

The background of the top half of the page is a photograph of a library. It shows dark wooden bookshelves filled with numerous old, leather-bound books. In the foreground, on the left, is a white marble bust of a man's head and shoulders. The image is partially obscured by a large, diagonal, magenta-colored graphic element that covers the bottom half of the page.

Library Membership Programme



Opening the Future is a collective subscription model that, through its membership scheme, makes library funds go further: achieving the dual objectives of increasing collections and supporting Open Access.

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About the Opening the Future library membership subscription programme

Introduction

Opening the Future is a new model that brings together the best of subscribing to frontlist titles with backlist collection development, maximising cost effectiveness for library budgets and increasing investment in quality Open Access (OA) publications. The Central European University Press (CEU Press) is the first to pilot this new model which is intended to scale in a way that, collectively, libraries can easily identify which small university and mission-driven presses they would like to support, with a single visit to a one stop platform, reducing the administrative costs for everyone.

Background

CEU Press's *Opening the Future* library membership subscription programme funds sustainable open access (OA) publishing while giving its partner libraries access to world-leading research on Central and Eastern European history, the history of communism and transitions to democracy. The programme can be summarised as follows: academic library members pay a small annual fee to get DRM-free, unlimited access to a selection of the well-regarded backlist, and with perpetual access after three years; the membership revenue is used to produce CEU Press's new monographs which are openly licensed and openly (freely) accessible to anyone in the world.

Given the current global library environment and existing budget pressures that have been exacerbated by the pandemic, a consortial model of funding like this promises a cost-effective solution for enhancing online/electronic library collections with relevant research.

Covid-19 has thrown many aspects of university research culture into acute relief. As the reality of the virus dawned and campuses worldwide went into lockdown, publishers rushed to open their publications by removing paywalls. Physical collections became

Members pay a small annual fee to get DRM-free, unlimited access to a selection of the well-regarded backlist, with perpetual access after three years; the membership revenue is used to produce new OA monographs.

inaccessible and demand for openly accessible research skyrocketed. Many publishers made topical works and more general material openly available, through their own sites or collective platforms. In one example CEU Press made 279 titles open to anyone with internet access in March – June 2020 and the number of downloads during this period was remarkable. Books that might normally be expected to sell around 150 copies in hardback were downloaded over 350,000 times in 129 countries. It seems clear that there is an opportunity to reassess scholarly communication in the book publishing world.

As membership grows, the cost per OA book goes down.

Building on library journal subscription models like Open Library of the Humanities and Subscribe to Open, and also on successful book membership programmes such as those at Open Book Publishers and punctum books, *Opening the Future* funds new OA books that will be available to anyone. With small contributions from a large number of academic libraries, no single institution bears a disproportionate burden, and scholars and institutions around the world stand to benefit.

Why OA now?

The Covid-19 pandemic has shown that open access in scholarly communications is the optimal solution in a time of severe societal restriction. The Australian National University Press, for example, saw an average [44% increase in its monthly downloads of open-access](#) materials since March 2020. And it is easy to forget that physical library access has been difficult for a whole category of disabled user for many years previously. Even without the context of Covid-19, open access is a benefit to scholars and readers alike - the following list of positive benefits is taken from the [OAPEN OA Books Toolkit](#):

