

# How should we fund open access monographs and what do you think is the most likely way that funding will happen?

The contributors to the *Insights OA monograph supplement* were invited to respond to this question, and their thought-provoking and sometimes conflicting replies below make interesting reading.

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In terms of funding open access (OA), I do not think it is unreasonable to expect an academic in receipt of research funding to underwrite the cost of the publication in full from their grant – it is not an overhead, it is a direct cost of the research. Academics need to engage with this concept early on in their careers and build it into their planning and budgeting. Failure to adopt such an approach will mean that an institution is forever subsidising research, and this subsidy will ultimately come out of the £9k students are now [in the UK in 2014] paying to study at university. Essentially, undergraduate students should not be forced into doing part-time jobs to pay for gold publications. We will not be subsidising gold OA.



MICHAEL C R DAVIES

The extension of OA models to monographs is an important issue and one that we need to resolve as a sector, through active engagement and advocacy with academics and researchers at all stages of their careers, well in advance of the next REF. We are very keen at Sussex to contribute to the debate around how best to make it work, but it is a very complex equation. There are many parameters in the OA model which, an engineer or scientist might say, need to be calibrated – if you change one thing in the model, it can lead to changes in lots of other things, therefore it will be an iterative process to arrive at a solution that works for academics, funders and publishers.

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In 2011, LERU (League of European Research Universities) published *The LERU Roadmap Towards Open Access*.<sup>1</sup> Comprising 21 research-intensive universities in Europe, the League found that its member institutions were much keener on green open access than gold. One of the major reasons for this was the issue of cost. When costs are shifted from reader (with university library subscriptions acting as the proxy for readers) to researchers (who pay to have their research outputs published), it is inevitable that a heavy burden will fall on research-intensive universities who produce the most research.



PAUL AYRIS

46 This is why gold open access for research articles, especially in hybrid journals where the costs of article processing charges (APCs) are high, is slow to take off. Even slower is a move to publish OA research monographs. The business model which underpins such publishing ventures is far from being clear and well established. Indeed, many scholars fear that even the *current* business model for monograph publishing is broken, thus threatening the whole future of this format.

With the foundation of UCL Press, one of the challenges was to identify financial support for the publishing infrastructure. The costs of maintaining this infrastructure are currently being met from the UCL research budget. Book publication charges (BPCs) will be levied on each monograph produced. Where a research funder will meet the costs of publication, these charges will be met by the funder. Where researchers are unfunded, and the author comes from UCL, it will be the UCL research budget which meets the costs.

UCL believes that ability/inability to pay to publish should not be a barrier to publication. UCL has therefore identified funding from the UCL research budget to initiate a bold experiment. UCL will develop its university press as an OA press, supported by UCL and national policies on OA dissemination. The dissemination of research outputs is a small fraction of the total amount of money that any university invests in research. For this reason, UCL is committed to excellent research and excellent dissemination of that research. Re-purposing part of its research budget will allow the university to meet this objective.

#### Reference

1. The LERU Roadmap Towards Open Access: [http://www.leru.org/files/publications/LERU\\_AP8\\_Open\\_Access.pdf](http://www.leru.org/files/publications/LERU_AP8_Open_Access.pdf) (accessed 17 March 2014).

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Funding for open access monographs from the perspective of a start-up 'library supported' university press is a major concern. Huddersfield's University Press itself does not have a budget to fund its publishing activities, relying for its initial publications on the Library budget. This is in line with the findings of the 2008 American Research Libraries (ARL) report<sup>1</sup>, which indicated that the highest level of funding in ARL was from the library operating budget, followed by grant support, with revenue from sales and endowment funds making up most of the rest of the source of support. In the long term, using the Library budget is not sustainable and further support will be needed. Future funding for OA monographs published by the Press needs to follow a mixed model, which would include a contribution from the Library, contributions from the University and research funders – and these do not necessarily have to be funders such as Wellcome or RCUK. The Heritage Lottery Fund and the Leverhulme Trust have contributed to Press publications in the last two years, for example.



GRAHAM STONE

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1. Hahn, K L, *Research library publishing services: new options for university publishing*. Washington, Association of Research Libraries, 2008. <http://www.arl.org/storage/documents/publications/research-library-publishing-services-mar08.pdf> (accessed 18 March 2014).

