

05. Publisher Success Stories

Open Access is reshaping the future of scholarly book publishing, offering new opportunities for publishers to expand reach, enhance impact, and support equitable access to knowledge. The last ten years or so have seen a florescence of ‘born’ OA publishers. This ranges from New University Presses (NUPs) such as UCL Press which just celebrated its tenth anniversary, to non-institutional OA presses such as Open Book Publishers and punctum books. Meanwhile, for book publishers who are transitioning to OA, it is more than a shift in distribution — it’s a strategic evolution that aligns with the values of transparency, inclusivity, and innovation.

This section presents a collection of inspiring success stories from publishers around the world who have embraced OA for books and achieved meaningful results. From increased visibility and global readership and reach to strengthened community engagement and deepened author relationships, these stories illustrate how OA can drive both mission and market success in the world of academic and professional publishing.

The headings below indicate what publisher (or organisation) the stories were disseminated by. This includes individual institutional publishers, and there may be crossover with Author Success Stories. If you want to recommend key publisher success stories for inclusion in the Copim Compass, please contact us at info@copim.ac.uk

- [American Council of Learned Societies \(ACLS\)](#)
- [Bloomsbury Academic](#)
- [Jisc | How smaller publishers are adapting and responding to the open access landscape](#)
- [Lever Press](#)
- [LSE Press](#)
- [Open Access Books Network \(OABN\): Publisher spotlight](#)
- [Open Book Collective in action: A fair and sustainable future for books](#)
- [Open Book Futures Project: An interview with Claire McGann](#)
- [Open Book Publishers \(OBP\)](#)

- punctum books
- The ScholarLed Consortium
- Scottish Universities Press (SUP)
- University of London Press (UoL)
- University of Michigan Press

American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS)

Engaging Monograph Authors in the Open Access Movement

The American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS) Open Access Book Prizes reward exceptional humanistic scholarship that has been published openly, demonstrating its relevance within and beyond academia. They shared some lessons learned during the competition's first year via [Katina Magazine](#).

[Read the lessons learnt](#)

Bloomsbury Academic

Bloomsbury Academic began as an OA book publisher in 2008. Their [Open Access at Bloomsbury webpage](#) includes information about:

- [How to publish your book open access with Bloomsbury \('gold OA'\)](#)
- [Community engagement](#)
- [Open access partnerships](#)
- [Open access: a guide for authors](#)

Jisc | How smaller publishers are adapting and responding to the open access landscape

Opinion piece from [Jisc](#) with sector views on how smaller presses should (and can) pivot to OA following UKRI's open access (OA) policy for longform.

[Read the blog](#)

Lever Press

Lever Press is a press governed by its participating members. An Editorial Board, composed of faculty from participating institutions, oversees the editorial and review process for their titles; an elected Oversight Committee, composed of representatives of participating institutions, directs the execution of their business plan. They are a member of the Association of University Presses.

A look at the factors that distinguish Lever Press and make it appealing to authors: Why Authors

Publish with Lever Press

Usage statistics for Lever Press titles combined with reader feedback: Impact of Lever Press Titles

LSE Press

LSE Press is a non-profit, open access publisher of the social sciences. Find out more about their publications and what people have been saying about them:

- [A year in the life of a book piece on How Africa Trades](#)
- [BCA African Business Book of the Year Prize](#)
- [Celebrating 1 million views/downloads](#)
- [LSE Press joins the Open Book Collective](#)
- [Stunning engagement for our launch event for How Did Britain Come to This?](#)
- [Royal Geographical Society to publish its book series Open Access with LSE Press](#)

Open Access Books Network (OABN): Publisher spotlight

A series of blog posts by publishers, talking about the platforms they use to publish their open access books.

[Read their stories on the Open Access Books Network \(OABN\) website](#)

- [‘The Case for PubPub’ by Jeff Pooley](#)
- [‘Setting up an Institutional Open Press: First steps’ by Suzanne Tatham and Catrina Hey](#)
- [Using Open Monograph Press for open access book publishing at Scottish institutions](#)
- [Using Fulcrum at Amherst College Press by Beth Bouloukos](#)
- [Deciding on an Open Access Book Publishing Platform: Ubiquity and the Start of Open Access Book Publishing at the University of Westminster Press](#)
- [Using Manifold at Temple University Press and Libraries](#)

Open Book Collective in action: A fair and sustainable future for books

The Open Book Collective (OBC) brings together publishers, publishing service providers, and scholarly libraries to secure the diversity and financial futures of open access book production and dissemination.

Watch this video (created by Couch Fire Films and filmed at the Charleston Library Society) to hear OBC members and supporters explain why a fairer and more sustainable future for scholarly books is needed.

Open Book Futures Project: An interview with Claire McGann

Dr. Claire McGann, project manager for the Open Book Futures project, joins the [Lancaster University Library podcast](#) - Talking around the library tree - to discuss the Open Book Futures project, which aims to initiate a step-change in the ambition, scope and impact of community-led Open Access book publishing.

[Listen to the podcast now](#)

Open Book Publishers (OBP)

Open Book Publishers (OBP) are an independent open access publisher of academic research in the Humanities and Social Sciences in the UK.

