

Renewals

- **When the current subscription has a few months left, you should get in touch with the library to discuss renewal.**
- **Renewals may take the form of additional backlist packages, or a supporter package without backlist content.**
- **Despite the extremely difficult financial environment for HEIs at time of writing in 2025, we have seen about 40% of our initial subscribers renew so far, alongside continuing new sign ups. We therefore feel like this is a sustainable model in the short to mid term.**
- **We have written a template renewal email for libraries but you will wish to adapt/shorten it. To download click here [□□ Template email to libraries about renewals](#)**

A natural question for schemes of this sort, and one we get asked quite frequently, is about their sustainability. Questions certainly remain about this in the long-term, if for no other reason than for the fact that all publishers - eventually - reach the end of backlist they have which is viable for packages. At Copim, we have made no secret of the fact that we believe a fundamental and systemic change about how closely library budgets are tied to direct acquisitions is required, with money instead being used to enable OA publishing to the benefit of all.

However, there is good reason to believe that these sorts of models work in the short-to-medium term, and that they will, as more and more publishers use them, becoming a more fixed part of the OA funding landscape. Our confidence in this rests on a few factors.

1. The two Presses have continued to accrue new supporters over the whole period from 2021 to late 2024, which increases the pool of potential renewals and also extends it by, at this point, to the period 2027-2030 (as our most recent new members will enter their first renewal period in 2027 and, if they renew for three years, will continue their subscription until 2030).

2. CEU Press entered its first renewal period in early 2024 and we therefore have nearly a year of data to work with. Our renewal rate so far (at time of writing in early 2025) has been around 35-40%. While this may not seem very robust, we must look at it in the following context:

a. Library budgets are under immense strain right now particularly in the UK, and budget cuts have been the main reason given to us for non-renewals.

b. This model does not work on "term access" (ie: access limited to the paying subscription period only) but is based on perpetual access (ie: acquisition). So perhaps there is less incentive to renew for this model than for some other collective funding models where the library must keep paying in order to keep the access? However, library members have told us repeatedly that the perpetual access component is a real benefit to them, a USP and a

'selling point' for internal stakeholders/budget holders. Also OtF programmes are able to access acquisition budgets where subscription/temporary access models cannot, which is reflected in the amount of money accrued by CEU Press and LUP.

3. The landscape of collective OA funding models for books has grown hugely since 2020, and has been adopted by several large commercial publishers and large institutional presses. As these become less experimental and more advocated-for and understood by libraries, we expect more libraries to be willing to, and interested in, engaging with them.

Managing renewals

As the subscription is for a three year period, by the end of the second year you are going to want to start thinking about renewals. Your CRM of choice ought to have a running list of when library memberships began so that you can keep track of this time period. We use a spreadsheet which we manually check regularly to see whose memberships are nearing their end point, in order to get in touch about renewals.

There are two main options when it comes to renewal:

1. Creating a new package of your back content to offer them.
2. Creating an 'OA' supporter package which comes with no back content attached to it.

There are pros and cons to each. A point in favour of a new package of backlist content is that it comes with further acquisitions to the library, which are ultimately the main draw for participation. On the other hand, though, it means committing more of your backlist. Theoretically, if it were in a very different subject area, it would also mean that potentially a different librarian at the supporting institution would be responsible for signing it off than the one you originally dealt with, but ideally they would provide internal advocacy to their colleague supporting the acquisition (though many libraries no longer have subject librarians).

The benefit of an OA supporter package is that you do not need to commit more backlist, or go through the work of creating an additional package (i.e. curating the theme, selecting titles). Both of our presses offer an OA supporter package. At CEU Press this is in addition to 5 backlist packages. At LUP it is the only alternative to their one original package. CEU Press is getting renewals on both additional content packages, and OA supporter packages, but it is also clear that libraries prefer backlist packages where the option is available. At time of writing we are only just at the start of our renewals for LUP (CEU Press began earlier) so we cannot yet say how attractive the OA supporter packages are as the sole renewal option. Additionally, an OA supporter package without content being acquired may have to come out of a different part of the library budget than the initial package, which may add complications, although in our own experience it has not yet.

We have also seen, in reality, that some libraries choose to renew with the same package they originally had despite being aware that this is unnecessary (as they have perpetual access after their initial three year subscription). Presumably they would like to keep supporting the programme and this is logistically easier within their administrative structures than opting for a second package.

Once you have decided what your renewal option will be, you should email the librarian you were in touch with originally. You should do this a few months before their current subscription term is due to end. If they have moved role or retired, you should be able to get in touch with the library's general help or contact page to find who their replacement is.

- **For a template renewal email to libraries please click here** [📄 Template email to libraries about renewals](#) Note that this template is rather long and library feedback has indicated that short and to the point is better. We recommend you trim and adapt it to present the main points succinctly.
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