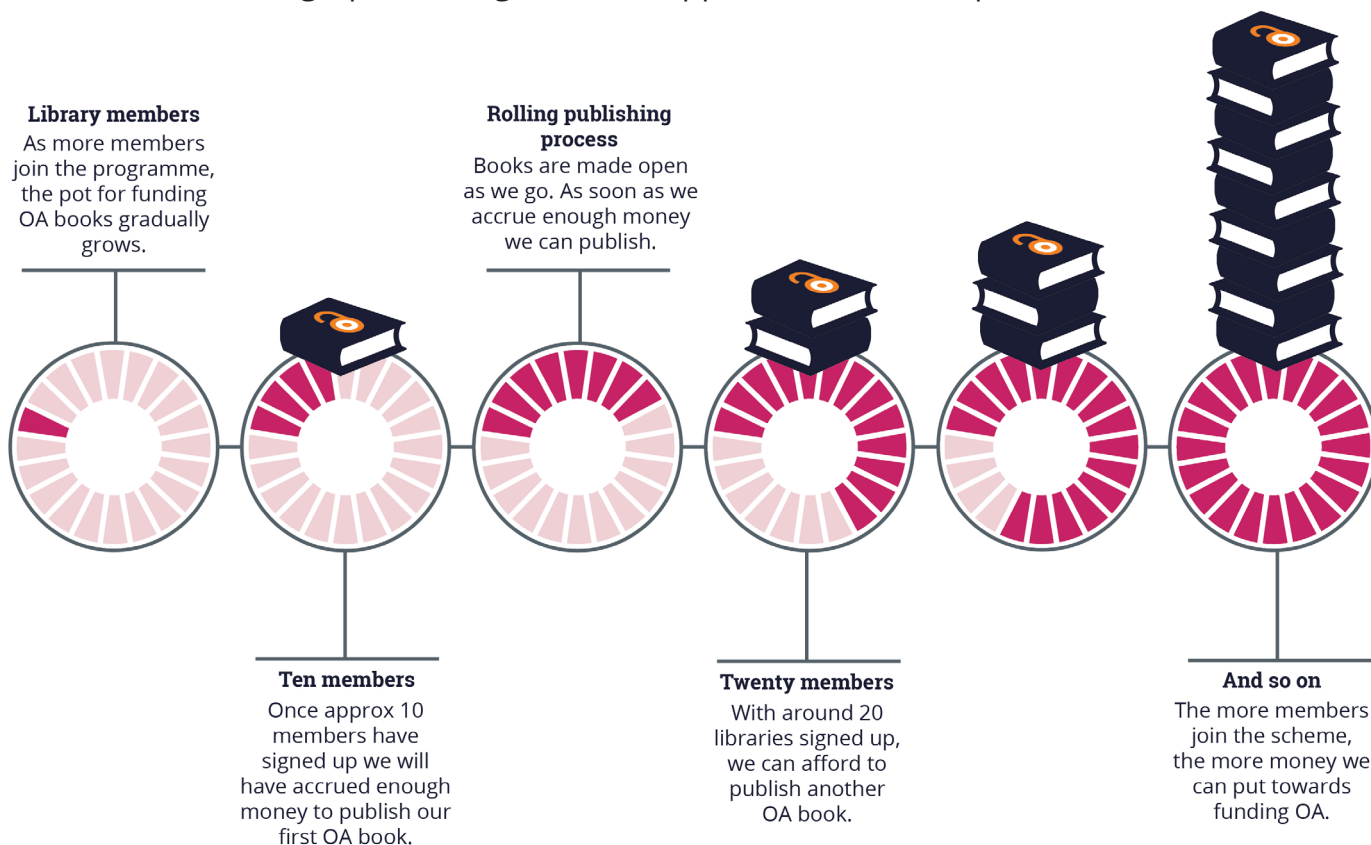
- Increased readership, usage and citation
- Wider and more diverse audiences
- Real-world impact and public engagement
- Quicker and more lasting impact
- More possibilities for readers to engage with and improve research
- Greater author control
- Compliance with funder mandates

CEU Press believes in the value of open access publishing and believes that this consortial membership funding model offers an affordable and sustainable route for small- to medium-sized presses to publish all new scholarly books as OA.