They are award-winning, not-for-profit, run by scholars, and committed to making high-quality research freely available to readers around the world. All their books can be accessed online or downloaded for free, with no Book Processing Charges (BPCs) for authors.

They recently received [three nominations for the 2025 ACLS Open Access Book Prizes and Arcadia Open Access Publishing Awards](#).

Lucy Barnes, senior editor and outreach coordinator at OBP, appeared on an episode of Research Talk* discussing the 'transformative world of open access monographs'.

[Listen to the podcast now](#)

*Research Talk is a podcast hosted by [Jisc](#).

punctum books

punctum books is an independent, scholar-led, non-profit, open access publisher. It was founded in 2011, and was also an early adopter of library memberships (in 2018) to support author equity. They publish in all subjects across AHSS, and support authors taking experimental risks with the forms and styles of their writing. They have a strong ethical commitment to open access, academic freedom, the rejection of 'prestige' within publishing, community, and cats.

Find out more about [punctum](#).

The ScholarLed Consortium

The ScholarLed consortium is made up of scholar-led, not-for-profit, open access publishers. It was founded in 2018 and sought ways for small-scale, scholar-led presses to grow and flourish together, by finding co-operative systems and practices to work together. It is therefore a proponent of the concept of 'scaling small'. It was a key and foundational partner in the COPIM project which began in 2019, and is currently listed as a package on the Open Book Collective. It continues to hold salons and other events and is open to new members.

[Find out more about the consortium.](#)

Scottish Universities Press (SUP)

Scottish Universities Press (SUP) released its first two OA book titles in 2024, marking a significant milestone in Scotland's academic publishing landscape. They have also unveiled a new open access textbook programme.

Scottish Universities Press: Looking back at 2024

Download and read their books for free:

1. Conversations with Tim Ingold: Anthropology, education and life. By Tim Ingold, Robert Gibb, Philip Tonner and Diego Maria Malara
2. Digital Editing and Publishing in the Twenty-First Century. Edited by James O'Sullivan, Michael Pidd, Michael Kurzmeier, Orla Murphy, Bridgette Wessels and Sophie Whittle.
3. The vow of stability: An ethnography of monastic life. By Richard D.G. Irvine

They also recorded 'fireside chats' with their authors to launch the books. Watch Conversations with Tim Ingold (Tim Ingold and his co-authors, Robert Gibb, Philip Tonner, and Diego Maria Malara, discuss why open access matters and share insights on why they chose SUP and how they found the experience), and Dr. Richard Irvine in conversation with Hannah Whaley and Gillian Daly (Richard covers his experiences of living in a Benedictine monastery, his thoughts on stability and the future of monastic life, and more challenging topics such as sexual abuse).

Read more about Dr. Richard Irvine's book on the University of St Andrews (USTAN) website.

University of London Press (UoL)

The [University of London \(UoL\) Press](#) authors share their own publishing experiences and words of advice and support for new authors, along with their views on open access and what more publishers can do to work with the research community to help build supportive, collaborative and open research and publishing cultures.

Reflecting on publishing and research culture - with Professor Rachel E. Johnson

Rachel E. Johnson is the author of [Voice, Silence and Gender in South Africa's Anti-Apartheid Struggle](#). Rachel E. Johnson is a historian of South Africa with interests in gender and politics. She is Assistant Professor in Modern African History at Durham University, UK.

'Voice, Silence and Gender in South Africa's Anti-Apartheid Struggle' was published open access with funding pledged by institutional libraries through the [Jisc Open Access Community Framework](#).

Reflecting on publishing and research culture - with Professor Sarah Fox

Professor Sarah Fox is the author of [Giving Birth in Eighteenth-Century England](#). Sarah Fox has recently been appointed Senior Lecturer in History at Edge Hill University, UK. Published April 2022, 'Giving Birth in Eighteenth-Century England' was shortlisted for the Royal Historical Society's Whitfield Prize, 2023. Professor Sarah Fox is primarily a social and cultural historian with interests in the digital approaches to history, social histories of law and medicine, the body, emotion, gender, food, and community.

The UoL Press published book, [Freedom Seekers: Escaping from Slavery in Restoration London](#), won the [2024 ACLS Open Access Book Prize & Arcadia Open Access Publishing Award](#), and was the joint winner of the [2023 Frederick Douglass Book Prize](#) from Yale University's Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition. [Listen](#) to author, Simon P. Newman, and publisher, Emma Gallon, in discussion at the ACLS Awards, where they took the stage to discuss the book, the process of publishing it, and the importance of creative, collaborative solutions for open access publishing.

University of Michigan Press

Michigan Publishing publishes scholarly and educational materials in a range of formats. Since spring 2021, the University of Michigan Press has been transitioning to an open access monograph model termed Fund to Mission.

They have shared Stories of Impact on their website, including:

- Three Years of Fund to Mission: Reaching 75% Open Access
- Breaking Down the Paywall: Author Relationships with Open Access
- What Happens When Ebooks are Free-to-Read? Reflecting on UMP's COVID-19 Response
- Opening Access to Books Increases Reach and Engagement
- Born-accessible Publishing is Good Book-making for Everyone
- Sustainable Publishing for Digital Scholarship in the Humanities
- When Digs Go Digital