Open Access for the Humanities

Over the past decade, researchers have increasingly looked towards Open Access as a way of disseminating their work online to anyone who requires access. The cost of subscribing to journals is high and rising, and libraries are unable to offer a complete range of journals to their readers as a result. Furthermore, as journal subscriptions rise, libraries have been forced to dip into the budgets previously allocated to monographs. This has had a detrimental and disproportionate effect on humanities disciplines, which rely largely on book-length works as the primary method of research communication.

Open Access helps rectify this by providing unrestricted access to the literature and reducing the overall cost of publishing in the process. Governments and other research funders – and universities – are recognising this and putting in place mandates for OA but, with the policy scene becoming quite complex, and burdened with increasing administrative pressures in general, it can be difficult for researchers to identify where to begin. There are, however, a variety of outlets for both Green and Gold Open Access in the humanities, each with their own benefits for your work. This guide will explore the various Open Access outlets available to humanities researchers and will discuss the issues surrounding them.

Journal Articles

Research articles can be made Open Access through either Open Access journals or repositories.

Green Open Access

So-called 'Green' Open Access involves you publishing your article in the journal of your choice, even when this is not Open Access, and providing OA to all those who do not have subscriber access to that journal by depositing ('self-archiving') your article in an institutional or subject-specific repository. Depositing is usually done at the point when the manuscript is accepted for publication in a journal. The very best place to start this process is your own institution: many universities now maintain Open Access repositories as way of showcasing their research. A good example of an institutional repository is Discovery at University College London. To find a suitable Open Access repository for your work you can consult the extensive lists available from the Directory of Open Access Repositories and the Registry of Open Access Repositories.

Uploading your work to an institutional repository is a simple way of ensuring that it will always be available to anyone who needs access. It also helps you understand the use and impact of your work as repositories often provide download and citation statistics so you can track the real-time impact of your research.

Self-archiving is free and easy to do. Once your article has been accepted by a journal, you then upload the article directly to the repository and provide accompanying metadata – the descriptive data such as author names, affiliations, title, abstract and details of the journal where it is published. It is important to remember that most traditional journals will not let you upload the final typeset and copyedited PDF of your article, which is subject to the publisher's copyright, and so in those cases you should upload the accepted version (your own final document in Word or similar) and provide the details of the journal in which it is published in the repository entry.

To increase the discoverability of your research, you might also upload it to a subject-specific repository. Subject repositories, such as PhilPapers in philosophy, are an excellent way of highlighting your work within a disciplinary community, particularly as many researchers now use them as the first point of call for discovering research. Whilst they are not yet available in all fields, there is likely to be a repository in your broad subject area. The Directory of Open Access Repositories, which can be searched by subject area, is a useful starting point.

For many researchers, an attractive feature of Green Open Access is that you can publish your research in the same subscription journals you normally would use, providing you also self-archive your work. However, others say that this simply perpetuates the existing journal system and does little to help ease the budgets of libraries, which must continue to subscribe to the toll-access (subscription-based) journals that their readers are used to. One solution to this is to publish your research in Open Access journals, often known as Gold Open Access.

Gold Open Access

For Open Access in journals, known as 'Gold' Open Access, articles are made Open Access at the point of publication, sometimes with an 'article processing charge' (APC) but often without one.

The number of Open Access journals is rapidly increasing in the humanities. The Directory of Open Access Journals, searchable by subject area, lists almost 10,000 journals (not all in the humanities) from over 120 countries and these are supported by a variety of funding mechanisms. For instance, all of the fourteen journals published by the not-for-profit Open Humanities Press (OHP) operate with no article fees at all, sustained in partnership with the University of Michigan Library. Similarly, the soon-to-launch Open Library of Humanities (OLH) will publish research from all areas of the humanities and will cover publication costs through library subventions and other sponsorship. Both OHP and the OLH have recruited editorial boards of senior scholars from all areas of the humanities, offering the same high-quality peer-review standards as subscription journals.

Whilst the majority of Open Access journals do not levy an APC to cover their costs, there are some that do. It is important to remember that the payment of APCs is intended to be routed through your institution and so you should contact your librarian for advice on the funds available. For example, Ubiquity Press publishes a suite of humanities journals, such as Stability in international development, whose APCs range from 100-250 GB Pounds (GBP). Likewise, Sage Open currently charges a discounted APC of US$99 and publishes articles from all areas of the humanities and social sciences.

As more publishers in the humanities begin to charge APCs, two principles should be followed to ensure fairness and sustainability:

- APCs should be waivable for anyone who does not have access to funds. This will ensure that all scholars will be able to publish their work irrespective of their institution's financial situation. This is particularly important for junior and independent scholars, in addition to scholars from low- and middle-income countries. Reputable publishers will list their fee waiver policy on their website.

