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# **A Study of Direct Author Subvention for Publishing Humanities Books at Two Universities**

**A Report to the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation  
by Indiana University and University of Michigan**

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## Executive Summary

This white paper presents recommendations about how a system of monographic publication fully funded by subventions from authors' parent institutions might function, based on research activities supported by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation at Indiana University and the University of Michigan. While the contributors present a strong argument for implementing such an "author subvention" system, they describe a number of challenges and potential unintended consequences. Particular issues discussed include how to determine which publishers would be eligible for support, how best to support untenured faculty, and how to avoid disenfranchising scholars at less well-funded institutions.

Two case studies, one at each university, form the core of the study. In each case, focus groups with faculty members and semi-structured interviews with senior administrators were used to elicit the reactions of key stakeholders to several proposed implementation models. The results of these were supplemented by analysis of university administrative records to discover how many books humanities faculty publish per year and which publishers they partner with. A financial study of monograph production costs at Indiana University Press and the University of Michigan Press established a reasonable per monograph cost (around \$27,000 per title). Multiplying the number of eligible books by the cost per book allows an estimate of what the potential annual expense of implementing an author subvention system might be at each university (between \$650,000 and \$1.35 million per year).

Not surprisingly, a number of findings by the UM and IU researchers are particular to the culture, political history, and organizational structure of their respective campuses. Nonetheless, sufficient common ground between the two institutions exists to set forth shared recommendations concerning faculty eligibility, program design, funding sources, publisher qualification, publication requirements, and the implementation and management of the monograph subvention program. These are shared with the proviso that each institution is unique, and what might work at Indiana and Michigan might not be appropriate in other institutional contexts and cultures.

# 1.0 Introduction: Why do we need to move to a “subvention” system for monographs?

This white paper presents the results of an investigation conducted at Indiana University and the University of Michigan during the first half of calendar year 2015.<sup>1</sup> Supported by funding from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the specific aim of the study was to explore how a potential subvention system of funding in which universities and colleges paid the costs of producing humanities monographs (rather than expecting publishers to recoup their costs from consumer payments) could work at two major research universities. The possibility of such a subvention system has been recently advocated for by the Association of American Universities and the Association of Research Libraries and is the subject of a collection of research projects funded by the Mellon Foundation.<sup>2</sup>

The two shared ambitions of the investigators are to ensure the survival of a viable, even robust, scholarly publication system in the humanities and humanistic social sciences in service to faculty, and to further the goal of open access publishing to make the work of academics broadly available to other academics, students, and people across the world. In other words, this project is directed toward financing longer-form publishing as it intersects with technological challenges of sharing the work of the humanities.

Before elaborating the stakes for various parties, we need to clarify both the nature of the scholarly object to be supported and the mode of distribution of that scholarly object.

The monograph has long been the preferred vehicle for both distributing scholarship and evaluating the performance of a scholar in the humanities and humanistic social sciences. Rather than relying on a narrow definition of what constitutes such a scholarly object, the mechanism we seek to describe allows for new kinds of vehicles. The scholarly objects we seek to support can include the traditional monograph, but are not limited to book-like forms. These scholarly objects can include new forms of digital publication with a variety of enhancements that are designed specifically for the digital environment, such as annotation, linking, non-linear reading, audio-visual components, or dynamic visualizations. Regardless of the form the containers take, the content therein seeks to make a contribution to knowledge and to further the relevant scholarly literatures, and thus retains the authority of “publication” as it is traditionally understood for the scholar and scholarship.

In the interest of a robust scholarly communication system and a sustainable model for university presses to support that system, a centerpiece of this initiative would be the production of an openly accessible version of

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<sup>1</sup> This report was produced as the main deliverable from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Grant 41400692, “A Study of Direct Author Subvention for Publishing Humanities Books at Two Universities.” The Indiana University team led by PI Carolyn Walters, consisted of Jason Baird Jackson, Scott Smart, Nick Fitzgerald, Gary Dunham and Shayna Pekala. The University of Michigan team led by PI James Hilton consisted of Paul Courant, Sidonie Smith, Meredith Kahn, Charles Watkinson, Jim Ottaviani, and Aaron McCollough. Lead authorship of the different sections in this report is indicated in the opening paragraphs.

