

UKSG webinar Q&A

‘Making Open Access Book Funding Work Fairly: Central European University Press and Opening the Future’

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Questions gathered during the presentation - follow up:

“Q: Is the Liverpool University Press (LUP) model the same as that described for Central European University (CEU) Press?”

- The basic principle is the same, but the LUP model covers a single subject list rather than the whole of LUP’s monograph output, which is much larger than that of CEU Press. For more details see: <https://lup.openingthefuture.net/>

“Q: If a library doesn't have a discretionary OA budget, can they still participate?”

- Yes, absolutely. Funds from any budget are accepted. In fact, we are hoping that as libraries see this to be a cheaper way of building collections they will pay for this type of offer through their acquisitions budgets. This should lead to a *transition* to funding OA monographs.

“Q: Also, will we have the pain of setting you up as new 'suppliers' for invoicing?”

- No, absolutely not. Invoicing is carried out by Lyris for North America, Jisc for the UK and Knowledge Unlatched for the rest of the world, with whom libraries are often already set up, so invoicing is painless.

“Q: Re. value for money, this model compares very favourably to the costs for access to science databases. Looked at in isolation HUM/SS reading lists can be very expensive to resource so it's good to see a long-term solution to that.”

We agree totally with you, and the point you make is one that we took into consideration when constructing the model.

“Q: Do you have plans to disseminate these OA books to other platforms?”

- CEU Press’s OA books will be listed on DOAB and available on OAPEN, KU’s ORL, Project MUSE, and other platforms. (Liverpool University Press will also host their OA books on their own web platform).

“Q: In response to MPE, you mention nervousness regarding releasing accepted manuscripts, but this is something OA advocates have had to overcome regarding journals too (it certainly was not popular in the early days!)”

- The function of the journal article is very different to the monograph and most authors are reluctant to reveal their work in the Author Accepted Manuscript form, which is what it could be under a green deposit. Authors have generally put in years of work into their books and value the input of publishers. The investment and publishing processes are of a different order to journal articles. In short, the writing of the monograph is a research process not a product. There might well be a place for Green OA and author accepted manuscripts in the monograph world, but there are different barriers in place when it comes to monograph vs journal publishing. For journals, we don’t know yet what the economic long-term effects will be of Green OA – it looks at the moment as though it hasn’t damaged subscriptions but we have no idea if that will be the case for monographs. What would Green OA do to the bottom line for the small, mission-led presses? We’re not talking about the mega corporations here, we’re talking about small, university presses who are operating on very finely-balanced margins and who disseminate research on a huge range of topics, many of which are not commercial money-makers but which are important works nonetheless.

“Q: We are a member (EUI) and subscribe to three packages - how do you advertise or expect members to advertise new OA titles - is there one dynamic link (or similar)? Also, we would appreciate if there would be some kind of advantage for 'our' authors becoming eligible for OA books publishing as we are members.”

- The answers to your first question can be mostly found on our OA Progress web page (<https://ceup.openingthefuture.net/forthcoming/>) and also on the News section (<https://ceup.openingthefuture.net/news/>) and in the FAQs. All of our books whether OA or not receive the same level of marketing support from CEU Press. You could add the Opening the Future logo to your website.
- In answer to your second question, we do not privilege the authors from the subscribing institutions as that could potentially be seen as compromising our title selection process. Though we do encourage authors from your institution to submit to the press and undergo the same rigorous peer review and selection process. As we gain new members to the program we will be able to offer OA publishing to more

authors that cannot pay BPCs with the goal of reaching the entire frontlist being openly accessible.

Questions answered during the Q&A section summarised:

“Q: Will the model incorporate textbooks or just monographs?”

- Business models for textbooks are very different to monographs and there are huge variations in what one calls a textbook. We do see more OA monographs being used as teaching resources, which makes it even more imperative that we make our books OA. Big textbooks can take millions of pounds investment and rely on multiple sales. It is difficult to figure out what the return would need to be if these were made OA and how to fairly spread these costs. Obviously, libraries bearing the burden of replacing many multiple print sales won't work. But as an industry we don't have the right models yet. Also, authors expect royalties for textbooks. Textbooks often cross-subsidise monographs. If OER textbooks supplant that income there is a danger to monographs – unless we find alternative ways of supporting them – such as Opening the Future.

“Q: Would membership mean an institution gets a discount if their authors publish with you?”

- No, the model is not based on the support of individual titles and nor is it a so-called “read and publish” deal. OtF provides the infrastructural support to sustain a press. We are offering small discounts to consortia to reflect the small reduction of administrative costs that this provides. There needs to be a shift in mindset where we get away from a unitised approach. OtF has more in common with S2O models for journals, where libraries pay for a year in advance without knowing what's coming. In the book space, you publish first and then libraries decide what to buy. So all the risk is on the publisher. These are the same publishers who you already trust to provide quality content in the journal space. Our model creates a balanced risk.

“Q: How do you get publishers to put books into the bundle, and not putting in weakest books? How are books selected for your scheme? Is it the books that would otherwise sell less?”

- In our first packages we put in the most highly downloaded titles when all books were open on Project MUSE in the spring of 2020. We would respectfully put forward the argument that because OA books get more exposure and more usage, citations, etc. the publisher's reputation is also more open to scrutiny. It wouldn't take long for a publisher's reputation to be in ruins if only sub-standard books were published OA.

“Q: There was no mention of green OA. Is green not a solution?”

- Authors value the input that publishers bring to the version of record. From a business perspective we have insufficient data on the extent to which open journals are impacting on subscriptions and very little on how OA impacts on print sales. However, having the AAM available would create confusion in the market place and could ultimately reduce the publisher’s ability to produce and sell print. Print and digital are symbiotic forms for books.



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