



UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PRESS

Open Access Monograph¹ Program: Concept Proposal

The dysfunctions of monograph publishing

At the center of debates over the future of scholarly communication – and the future of university presses – lies the monograph. Libraries complain they do not get enough usage; publishers complain that they do not get enough sales; and authors are ill-served by a model that consigns their work to the few hundred libraries still able to afford them. Over a generation ago, the reliable business of printing and selling a few thousand copies of a scholarly monograph began to break down. Battered by the soaring costs of science journals, libraries watched their book budgets plunge and, as a result, presses have seen the standard sale of a monograph drop from around 1,500 copies to around 400 copies.

More recently, the promise of digital technology has put greater strain on print monographs, reducing the sale of most titles to diminishing returns, while significantly adding to production costs through increased permissions fees, the preparation of digital files, the management of digital assets, and related expenses. And beyond the financial challenges, new forms of digital and multimedia scholarship are ill-served by a print-first/only model, and the humanities and “soft” social sciences risk being left out of the vibrant world of digital scholarship and debate

Our vision

Reinventing the monograph for all.

The same high standards for scholarly publishing. Better everything else.

We believe that we have gone as far as the current model will take us with tweaking and reducing costs, and the time is ripe for a wholly new approach to publication of the scholarly monograph.

This digital, open access model is:

- A collaborative/community model where costs, risks and benefits are shared
- Centred around high quality digital publications that preserve the legitimacy and quality of print but take advantage of new technologies
- A way to make content discoverable, accessible and usable for the widest possible audience, to the benefit of authors, students and the scholarly community more widely
- A digital model that enables the humanities and social sciences to participate in the world of digital debate and scholarship

Working program concept

- All OA monographs will be available free at point of access in multiple digital formats (HTML, PDF, ePub, Kindle), optimized for mobile devices and available for download as either whole book or in chapter format.

¹ For the purposes of this document, monographs are defined as books which are written by scholars and researchers and which are intended primarily for other scholars and researchers. A monograph can have more than one author, but we are excluding as monographs books that are collections of essays.

- Titles also available for purchase via print-on-demand (revenues will help support publication costs)
- Revenues to support costs will come from four sources (detailed below):
 - A Title Publication Fee from each author (department/institution)
 - A UC Press subvention for each title
 - Libraries, via a Supporting Library model
 - Incremental revenue from POD sales
- We will retain all valuable elements of the current model (especially thorough peer via external reviewers and the Press's Editorial Committee)
- The program will enable the integration of humanities scholarship with digital tools:
 - Remove the constraints of print with regard to illustrations and multimedia content
 - Integration with online tools such as annotation, reference management, data tools and more

Advisory Board

UC Press will appoint a senior-level Advisory Board to help finalize the model for this program and guide its launch, and to provide ongoing governance. This Board will include (those who have accepted are listed; others are still to be appointed):

- Faculty from the UC and beyond:
 - David Theo Goldberg, Professor of Comparative Literature and Director of UC Humanities Research Institute, UC Irvine
 - Todd Presner, Professor of Germanic Languages and Comparative Literature, UCLA
 - Christopher Kelty, Associate Professor, Institute for Society and Genetics and department of Information Studies, UCLA
- Representatives of the library community
- Other industry advisors and stakeholders

Editorial Strategy

- To encourage the right volume of projects for a robust start, the program will be open to excellent projects across all our humanities and related social science disciplines. We will make every effort to promote the program as a space for high-quality, innovative work and not a second tier option, or space for 'problem' projects that can't be published otherwise.
- We will seek to bring some series to the program that are guided by high-profile, forward-thinking editors ready to help promote the pilot and its mission. We already have ideas for series in history and ancient world studies.
- Ideally we will have a mix of senior authors whose visibility can bring prestige to the pilot, and up-and-coming younger authors.
- All books in the program will be submitted for prizes and awards, and we have begun canvassing scholarly societies to pave the way for digital submissions.

Business Model

Publication costs:

We currently estimate these to be approximately **\$15,000** per title. This includes all direct and indirect costs of acquisition and peer review, editing and production, digital conversion and hosting, long-term preservation and marketing.

We believe that open access publication of monographs will extend the reach of critical scholarship, but we also recognize that this emergent model requires publishers to strip out complexity – and cost – in order to be sustainable over the long term. UC Press is already working on ways to do this,

including the development of a streamlined, digital workflow and content management system that will support the further reduction of these costs.

Revenue streams to support publication costs:

- Title Publication Fee of \$7,500 per title
- UC Press subvention of \$2,500 per title
 - For UC authors, the subvention would come from the annual grant we receive from the UC specifically to support the work of UC faculty (the Scientific Account). This would allow the Press to contribute \$5,000 per title, and to reduce the title fee to UC authors to \$5,000 per title.
 - We also intend to create an Author Waiver Fund to support authors at institutions that are unable to support this fee. As part of UC Press's launch investment, we are seeding this fund with \$50,000.
- Incremental revenue from POD sales
- The library subsidy is based on a Supporting Library model. Participating libraries would pay an annual fee of \$1,000 per library to support OA publication of these titles. Supporting Libraries will also receive cataloguing records, COUNTER-compliant usage statistics and a discount on POD.
 - The revenue stream from Supporting Libraries will support:
 - \$2,000 subsidy per title;
 - Contribution towards creation of cataloguing records;
 - Any remaining revenue would be added to Author Waiver Fund.

Technology Partners

UC Press will select appropriate technology partners for this project:

- Digital preservation: all titles will be guaranteed long-term digital preservation through the Portico digital archive.
- Hosting: UC Press will select a hosting partner able to provide a high-quality digital reading experience that offers:
 - Ability to produce multiple e-book formats for multiple devices, integrate POD and ordering, sell by the chapter, etc.
 - Ability to handle multiple images (including color) and multimedia.
 - A range of digital integration partners for annotation, reference management, data tools, etc.