<sup>2</sup> For the “AAU-ARL Prospectus for an Institutionally Funded First-Book Subvention,” see: <http://www.arl.org/publications-resources/3280-aau-arl-prospectus-for-an-institutionally-funded-first-book-subvention#.VZmLOUXmq0Q>, accessed July 5, 2015. For the Mellon proposal, see [presentations made by Mellon Program Officer Donald Waters](#) and his slides set titled “Scholarly Publishing” presented June 23, 2014 at a meeting of the Association of American University Presses. An account of both proposals is available in Jennifer Howard (2014) “Who Ought to Underwrite Publishing Scholars’ Books?” *Chronicle of Higher Education*, June 27, 2014. <http://chronicle.com/blogs/wiredcampus/who-ought-to-underwrite-publishing-scholars-books/53621>, accessed July 5, 2015.



the scholarly object. The scholarly work should be released under license terms that would permit typical scholarly and classroom uses—for instance, in teaching, criticism, and commentary—and that would also permit long-term preservation of the object. The publication agreement would allow the author to retain copyright, while granting the publisher only the rights necessary to distribute print and/or electronic versions of the work. The author would be free to negotiate other uses of the work with the publisher.

And now, to turn to the stakes of this initiative.

## 1.1 What is at stake for presses?

Academic presses are critical to the work of the humanities and humanistic social sciences. The project of evaluating faculty for purposes of tenure and promotion in the humanities and humanistic social sciences depends upon this publishing system. However, the world of university presses has become unstable, and its instability threatens to undermine the institutional commitment to the production and dissemination of knowledge and to the excellence of its faculty, as evaluated through the tenure and promotion system. And yet, a good many faculty possess only a vague awareness of the on-the-ground conditions of academic publishing.

The model that worked from the post-World War II era to the late 1990s has come undone due to a variety of pressures well-chronicled over the last decade, perhaps most systematically by John B. Thompson in his *Books in the Digital Age* (2005). At this time, university press publishing requires subsidy. The income generated from sales of academic books no longer covers the full costs of soliciting, contracting, editing, preparing, and publishing monographs of humanistic scholarship, except in unusual circumstances of academic best-sellers.

Some university presses generate sales from non-academic lists, some from continually updated professional products, and others from diversified portfolios including academic journals. But only two university presses, Oxford and Cambridge, operate at a scale and scope that allows them to be consistently profitable in their overall publishing operations. Most university presses do not have the historical serendipity of the continuous high selling publication; many have tried to diversify but have been unsuccessful. Those university presses that focus almost exclusively on humanities publications are struggling to remain viable.

Generally, small and medium-size university presses cannot survive on what they sell.

The apparent robustness of a small set of university presses easily masks the struggles of most university presses to maintain a presence, a high level of excellence, and a viable list. For the great majority of presses, the commitment of resources from university administrations is necessary to fiscal survival, but such resources cannot be assured going forward in this time of continuing budget constraints. Further, with the technological capability to make research findings and scholarship of all kinds openly accessible to readers, not only on campuses but across the globe, the economic model for university presses is even more strained. If you give humanistic scholarship away for free, the urgent query goes, how do you sustain the enterprises that solicit, nurture, edit, and publish that scholarship? The university subsidy for academic presses, certainly a prestige item on campuses, would need to be bolstered, not cut.

At stake here is the sustainability of a diversity of university presses across the academy. This project aims to build support for university presses by helping them adapt to the new ecology of scholarly practice and publication. In this way, the university press publishing system can extend the enduring achievements of

legacy-based print publishing through incorporation of the potential benefits of digitally-enviromed scholarly communication. Indeed, this project encourages university presses to anticipate and respond to modes and vehicles of scholarly communication that have already gained traction or are on the horizon.

At stake for non-profit presses is construction of a business model in which they can survive without relying exclusively on sales. The presumption of this project is that there will be enough resources to ensure the survival of university presses. And more. Reconfiguring the business model so that the subsidy of university presses is shared between the home institution and the institutions from which authors come also aligns the interests of university presses and university administrations, unlike the current system.

## **1.2 What is at stake for administrators?**

A business model for university presses organized around the kind of subvention models that Mellon, AAU, and ARL are exploring addresses several concerns of academic administrators.

First, it addresses the “free rider” problem, at least in part. More and more, regents, financial officers, and provosts are asking why the university budget subsidizes a press that publishes the work of scholars from other universities and colleges. With only a few exceptions, university presses can’t survive without subsidies. All university presses publish work by scholars from many institutions; indeed they seek out work by established and emerging scholars from across the nation and the globe. The status of the press depends on its not being positioned or perceived as a vanity house for home institution faculty and the quality of its roster of authors.