Benefits of the Opening the Future model

- 1.** The model has a number of characteristics in its favour, including pleasing library economics. For example, if an annual membership of €800 (approx \$950 USD) gives access to 50 backlist titles, and funds a further 25 OA per year, yielding a total of 75 books per year that are accessible (and growing every year) - with only 200 member libraries this equates to around €11 (approx \$13 USD) per library, per title.
- 2.** At the expiry of their three-year membership libraries will own those 50 backlist titles in perpetuity and know they've joined the community of libraries supporting OA going forward.
- 3.** The backlist/frontlist combination provides a unique dual-route to rationalisation for acquisition librarians. Many institutions do not have dedicated OA funds, particularly for monographs: the fact that the backlist remains a subscription means that these libraries are able to justify the expenditure on books to which they would otherwise not have access. At the same time, every year of membership will grow their (open) collection by (in the above example) 25 titles.
- 4.** Those libraries preferring to pay with their OA budgets are able to justify this expenditure because the new frontlist titles are openly accessible. This will also allow institutions that have access to block grants for OA to use this pot to fund the purchase.
- 5.** When the revenue target is met and the entire monograph frontlist is openly accessible, future membership fee rates can be lowered.
- 6.** If the revenue target is exceeded, the surplus can go towards funding infrastructure projects devoted to enhancing open book dissemination.
- 7.** We'll start raising funds through the programme from January 2021 with the target of producing 25 OA monographs through this scheme as soon as possible. Even if very few libraries come on board we're still able to publish OA books - for example: for every 7 libraries paying €800 (approx \$950 USD) per year, another book gets made OA.

8. Publishing the OA titles is a rolling process: as soon as we have the funds to produce a title we will publish the next one in line, and so on.
9. Membership/subscription funds are directed purely towards ensuring that future press outputs are OA.
10. We know library budgets are tight, but consider how much better value for money this is than buying single titles. Even if a library already has some or all of the titles we're offering, please consider how cost effective this is for enabling many more books to go OA. For example, with €800 (approx \$950 USD) libraries might be able to buy 4-6 ebooks on multi-user licenses; whereas here, once we reach our subscription targets, the cost to a library would be only €32 (approx \$39 USD) per OA book, and that's without taking into account the 50 backlist titles that membership gives access to. If you are a small library paying €350 (approx \$425 USD) for your membership you are contributing just €14 (approx \$17 USD) to make a book OA. Either way, this is a good deal.
11. Institutions that do not wish to sign up to a book package, or may not be able to, can still support and help to fund the Open Access monographs through an 'OA Supporter Membership'.



Note: the OA modelling here is based on an average membership of €800 per year (our medium-size band pricing). Appraising the cost per book/per library is only possible once we've had time to accrue members. This is a pilot project.

What exactly do members get for their money?

Membership is open to libraries and institutions worldwide. Members receive access to a package of 50 titles from CEU Press's extensive backlist on Central European history, the history of communism and transitions to democracy. There are several packages to choose from, including one with broad appeal with titles in literature, sociology and human rights, and each contains titles proven by recent download figures to be popular and current; one package has been curated by an independent panel of subject expert library colleagues. You can also subscribe to more than one package.

