# Author and library outreach

Here we detail general outreach. However, direct outreach to libraries that you hope will support you is vital to spreading awareness of your scheme and gaining hew support. This section covers suggestions and templates for this sort of direct outreach. This can be done via your authors, by asking them to ask their own institution, and/or by direct library outreach. While author outreach to their own institutions can be extremely important, in our experience, direct outreach to libraries has seen the most impact.

With a model of this kind there is another consideration for library outreach; where there is a clear distinction, do you contact the scholarly communications librarian who may oversee an OA budget, or do you contact the subject librarian relevant to the backlist package you are offering? I.e., are you asking them to invest directly in an open access initiative with a backlist as a sweetener, or are you asking them to purchase books for their collection, with funds that will go towards open access? Ideally you would contact both. Both approaches are outlined below.


- Outreach to former and current authors
- Outreach to open access or scholarly communications librarians
- Outreach to acquisitions/collection librarians and using Worldcat data
- Library consortia

# Outreach to former and current authors

**Where possible, ask your authors to undertake outreach to their own library about the model.**

# Outreach to backlist authors

Authors who have published with the press are likely to be among the keenest to ensure its future prosperity. Authors who have previously published with the Press are, therefore, a key outreach point for institutional contact. That said, it is by no means guaranteed that these authors will understand the Opening the Future model or, indeed, have any knowledge of open access publishing in general. There is, for example, no guarantee that authors have heard of book processing charges or arguments why BPCs are not the best way to fund OA books. However, authors can present a very compelling case to the library about possibly avoiding future BPCs if the library pays a much smaller fee to contribute to flipping your Press' frontlist.

Emails to these individuals should:

- Be addressed from a known and trusted figure, such as the acquisitions editor who worked with the author previously.
- Be specifically actionable. The email should clearly ask the author to reach out to a particular librarian, if possible with a name and contact address.
- Require as little work on the author's part as possible. Use the below templates to attach the email that you would like the author to send to the library.
- Be personalised so as not to come across as marketing spam.
- Comply with all General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) provisions for opt-out if an author does not wish to hear any more.

1. **For our template email to authors, click here** **Template outreach email to authors**
2. **For our template email for your authors to send to their libraries, click here** **Template outreach email from authors to libraries**

# Outreach to frontlist authors

The degree of enthusiasm for open access varies hugely between authors. Nonetheless, frontlist authors who are convinced of the merits of OA make for powerful allies. Writing to authors in this category is particularly efficacious, when a work is in production or under contract, as they will often be keen to help the Press to thrive.

Many of the same principles apply as in the above outreach to backlist authors section, except that the relationship here is likely to be warmer and more active. The key is to do as much work on behalf of the academic as possible so that it is easy for them to write to their librarian.

# Outreach to open access or scholarly communications librarians

**OA/scholarly communications librarians may support this model as part of the broader effort to shift the academic landscape towards open research.**

Open access librarians are often extremely savvy and well versed in new models for open access. Given the affordability of Opening the Future and the fact that scholarly communications budgets are often being cut back, this initiative offers a powerful and affordable way for institutions to signal their support for open access books, even when they do not have a great deal of available funding.

One potential point of confusion for this group is that they may misconstrue Opening the Future as a read-and-publish or transformative agreement. That is, they may erroneously believe that they are paying for their authors to publish openly with the press. Communication with librarians in this group must stress the novelty of the approach and that the aim is to reach the entire frontlist becoming OA, thereby avoiding the need for hybrid interim measures.

One of the aims of models like OtF is to try to uncouple the link between a university (library) paying a fee so its own researchers can publish openly. Instead the model endeavours to encourage universities to sustain presses that they value, and that publish work in relevant fields: if BPC-free models like OtF are successful then *any* authors (including their own) who come to those presses with a book proposal will be able to publish OA.

**See also this toolkit's FAQ section on OtF: Comprehensive list of OtF FAQs**

Key elements of outreach to OA/Schol Comm librarians include:

- Stressing the affordability of the initiative, with particular reference comparison to BPCs.
- Emphasising the need to avoid Book Processing Charges.
- Where accurate and where you have the data to support this, tying the request to authors from the institution without implying that this is a transformative agreement (i.e. showing that authors from the institution are publishing with the Press).
- Tying the request to subject-specific readership/usages (e.g. are there books set on courses at the university that are published by the Press?).
- Stress the relevance of the backlist being offered to their research and/or teaching collections.