In a direct subvention system, university presses would support their publication program through the subventions brought to them by authors at their own and other institutions. In other words, universities and colleges would act as financial contributors to the publishing system by supporting the scholarly work of their own faculty. In a robust-enough system, the funds available for subventions would cover full first-copy costs.

Second, in addition to a concern about free riders, provosts, and certainly AAU provosts, express particular interest in what is commonly termed the “first book” problem. It is a shared belief that tenure-track faculty may have difficulty placing a first book because they do not yet have an established record necessary to attract a large enough readership to recoup the costs of publication. And yet, the entire tenuring system within the academy depends upon a press that seeks out, encourages, mentors, and edits the first books of tenure-track faculty. How legitimate this worry is remains debatable. Our project did not find this to be an issue for scholars in the humanities and humanistic social science units at Indiana and Michigan. Nonetheless, a subvention system will contribute to allaying this concern.

Third, a robust subvention system would introduce the idea of more transparency in the economic model of presses and make clear the real costs of publishing books and/or innovative hybrid projects of humanistic scholarship. Right now, there is little reliable information about the real cost per book of university publishing, neither the range of per-book costs nor the average per-book cost, although this is an issue that both this project and a related initiative led by Nancy Maron under the auspices of Ithaka S+R are exploring. If university presses were to become beneficiaries of funding from multiple institutions, those institutions, and the home institution, would want to have detailed data itemizing and explaining the costs of the openly accessible first-copy scholarly object.

And finally, provosts and deans are regularly charged with indifference to, or benign neglect of, the conditions of the academic humanities in today's university. A commitment to supporting the work of humanities faculty via subventions signals the recognition that their work is critical to advancing the goals of a liberal education and contributes to the scholarship, skills, and intellectual disposition that engagement with humanistic learning instills in undergraduates and graduate students.

### **1.3 What is at stake for faculty members?**

A subvention system is meant to support faculty as authors as well as non-profit presses as publishers. It models a program that supports humanities scholars as they advance through ever-changing careers.

At stake for emerging scholars, as noted above, is the ability to get first books published. Faculty, seasoned and emergent, also want their work to have more impact in the world. In this respect, what's at stake in open access publishing is the enhancement of scholarly visibility and impact in the field. For an increasing number of humanities scholars, a system supporting open access scholarly communication advances a vision for the social good of their work, and ensures that the work is made available to faculty and students at less well-resourced institutions and to readers beyond the walls of the academy. For this group of faculty, open access is integral to a scholarly ethos of educational justice, as it expands the set of scholars able to participate fully in the production of scholarly work.

Further, an increasing number of humanities scholars are experimenting with the opportunities made available through multimedia digital formats that rely on the ability to freely reuse other scholars' works. At stake here is creating support for faculty to conceptualize, compose, and communicate in these new modes of scholarship, thereby expanding the notion of long-form humanistic scholarship.

As is clear, faculty are not a homogenous group, and their needs and interests are similarly diverse. However, we believe the stakes we have described are not limited to discrete groups of faculty, and are relevant to the majority of our colleagues in the humanities and humanistic social sciences.

Boldly, what's at stake for the academic humanities is the facilitation of access to the world of humanistic work. This would be accomplished by sharing the results and benefits of such scholarship with the wider world, and demonstrating the importance of the humanities beyond the walls of the academy. At stake too, is innovation in the scholarly work of the humanities, expansion of the scholarly object, and the multiple modes of communicating scholarly work now available and potentially at hand to sustain excellence, diversity, and creativity in the academic humanities.

Having described the stakes of this initiative, we now turn to a discussion of how it might work in practice with a presentation of the results of two parallel investigations—the first at the University of Michigan and the second at Indiana University.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> A detailed description of how each case study was conducted can be found in Appendix A: Methodology.

## 2.0 University of Michigan Case Study

The investigation at the University of Michigan was led by Paul Courant and Sid Smith with assistance from Meredith Kahn, and they authored this section of the report. The narrative below is organized around a series of questions posed in the original proposal to the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation which concern the mechanics of how a publication subvention system might work within a research university such as Michigan.

### 2.1 Through what processes would each university solicit, evaluate, allocate, and award funding to sponsor publication at all levels of the professoriate?

The research team presented attendees of faculty salons with four possible scenarios to describe how funds could be distributed.<sup>4</sup> All four scenarios assumed that faculty would receive a voucher—basically a promise to fund—redeemable with an approved set of publishers. Questions regarding the magnitude of funding the voucher represents, which publishers would be eligible to receive funds, and what publishers would be required to do in exchange for the funds are addressed later in this report.