Key features of the books to which members have access

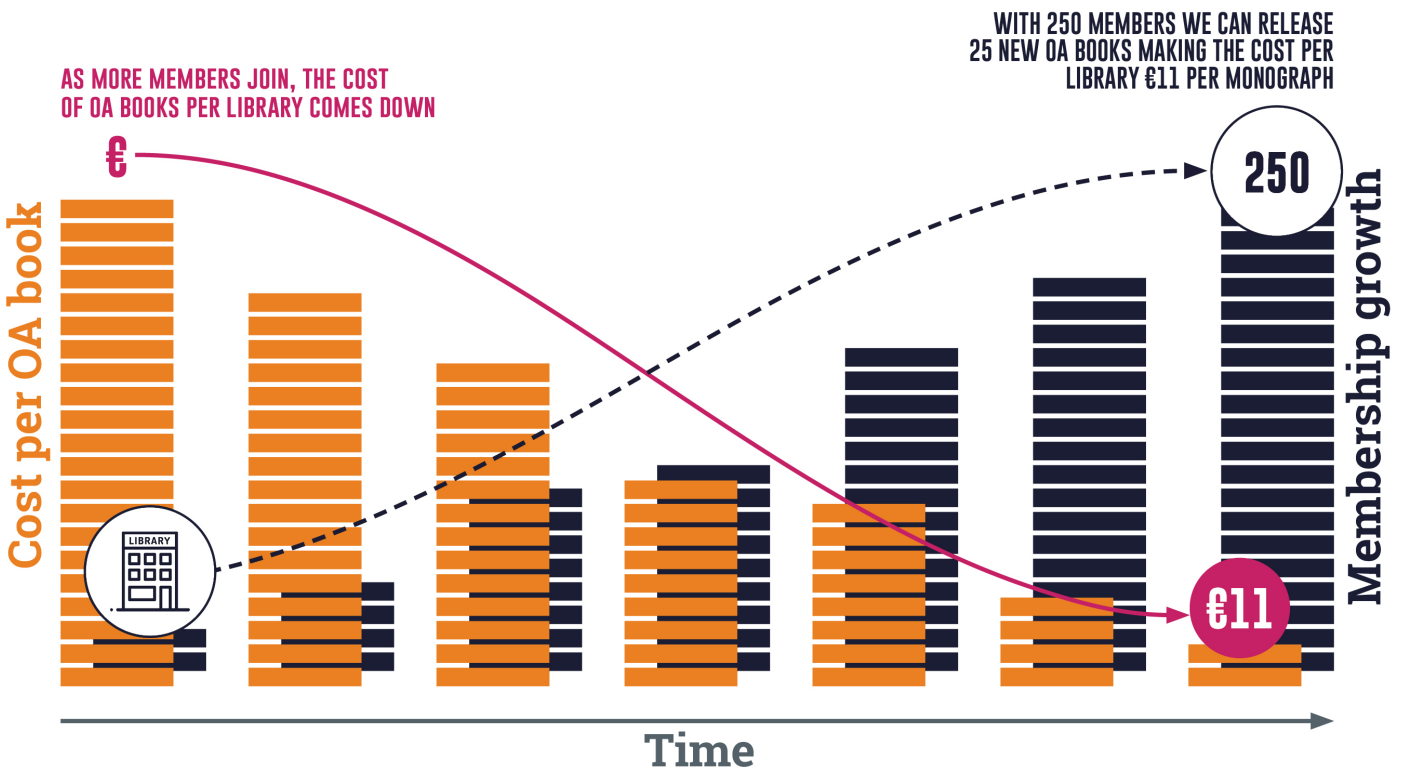
- 1.** Access for library members/patrons will be via Project MUSE - a leading not-for-profit platform in scholarly humanities publishing. Authentication methods supported include IP, Shibboleth, and referring URL, and the books will be seamlessly integrated with any other holdings on the MUSE platform.
- 2.** Books will be provided in PDF format. Library members/patrons will have unlimited access, DRM-free for the duration of membership.
- 3.** Libraries will retain secure access to the books for as long as they are members: membership will last a minimum of three years, with the option to renew after that.
- 4.** At the expiry of the three years, libraries will own the package in perpetuity but will have the option to renew membership and subscribe to another package of different titles.
- 5.** Titles included in the packages are based on recent download/usage figures in order to ensure they are relevant, current, and represent good value-for-money. One package has been curated by an independent panel of subject expert library colleagues.
- 6.** No catches and no hidden fees - we believe the books speak for themselves. Members won't be asked to pay more on top of their annual fee to access 'more' or 'better' titles. Packages won't suddenly change; no bait and switch.

7. There is flexibility around package choice for libraries: members can pick the one with the most relevant 50 titles to meet the needs of their researchers and students. And there is always the option to subscribe to more than one package.
8. Project MUSE will provide MARC and KBART files for the titles, via the MUSE library customer dashboard, and has shared package metadata with major library discovery services. MUSE also supplies COUNTER-compliant usage statistics.
9. Anyone wishing to support the programme financially but not interested in subscribing to the packages can still do so. There is a simple and quick form on the website where you can register as an OA supporter: [OA Supporter Membership](#).
10. As the programme develops we will assess how we might provide other benefits, particularly for long term members.