- Personalisation so as not to come across as marketing spam.
- Complying with all General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) provisions for opt-out if a librarian does not wish to hear any more.

In order to find OA librarians who may be sympathetic to a scheme of this sort, there are a few options. One is to research which libraries are participating in other similar collective funding models, or who have advocated for them strongly in forums such as OA webinars or via Jiscmail such as:

- oagoodpractice@jiscmail.ac.uk
- lis-e-resources@jiscmail.ac.uk
- lis-link@jiscmail.ac.uk

**For a template based on our own outreach to open access / scholarly communications librarians please click here □□ Template direct outreach to OA or scholarly communications librarians**

# Outreach to acquisitions/collection librarians and using Worldcat data

**Acquisition/collection librarians may wish to participate in OtF in order to enhance their collections in a cost-efficient way (while also supporting open access).**

One of the core goals of the Opening the Future model is to shift from a bifurcated environment where acquisitions budgets are used to buy books, while scholarly communications budgets are used to fund OA, into a more holistic environment in which all acquisitions expenditure contributes to making content open for all. However, at time of writing that shift in library budgets is still a long way off from happening, and outreach needs to take account of this.

When 'selling' the benefits of the Opening the Future model to acquisitions librarians, the focus should be on the unique content that is delivered to each participating library (the backlist). Institutions will often want to see a teaching need for the title or whether faculty have requested a purchase, which can be challenging to demonstrate. Demand-driven acquisition paradigms have also instilled a false belief in the sustainability of on-demand access.

Various data sources, such as Worldcat or Open Syllabus, can help to make the case to acquisitions librarians, although the data can be read in different ways by different institutions. For instance, if Worldcat data indicate that a library has previously purchased every title from a press, some libraries will see this as a good indication that they should join the Opening the Future model as it represents a cheaper way to acquire all new books. Others, though, may question why they should subscribe when they already have all the titles. Hence, data are never neutral and require contextualisation for each library.

- Stress the link between the backlist packages and their own teaching and research aims.
- Focus instead on how this enhances their collections at a low cost, and by acquisition after the three years.
- Stress the affordability of the initiative, with particular reference comparison to BPCs.

In order to find relevant acquisitions/collection librarians, you can use Worldcat or Open Syllabus data, or you can purchase access to subject librarian contact lists from reputable marketers.

Alternatively, you can research which universities have a heavy teaching or research focus in the subject you are offering. You may already have strong links to libraries via your current sales activities.

**For a generic template based on our own outreach to acquisitions / collections librarians please click here Template direct outreach to acquisitions librarians.docx**

# Library consortia

**Library consortia can offer extremely useful financial support, but their processes can be lengthy and complex.**

**You should seek out consortia whose members may already publish (extensively) with you to demonstrate the value of investment.**

Approaching library consortia can be a powerful way to generate multi-library signups and quickly gain many members. CEU Press and Liverpool UP have received important financial support from consortia during our project.

That said, there are a number of aspects to bear in mind with consortial groups:

- Consortial groupings can be slow in their decision making. There are often multiple layers of committees, and budgets can be set up to 12 months in advance. Hence, while the rewards can be great, the lead time for consortial participation can be lengthy.
- Consortial groups are more likely to respond to larger presses with more substantial asks. There is almost a sense that below a certain threshold, it is not worth the time/participation of the big groups. Nevertheless, we have been supported on an individual press level, so while the path to consortial funding may be more difficult and time-consuming, it is feasible.
- Consortia can sometimes be distant from the purchasing process. Speaking directly on the ground with individual acquisitions and scholarly communications librarians can often yield more immediate direct results, although the rewards of landing a large-scale consortial group is key.
- Some library systems act as mini-consortia. The California Digital Library (CDL), for instance, acts on behalf of the California system and is an extremely important player in the US market. Nine libraries of the CDL group are subscribing members of Opening the Future at both Liverpool University Press and CEU Press.
- Some consortia have a large reach as advocates, if not as purchasing schemes. The Center for Research Libraries (CRL) in the USA is a powerful ally who has endorsed the Opening the Future model at the Central European University Press.
- Some libraries are members of multiple consortial groups. Avoiding overlap in pricing calculations and factoring this in during growth predictions is important.
- Being able to demonstrate to consortia that their institutional authors publish with you can be persuasive for gaining support.

Consortia have their own timeframes for applications, as well as different application processes. Some may be appropriate for your press. We have only had discussions with consortia in North America and Canada, which may influence our perspective. As a starting point, several US consortia are listed on the ICOLC website.