In brief, the scenarios described four possibilities, and the discussion was extended to variations and combinations of these:

- A. Entitlement to one subvention would be part of a startup package awarded at time of hire, and redeemable upon securing a publication agreement with an approved publisher.
- B. Vouchers would be awarded at time of hire and at time of promotion to higher ranks, and could be redeemed when a publication agreement is secured.
- C. Entitlement would be available to all faculty at all ranks, redeemable whenever a publication agreement is secured. [Attendees were also asked to consider a variant of this scenario in which redemption is limited to one in every 6-8 years.]
- D. Vouchers would be available at any time through a competitive system. A standing faculty committee would evaluate candidates and award vouchers annually.

Reactions to potential scenarios varied:

*“I would rank these options in their current order. A system that is competitive will create more uncompensated labor. Junior faculty should have preference, but everyone should have access.”*

*“I think C is the winner. We don’t want to discourage people who are very productive.”*

*“I don’t like D—another committee!”*

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<sup>4</sup> See Appendix B: Scenarios Presented to Faculty Participants.

*“The startup package is very attractive as a recruiting tool. I find the promise of a subsidy at time of hire more compelling than at time of promotion. But perhaps there should be an option for folks who have tenure. When you have tenure you can afford to try new things.”*

*“Everyone should at least get Book 1 and Book 2 funded. But it’s not sustainable to have everyone funded all the time. If there are additional funds, it could be competitive after that.”*

Faculty attendees expressed a strong preference for an entitlement available to all faculty, with some recognition of a likely need for limiting the number of works per faculty member that would be supported. Many attendees also found the logic of making the entitlement part of a startup package attractive. There was near unanimous dislike for the competitive scenario, variously citing, among other reasons: the already untenable workload of committee service; the potential for such a competition to become a form of “pre-tenure” review; and the opportunity for inequitable distribution of funds.

Administrators dismissed an unlimited entitlement as impractical from a financial standpoint, given that money to support such a system would not be unlimited. Comparing this potential system to Michigan’s existing subvention support (described at <http://research.umich.edu/publication-subvention> as available for costly monograph projects, with only a limited amount of funds awarded with some restrictions and requirements), they noted that a competitive system has precedent and has proven to be successful at Michigan. However, a competitive system for the fully-loaded costs of a monograph could be politically unpalatable in their view, for many of the same reasons faculty noted. Among administrators, assurance of subvention as part of a startup package held the most promise, as it represents a model already familiar due to widespread use in the sciences, and because such a model could be used as a recruiting tool and to build goodwill in the humanities.

Faculty participants, administrators, and the research team shared the view that implementation of a direct subvention system for humanities publications would likely require a hybrid solution, possibly incorporating aspects of a startup package for newly hired faculty, as well as a mechanism to make subventions available to at least some tenured and senior scholars to incentivize their participation. The research team believes the participation of both untenured and tenured faculty in such a system is critical to legitimize and normalize this new model for funding humanities publication. Without the participation of senior faculty, this system could fail to achieve widespread adoption, and would be seen as separate from (and possibly less than) acceptable, respected practice in the academy.

One mechanism that could allow participation of senior faculty without breaking the bank would be to implement a pilot phase that would include a fairly small subset of departments in which senior faculty would be eligible. Over the longer term, there are other possibilities, including limiting eligibility for senior faculty to projects that use digital enhancements in original ways, creating a committee to evaluate proposals that would be eligible for support, or allowing broad eligibility but limiting the number of scholarly objects supported over the career of senior faculty members, one version of which is discussed immediately below. The initial limit—especially in a pilot project—would probably be a single publication, with the hope that both faculty enthusiasm for this kind of publishing and the ability of the university to support it would grow over time.

In our conversation with Andrew Martin, dean of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, we developed and discussed a model in which newly-hired junior faculty would be assured direct subvention along the lines

discussed in this paper for up to three appropriate scholarly objects over the course of a successful academic career. This model is a variant of Scenario B described above, with subventions provided for publications associated with supporting the case for promotion to Associate Professor and to Professor, as well a subvention for one work produced after promotion to Professor. For new hires at the ranks of Associate Professor and Professor, respectively, there would be guarantees of direct subventions for two works and one work, respectively. Of the possibilities described above, the research team finds this plan to be the most compelling. As an entitlement it offers a solution with less administrative overhead than a competitive system, and its focus on faculty at distinct stages in their careers keeps the scale of the system manageable while allowing the maximum number of faculty to benefit. Of course, faculty may choose not to take advantage of direct author subventions for open access publishing, opting out of the program to publish their work with any entity they choose.