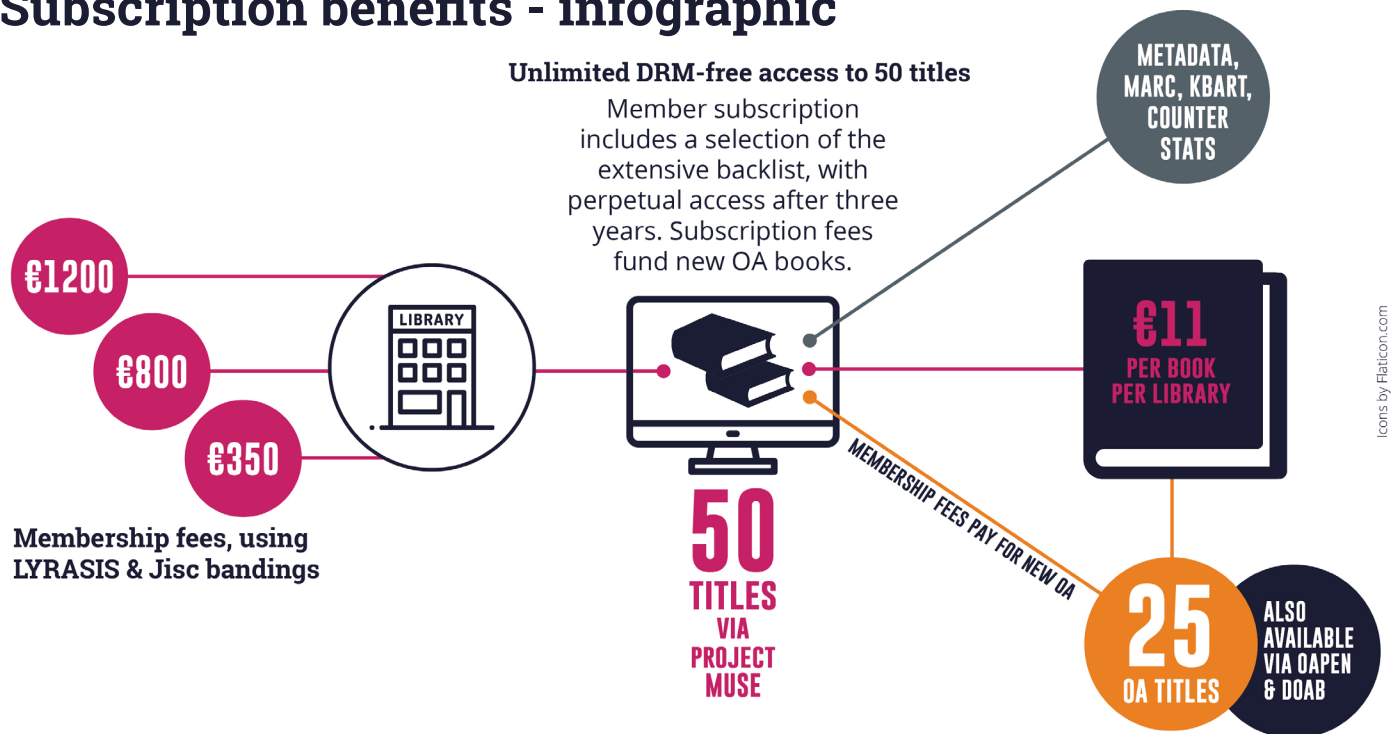
Key features of the OA books that the combined membership fees pay for

1. Membership revenue will pay for only those frontlist books that do not already have funding.
2. Books that have other external funding for OA will not receive funding under the *Opening the Future* programme.
3. If a proposal for a book comes to CEU Press with partial OA funding, the Press will use *Opening the Future* membership fees as a contribution to the publishing costs and publish the book OA.
4. CEU Press aims to publish 25 new titles per year in OA format and with open licences, but will start publishing the first soon after enough fees are gathered to publish it.
5. All new titles will be OA but each new book will be published only when enough members join and enough combined fees are accrued to cover the publishing cost - a bit like a crowdfunder target. New OA books will not be published upfront first and then retrospectively funded.
6. The aim of this approach is to continue to yield a sustainable source of revenue for the Press while achieving the desired commitment to making more titles OA.

As membership grows, the cost per OA book goes down - infographic



Subscription benefits - infographic



Note: €11 per book is for indication only and is calculated on the basis of every library receiving 50 books as a subscription and gaining access to 25 new open access books per year. Cost modelling is based on an average membership of €800 per year (our medium-size band pricing) and assumes 250 library members. Appraising the cost per book/per library is only possible once we've had time to accrue members. This is a pilot project.

How much do members pay?

