MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY PRESS

OPENING THE FUTURE

Essential Info

updated May 2025

- ✓ **Works with existing acquisition infrastructure**
- ✓ **Supports Diversity, Equity & Inclusion goals**
- ✓ **Builds your library collection with perpetual access**
- ✓ **Benefits authors and institutions without dedicated OA funds**
- ✓ **Authors and institutions don't have to pay expensive BPCs**
- ✓ **Complies with funder mandates for monograph publishing**
- ✓ **Supports small independent University and mission-driven presses**
- ✓ **Sources and disseminates research openly and globally**

Summary of the OtF model

Opening the Future funds BPC-free open access book publishing while also broadening your own collection through an affordable subscription to closed content.

We're reshaping how knowledge dissemination is funded and accessed, by leveraging the collective contributions of academic libraries worldwide. Your *Opening the Future* membership funds a press to publish new OA monographs, while your library benefits from access to closed content, and no single institution bears a disproportionate burden. For a modest annual fee your library gets DRM-free, unlimited access to a closed-access selection of a publisher's backlist, with perpetual access after three years. The membership revenue is used by the publisher solely to produce new frontlist OA monographs, moving towards an affordable, sustainable model for academic publishing and creating a collection of OA books that are open for the world.
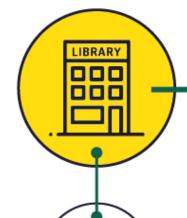
With OtF, your local collection grows and funding future OA books demonstrably costs a fraction of closed monographs. Publishing the frontlist OA titles is a rolling process with no thresholds to meet: as soon as they have accrued enough membership funds to produce a title the press publishes the next book in line, and so on. Be part of something special. Join over 90 Universities around the world already committed to Opening the Future.

Opening the Future in a nutshell

Library subscribes to package of non-OA books offered by publisher at special price

Package access is available to subscribing library only, DRM-free, concurrent use, with KBART/MARC files and COUNTER stats

Publisher makes backlist package of non-OA books available to members

Books in the subscription package remain non-OA, with perpetual access granted after three years membership

Publisher uses membership subscription money to publish new OA books

OA books are available to anyone globally, listed on DOAB, OAPEN, MUSE, JSTOR, etc

Icons by Flaticon.com

What's in the OtF backlist package at MSU Press?

66 multi-user eBooks, with perpetual access
after 3 years membership

African and Diaspora Studies
Covering a broad range of fields, from political and social sciences, history, colonial and post-colonial studies, through the arts and literary studies. Together, these provide a holistic overview of the region(s), their cultures and their histories.

Also available: a non-backlist OA Supporter Membership that simply funds new OA frontlist publishing in the same series.

msup.openingthefuture.net

Value for money

A three-year commitment to receive perpetual access to 66 titles and simultaneously fund new OA books at MSU Press is less than half an average BPC for a single book at many commercial publishers.*

* This does depend on what you call an average BPC but even the largest libraries pay only approx. $2100 / £1560 a year, which includes access to 66 e-books. Financially-speaking it's very cost effective – and you retain perpetual access after 3 years' membership or by paying for 3 years up front in one go.

Benefits...

1 The backlist/frontlist combination provides a unique dual-route 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 grows their (open) collection too.

2 Libraries preferring to pay with their OA budgets are able to justify the expenditure because the new frontlist titles are openly accessible with no embargo. This also allows institutions that have access to block grants for OA to use this pot to fund the purchase.

3 If the target is met and the full frontlist in this series is openly accessible each year, any surplus membership revenue will go towards funding more OA books at MSUP in related disciplines.

4 Publishing the OA titles is a rolling process with no threshold to be met: as soon as they have the funds to produce a title the press will publish the next book in line OA, and so on. Membership/subscription funds are directed purely towards ensuring that future press outputs are OA.

Benefits continued

5 Backlist access for MSU Press titles is via Project MUSE, a leading not-for-profit platform in scholarly humanities publishing. Authentication supported includes IP, Shibboleth, and referring URL, and the books are seamlessly integrated with any other holdings on the MUSE platform. They offer COUNTER-compliant stats, MARC & KBART.

6 The backlist books are provided in PDF format. Library members/patrons have unlimited concurrent access, DRM-free for the duration of membership. At the expiry of the three years, libraries own the package in perpetuity but have the option to renew membership and subscribe to another package of different titles or switch to an OA Supporter Membership without the backlist.

7 Titles included in the package are based on editorial insight to ensure they are relevant, current, and represent good value-for-money.

8 No catches and no hidden fees – trust and transparency is the only way this will work for everyone. Members are not asked to pay more on top of their annual fee to access 'more' or 'better' titles. The package won't suddenly change; there is no bait and switch.

Opening the Future has a voluntary Library Advisory Board that meets quarterly to help guide and feedback on the model. Members are welcome to volunteer and be part of the Board.

How can I persuade my institution to support OtF and collective funding for open access books?

If you need to build a case for support in your library, this series of 3 blog posts gives some useful language, case studies, and arguments:

[Persuading my library to support collective funding for OA Books (Part 1)](#)

[Persuading my library to support collective funding for OA Books (Part 2)](#)

[Creating evaluation criteria to assess collective funding models for OA Books (Part 3)](#)

How to sign up

Your library can become a subscribing member through a simple sign-up form on the OtF website. We hope to have trusted library partners Lyrasis in the USA and Jisc in the UK on board soon.

Michigan State University Press

msup.openingthefuture.net/packages

Questions & feedback

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