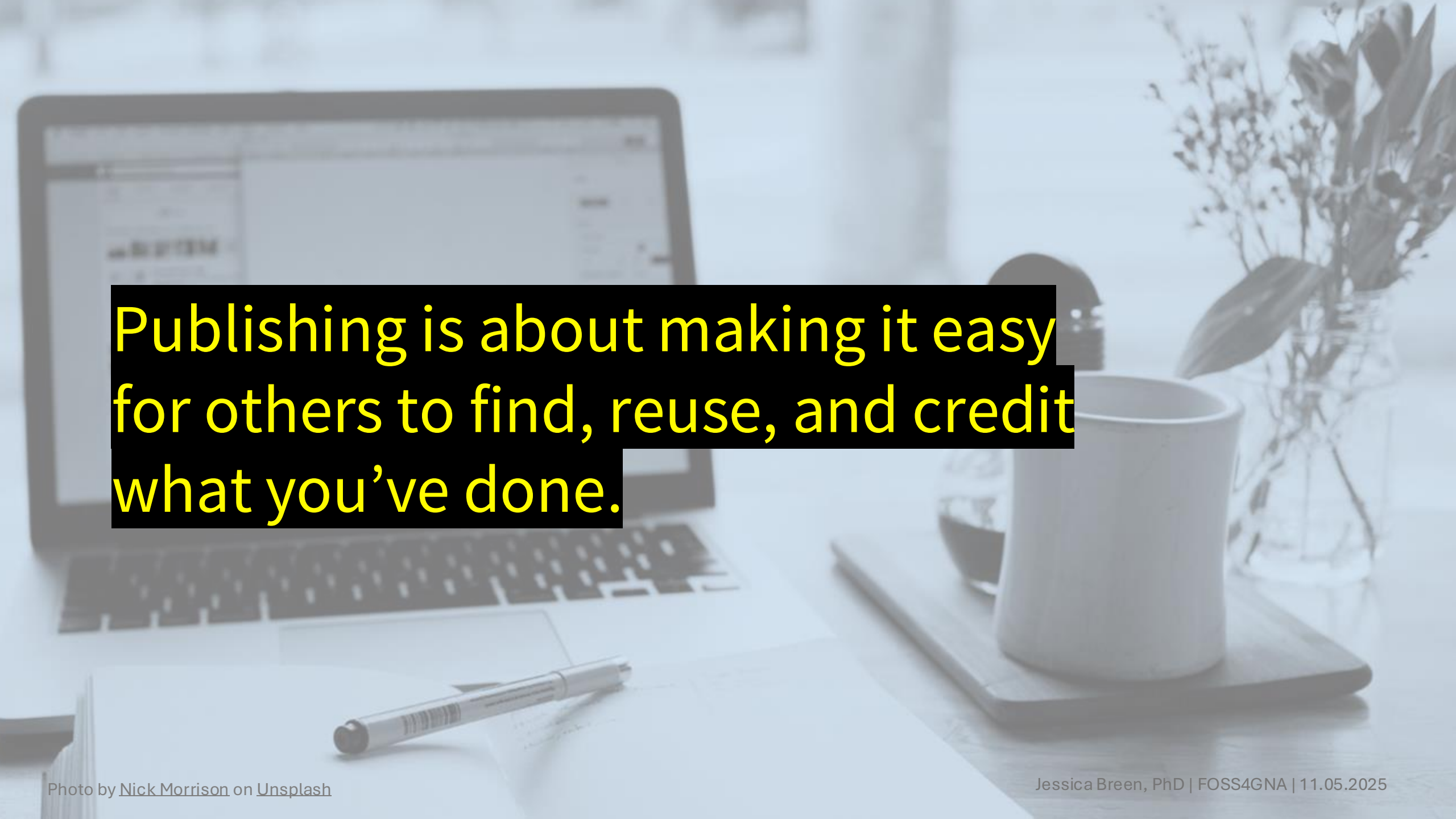

Publishing is about making it easy for others to find, reuse, and credit what you've done.

Photo by Nick Morrison on Unsplash

THANKS.

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