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47 The current green and gold funding paradigms both present authors with problems. Green OA publishing is not attractive for academics in my position as preparing an acceptable preprint would require a lot of labour and, when complete, would effectively be a substandard version of the book, lacking illustrations, graphic design and textual accuracy due to the lack of input from publishing professionals. Gold OA publishing is fine in theory but the question of who would fund production costs remains unresolved. One solution would be a publicly funded national or disciplinary body that evaluated the merits of monographs and nominated the best for OA publishing. I suspect that this system would be far more laborious for academics than obtaining a contract from a publisher, probably closer to a grant application than a book proposal, and this is not an attractive prospect. With only a limited amount of funding, this could make an OA monograph quite an elite product, it could become hard for young scholars to access OA publishing and deprive some academics of the opportunity to write monographs.



JIM CHESHIRE

Academic research should be OA but any moves are heavily entwined in other debates about copyright and peer review, as can be seen in a recent discussion within my specialist field.<sup>1</sup> I believe that printed books will continue to be a significant part of the publishing process but the status of the physical book is in transition. Perhaps we will buy fewer books and pay more money for them; read novels and thrillers electronically but carefully curate a shelf or two of books that retain special significance for us?

## Reference

1. *Journal of Victorian Culture* 'Digital Forum on Open Access', <http://blogs.tandf.co.uk/jvc/2013/12/23/digital-forum-open-access/> (accessed 5 January 2014).

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Perhaps before considering *how* OA monographs should be funded, it is wise to consider if they *should* be funded at all. The view of many publishers is that funding is essential, but publishers also need to demonstrate clearly what their offer is to authors and funders. At Oxford University Press, we strongly believe we provide clear value in the commissioning, refinement, production and dissemination of monographs, and that this requires a different level of investment than that required for a journal article. In an OA world, the recognized value needs to be clear and commonly understood and funders should support publishers when they are confident that there is appropriate value in that form of dissemination. With that assumption in place, at present it is difficult to see, at least in the early period, beyond a replication of the APC model. The sort of crowd sourcing used by Knowledge Unlatched and unglue.it is interesting; it is trying to address the funding of open access in a creative way, but arguably these models are not scalable in the way an APC equivalent would be. One thing this author would like to avoid in the long run is a headline charge per publisher. Even more than a journal article, monographs are individual pieces, and there is no reason why every monograph should cost the same, whether that is £10k, or £8k, or £12k. Again, we need a caveat here, though, that until we do have a more common understanding of the value of open access dissemination, publishers will need either to have these headline figures or undoubtedly be faced with charges of lack of transparency. Whilst a single charge makes little sense in the long term, perhaps it will be unavoidable while the publishing industry learns to understand how much it costs to publish OA monographs, and how much existing revenue declines in an OA space. In the longer run, a more nuanced and informed conversation is required on all sides, which includes understanding that OA charges should reflect value; and that means contemplating revenue replacement as well as cost



RHODRI JACKSON

48 replacement. Considering embargo periods after which a monograph could become OA, allowing a timeframe for regular sales, would be just one helpful example in this context. That constructive conversation is definitely visible<sup>2</sup> and should be preferred by all parties as a way of working towards understanding how we can ensure better access to the repository of scholarly knowledge represented by monograph publishing.

#### References

1. For an example of the issues and trade-offs involved see the blog piece by Caroline Wintersgill published in *The Author*, Autumn 2013, but available on the Bloomsbury website: <http://bloomsburypolitics.typepad.com/politics/2013/10/open-access-open-minds-who-should-be-the-academic-gatekeepers.html> (accessed 6 January 2014).
2. For example: [http://www.hefce.ac.uk/media/hefce/content/whatwedo/research/infrastructure/openaccess/ERG\\_scope\\_0103.doc.pdf](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/media/hefce/content/whatwedo/research/infrastructure/openaccess/ERG_scope_0103.doc.pdf) (accessed 7 January 2014).

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John Willinsky has repeatedly pointed out that technically, there is no need for additional funds to be poured into the system and that the money for OA publishing is already there.<sup>1</sup> The problem is the difference between actual publishing costs and the bloated library budgets that are sucked up annually by trade publishers for subscriptions. The challenge is to re-channel this money.

