

Call for Participants in an Open Access Faculty-Library Publishing Partnership Development Grant

Open Humanities Press/Public Knowledge Project

July 22, 2008

Open Humanities Press and the Public Knowledge Project are inviting interested libraries to join us in developing a grant proposal to form an international faculty-library publishing partnership that can serve as a potential model for scholar-led, Open Access monograph publishing in humanities and social sciences disciplines.

Open Access distribution is increasingly recognized as a viable solution to today's crisis in scholarly publishing. Libraries have been one of the most vocal and effective advocacy groups in promoting OA to faculty. In addition to establishing institutional repositories for Green OA journal articles, libraries are also beginning to explore possible new roles as academic publishers by hosting Open Access journals associated with their faculty members (Gold OA).

Our proposed international publishing partnership aims to define an innovative role for libraries as joint providers of an open management and production infrastructure for self-organizing, scholar-led Open Access publishing projects. Where currently the majority of library publishing initiatives are oriented toward content produced by faculty at their home institutions, this project envisions a role for libraries as participants in the global market for ideas, and as facilitators of the established practices through which scholarly materials in the humanities are commonly created: small, national and international groups of scholars collaborating together in specialized areas of interest to oversee the publishing of peer-reviewed monograph series.

As part of our effort to effect a cultural shift in faculty attitudes in favor of Open Access, this project is envisaged as a demonstration aimed at fostering other scholar-led OA initiatives in the humanities and social sciences through 1) the collective development of sustainable, open source software that reduces publishing and infrastructure costs, and 2) the Open Access publication of a number of influential books (both digital and print on demand), selected and edited by senior members of [OHP's advisory board](#) (which includes some of the leading names in the field), that will ideally contribute to a greater trust in and acceptance of OA publishing among HSS scholars. This initiative is a response, in part, to what is currently the restricted market for scholarly monographs, which severely limits the number of quality titles which the university presses are unable to take on, as well as the sales of those that are

published by traditional means. There is a decided need for new ways of authors in the humanities and social sciences coming to work on book-length scholarly projects, rather than see this important form continue to lose out to the growing economic dominance of journal publishing.

We are inviting libraries to explore with us the roles the library community might play as publishing partners in such an enterprise. Among others, we are interested in investigating possible revenue streams for editorial and layout production costs, developing administrative and production work-flows and processes that can be shared across a number of OA publishing initiatives, learning about the complexity and limitations of existing purchasing channels and creating a user-friendly sales channel for the library purchase of POD editions of OA materials, as well as piloting the partnership through the publication of high-profile edited series.

We envision the outcome of this project as an extensible and transferable model for how libraries and faculty might collaborate to spearhead and streamline a shift to Open Access in disciplines for which the book-length argument remains the preferred means of scholarly communication.

The public archives of our planning discussion to date can be read at <http://lists.ibiblio.org/pipermail/ohp>. Please contact Sigi Jöttkandt (sigij [at] openhumanitiespress.org) or John Willinsky (john.willinsky [at] stanford.edu).

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Open Humanities Press is an international Open Access publishing collective specializing in critical and cultural theory. Launched in 2008, OHP was formed by academics to overcome the current crisis in scholarly publishing that threatens intellectual freedom and academic rigor worldwide. OHP journals are academically certified by OHP's independent board of international scholars. All OHP publications are peer-reviewed, published under open access licenses, and freely and immediately available online at <http://openhumanitiespress.org/>

The Public Knowledge Project is a research and development initiative directed toward improving the scholarly and public quality of academic research through the development of innovative online publishing and knowledge-sharing environments. Begun in 1998, PKP has developed Open Journal Systems and Open Conference Systems, free software for the management, publishing, and indexing of journals and conferences, as well as Open Archives Harvester and Lemon8-XML to facilitate the indexing, formatting, and archiving of research and scholarship. This open source software is being used around the world to increase access to knowledge and improve its scholarly management, while considerably reducing publishing costs.

Located at the University of British Columbia, Simon Fraser University, and Stanford University, PKP also sustains an active research program on the impact of increased access to knowledge, with the resulting publications, dating back to 1998, available from <http://pkp.sfu.ca/node/1410>