Library and institutional members are banded according to their size, as recognised by *Opening the Future* partners LYRASIS and Jisc. Based on these, our annual membership fees are as follows:

Banding	Annual Membership Fee
High	€1,200 (approx \$1,425 USD / £1,000)
Medium	€800 (approx \$950 USD / £700)
Low	€350 (approx \$425 USD / £300)

Membership is for three years, regardless of at what point a library signs up: once the payment is processed and subscription is activated, access to the package is granted for three years from that date, and becomes automatically perpetual at the end of the three year period.

Where can I find out more?

More information can be found on the website: openingthefuture.net

How do I sign up?

The packages of book titles and their sign up forms are on the website: openingthefuture.net/packages

Who is involved in running this programme?

This membership programme has been launched as part of a collaboration between CEU Press and [COPIM Work Package 3](#), with responsibility at Birkbeck (University of London). The Work Package was tasked with running a case study as a pilot to transition the revenue model of an extant publisher to sustainable OA. It is our aim that, with the documented success of *Opening the Future*, we will have a model that could lead to the widespread transition of university presses worldwide to OA.

Work Package 3, based at Birkbeck, is led by Martin Paul Eve (Professor of Literature, Technology and Publishing, and co-founder of Open Library of the Humanities), and CEU Press's lead on their transition to OA has been Dr. Frances Pinter (CEU Press Executive

*It is our aim that, with the documented success of *Opening the Future*, we will have a model that could lead to the widespread transition of university presses worldwide to OA.*

Chair, founding Publisher of Bloomsbury Academic, former CEO of Manchester University Press, and founder of Knowledge Unlatched). The team has partnered with internationally-respected advisors and providers: LYRASIS, Jisc, OAPEN, and Project MUSE.

It is important that library and institutional partners know where their membership money is spent.

Transparency and fine print

- 1.** CEU Press will not use any membership fees to make a profit - all membership fees will produce new OA books and any surplus in a year will go towards supporting infrastructure projects devoted to enhancing open book dissemination.
- 2.** It costs CEU Press approximately €7,500 (approx \$9,100 USD) to produce an OA monograph and get it set up and discoverable on the appropriate platforms: membership fees cover this cost.
- 3.** It is possible for funders directly to support this consortial membership scheme. They can sign up to an [OA Supporter Membership](#) via the website, or contact Professor Martin Paul Eve on martin.eve@bbk.ac.uk to discuss further.
- 4.** Membership revenue will pay for only those books that do not already have funding.
- 5.** Billing and invoicing in the USA and Canada is handled by LYRASIS; in the UK it is handled by Jisc. Outside of those areas, billing and invoicing is handled directly by CEU Press.
- 6.** Membership and access to the packages can start at any point in a year. The three-year membership and package access will be activated within 4 weeks of receipt of your payment - we will notify you when access is ready.
- 7.** Our 'cost per OA book' is priced at an 'average' of €7,500 (approx \$9,100 USD). The cost of publishing varies with each book, as does the expected additional print sales which together with the OA contribution makes up the income necessary to make each book viable.
- 8.** This is a case study and proof of concept which we believe will scale up in ways that provide efficiencies and equity to the benefit of all.

Glossary of terms

For anyone unfamiliar with some of the terminology used in this prospectus:

- **Frontlist** / the list of a press's forthcoming books and/or newly-published books.
- **Backlist** / previously published books.
- **COUNTER** / Project COUNTER. An organisation that defines a standard for collecting metrics on scholarly articles.
- **DRM** / Digital Rights Management. Measures to restrict unauthorised copying in the digital space.
- **Open Access (OA)** / peer-reviewed research publications that are free to read and re-use.
- **Licence** / the open access Creative Commons licence under which books will be published.

Contact us

To find out more, the website openingthefuture.net lists all the book titles in the membership packages. It also details [FAQs](#) and other useful information. You can sign up as a member there too.

If the website doesn't answer your questions then please email openingthefuture@copim.ac.uk and we will get back to you as soon as we can.

A shorter 'Executive Summary' of this brochure, and the infographics used here can all be downloaded in a print-friendly format (PDF) from openingthefuture.net/resources