Until this is accomplished, there will be the extra cost of building infrastructures and running them long term. In his 2008 manuscript about funding OA publishing, Willinsky suggested a way to shoulder this additional financial burden, which still makes sense today:<sup>2</sup> funding instruments can support infrastructural enterprises to create functioning open source platforms that are adaptable and useable by institutions everywhere in as many disciplines as possible. Universities and their libraries can earmark and pool additional funds to support the initial cost of manuscript production. Faculty and students can commit hours to take on tasks of board members, peer reviewers, proof readers, designers and coders. Finally, freemium, subscription and print-on-demand solutions can create some revenue, which university accounting can administer.



ANDREA HACKER

#### References

1. For example in his keynote lecture 'Revolutionizing Academic Publishing? The Open Access Challenge' for the Annual Doctoral Week organized by University of Heidelberg's Graduate Academy on 24 October 2012: <http://www.asia-europe.uni-heidelberg.de/en/news-events/films/events/detail/m/revolutionizing-academic-publishing-the-open-access-challenge.html> (accessed 2 January 2014).
2. Willinsky, J, Monograph Funding, unpublished document, 2008, Public Knowledge Project (PKP) website, available at: [http://pkp.sfu.ca/files/Monograph%20Funding\\_0.doc](http://pkp.sfu.ca/files/Monograph%20Funding_0.doc) (accessed 13 March 2014).

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In my opinion, the funding situation is currently the biggest problem with open access. When pushing the well-intended idea to save university libraries the spiralling subscription costs by asking academics to publish OA, one important point has somehow been forgotten: publishing is costly, at the moment no one wants to pay for it, and no one has been made responsible for making it happen. In a time of austerity, faculties and university libraries did not jump at the chance to pay for OA publishing. So far, national research funds have not been of much help either. While they support open access, they don't actually finance it. The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) states on its website it is still 'developing an approach to open access', as is the German research funding organization, Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG), which is currently assessing the costs and its options for funding it. The Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO) is already supporting it up to €5,000 per book, but only for research already funded by it, and not for stand-alone publications. While OA has gained wide support, its financial funding is scattered all over the place. In the next couple of years, finance will therefore have to come from all sides: for some research, funds are available; some authors will also pay for it, as there is some funding in some of the universities and the article processing charge has indeed become the backbone of OA; scholars also discuss crowd sourcing and OA, and the interesting experiment Knowledge Unlatched has professionalized this approach by using libraries as their crowd; finally, indirect donations to OA presses are another option, as one can see with the newly founded Mattering Press, which presents itself with a clearly visible 'donate' button on its website. Even when more research funds become available, it looks like the big restructuring – from buying closed access publications to helping academics publish them open access – will need another big institutional push.

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MERCEDES BUNZ

I would like to see research funders adopt the approach of the Wellcome Trust, as expressed by Robert Kiley in what he calls his mantra: 'dissemination costs are research costs'. But for the humanities and social sciences (HSS) we also need libraries to become involved. Libraries should try to reserve a small but increasing percentage of their acquisitions budget to support OA publications and services. If pro-OA libraries can align their efforts and spend a small part of their budgets as an OA consortium, they have the opportunity to take the lead in the transition to OA.

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All stakeholders, including libraries, publishers, funders, institutions and academics, need to work together to continue to experiment with a variety of different funding models. The monograph is such an important publication format for many areas of HSS, so it is vital that sustainable models are sought.

HSS receives much less funding than STEM subjects, which is a problem, not just related to open access. Thankfully, a growing number of funders are now offering funding to cover such charges. Many UK institutions have centralized OA funding pots, and while these are as yet relatively small, it is important that HSS gets its fair share of these funds. It is probable that a proportion of library budgets will be diverted to fund open access, but this is unlikely



HAZEL NEWTON

50 to be the sole solution. As such, we're likely to continue to see a mixed economy in terms of publishing model for monographs.

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Diversification is the keyword when you want to build a sound and sustainable economic model for scholarly monograph publishing. This field of activity has always relied on different streams of revenue and there is no reason open access monographs should be an exception. In the same way that traditional monograph publishing never relied solely on sales, we should not think that OA monograph publishing could rely only on up-front funding. The landscape is changing rapidly in this respect. Many players are experimenting with different ways of funding: crowdfunding, freemium, subscription and subsidization are just some examples. Those players should not regard each other as competitors but should see these as complementary solutions that could work together – with publishers and libraries – to support high quality monograph publishing, making it available for everyone thanks to open access.

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In the future, as printed books today, open access books will be funded by many different sources and combinations thereof, not only subsidies, but also through sales of printed and electronic versions in freemium models.

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