- APCs should be transparent so you know exactly how the funds are being spent and the services they provide. This will ensure that they are kept as low as possible, which will save money for the overall research budget as more journals become Open Access.

Books

Despite this progress on Open Access by journals, monographs are the main currency in most humanities subjects and a number of initiatives with a wide variety of models have recently launched to make books Open Access too.

The OAPEN Library and Directory of Open Access Books are excellent resources for Open Access books in the humanities and social sciences. These two sites are good places to familiarise yourself with the publishers that are releasing Open Access books. As with all academic publications, Open Access books are peer-reviewed, professionally typeset and available in both printed and electronic formats.

There are a number of ways that publishers look to cover the costs associated with book publishing.

- **Print sales**. The most common model is for publishers cover the costs associated with book publishing by selling the print version, enabling them to release the electronic ve rsion for free

- **Publication fee**. Some publishers request a one-off payment to make a book Open Access. For example, Manchester University Press charges a basic fee of 5,900 GBP whilst Palgrave MacMillan charges 11,000 GBP. Unless you have funding, these fees may be prohibitively expensive, but other publishers look to recuperate their costs in other ways

- **Grants or crowd funding**. For example, Open Book Publishers is a publisher of Open Access books in the humanities and social sciences, boasting such authors as Amartya Sen, Lionel Gossman and Caroline Humphrey. Importantly, if your manuscript is accepted, the decision to publish is not contingent on your ability to pay, although you would be asked to apply for grant funding where available. OBP estimates that the cost of reviewing, producing and marketing a book costs 3,500-5000 GBP

- **Library consortial funding**. A soon-to-launch initiative for Open Access books is Knowledge Unlatched, which will work within the traditional publishing industry to fund books through library consortia. Libraries will pay a 'title fee' that will go towards covering the cost of making the book

Open Access. Whilst this does mean that you can publish with a range of traditional publishers, you will still need to convince the publisher that your book is worth making Open Access and so it is worth outlining your intentions when you submit your manuscript

The Future

Open Access offers the perfect opportunity for scholars to reassess their publication practices and experiment with new forms of scholarship. As more journals become Open Access, and more content is made available for scholarly reuse via Creative Commons Licences, new avenues of research presentation can be explored. One model is where readers are able to make comments on the book and revisions are made to the work post-publication. For example, Kathleen Fitzpatrick's Planned Obsolescence was published and peer-reviewed online as a way of experimenting with open review (whereby the author knew the identities of the reviewers). Similarly, initiatives such as Scalar and Hybrid Publishing look to explore the full potential of scholarly publishing in the digital age, going beyond the printed word on the page and trying out collaborative, non-linear, and media-rich works of scholarship.

Open Access is the foundation of all these new and promising opportunities for humanities research. We can look forward to major advances in knowledge generation, innovation and creativity as our research base opens up.

Some examples of subject-based collections of Open Access research material

- **Art-Dok:** published papers in art history http://archiv.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/artdok/

- **Archaeology Data Service**: archaeology papers and datasets http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/

- **Cogprints**: papers in psychology, neuroscience, linguistics and related areas of computer science http://cogprints.org/

- **e-LiS**: papers in library and information science http://eprints.rclis.org/

- **History and Theory of Psychology Archive**: papers in the history of psychology http://htpprints.yorku.ca/

- **Philpapers**: bibliography and OA collection of papers in philosophy http://philpapers.org/

- **PhilSci-Archive**: a preprint collection covering the philosophy of science http://philsci-archive.pitt.edu/

Some further examples of Open Access book publishers

- **Punctum Books http://punctumbooks.com/**

- **Re:Press http://re-press.org/**

- **University presses:**

  - Athabasca Press (Athabasca University, Canada) **http://www.aupress.ca/**

  - Amherst Press (about to launch: Amherst University, USA) **https://www.amherst.edu/library/press**

  - ANU Press (Australian National University, Canberra, Australia) **http://epress.anu.edu.au/**

  - UCL Press (recently launched, University College London, UK) contact Managing Director, Paul Ayris, **p.ayris@ucl.ac.uk**

Some interesting new developments in Open Access for the humanities

- **Europeana:** Portal bringing together digital cultural collections from over 2000 institutions across Europe **http://www.europeana.eu/**

- **DPLA:** (Digital Public Library of America) Platform bringing together digital cultural collections from institutions across the USA **http://dp.la/**

- **History Working Papers**: interactive site for work-in-progress, encouraging debate and discussion on current research topics **http://www.historyworkingpapers.org/**

- **Press Forward**: an experiment in new methods for capturing and highlighting presently orphaned or underappreciated scholarship **http://pressforward.org/about/**

- **Open Humanities Press 'Liquid Books' series**: experimental digital book series encouraging collaborative, interactive creation and editing, with final versions 'frozen' and published **http://www.openhumanitiespress.org/liquid-books.html**

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