The Dean noted that one advantage of such a system is that it would complement other activities that the College and its departments might undertake to advance the careers of the faculty, such as workshops, writing groups, or mentoring for faculty nearing tenure review. We share this view, and also want to expand the model to incorporate an ensemble of activities rather than having it remain simply a subvention program. For the transition to be made to this new environment of scholarly publishing, we recommend a set of additional activities to familiarize faculty with new developments in publishing; to offer information and advice about new licensing opportunities, such as Creative Commons licenses; to explore with them the details of publishing open access; to enable faculty to imagine new kinds of containers, new hybrid forms their scholarship might take. When paired with direct author subventions, we believe these activities would ensure the continued survival of a robust scholarly communication system for the humanities and humanistic social sciences. Faculty in the salons, as well as administrators, were generally supportive of complementary programs along these lines.

## **2.2 Under what terms would funds be made available via authors to publishers?**

### **2.2.1 Terms and conditions of publication agreements**

A centerpiece of this initiative would be the production of an openly accessible version of the scholarly object, in addition to publisher versions available for sale. The openly accessible version of the scholarly work must be released under license terms that would permit typical scholarly and classroom uses—for instance, in teaching, criticism, and commentary—and that would also permit long-term preservation of the object. Beyond these requirements, authors and publishers would be free to enter into contracts regarding derivative works, rights sales, print-on-demand (POD) production, elegant print editions, and the like, just as they are now.<sup>5</sup> The starting place for contracts between Michigan faculty and eligible publishers would be that copyright for the work is held by the author, and that the openly accessible version must be released under a Creative Commons license (the choice of a particular license to be negotiated between the author and the publisher) with licensing for all other uses to be negotiated between the author and the publisher.

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<sup>5</sup> Many of the faculty in our salons expressed a desire to have expert advice in negotiating with publishers. Creation and development of such expertise could improve the humanities publishing landscape in both the current world and under the subvention models we are discussing.

## 2.2.2 Selection of eligible publishers and the question of commercial presses

The question of which publishers would be eligible to participate in such a system and how they would be selected has emerged as perhaps the most challenging aspect of this project. The research team discussed a number of methods for determining eligible publishers, many of which could be employed in combination:

- creating a predetermined whitelist of publishers
- creating a predetermined blacklist of publishers
- limiting the whitelist to member presses of the Association of American University Presses, which has a rigorous review process for membership acceptance
- starting with a list of presses with which faculty promoted to associate and full professor in the last five years have published (see Appendix C), and adding additional presses as appropriate
- limiting the whitelist to publishers with revenues of less than \$200 million/year, where that figure is chosen to rule out publishers that are commercial or essentially commercial in nature<sup>6</sup>
- tasking a faculty committee with assembling whitelists, blacklists, or other lists
- tasking the U-M Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, the Office of the Vice President for Research, the Provost, or another administrative body with assembling such lists

In selecting eligible publishers, are we seeking to support the work of particular kinds of publishers or all academic presses? As noted above, a small number of university presses (Oxford and Cambridge are the best examples) are financially stable (profitable, even), and do not require subsidy to survive. In addition, as the economics of academic journals demonstrate, publishers are more than capable of creating revenue-generating business models for open access academic publishing. As we design this system, we must ask ourselves if we are comfortable with it benefitting large non-profit but commercially-oriented entities that are thriving in the marketplace, as well as the great majority of university presses that are nonprofit in both name and business performance. Our faculty already publish with Oxford and Cambridge, and given the strong lists enjoyed by OUP and CUP in a number of areas, will continue to do so.<sup>7</sup> And given their financial stability, Oxford and Cambridge will likely continue to publish the work of our faculty even if a system of direct author subventions never materializes or they are deemed ineligible to participate. But precisely because Oxford and Cambridge are so prestigious, their participation in a direct subvention program will enhance the legitimacy of the enterprise. Academics who might have some trepidation about an open access program are likely to be reassured if OUP and CUP participate. And the substantial number of faculty who publish with Oxford and Cambridge will likely be more inclined to support the direct subvention program if the publishers of what are likely to be their best works are eligible to participate.

Then there are the explicitly commercial presses with which our faculty choose to publish. Wiley-Blackwell, Ashgate, Palgrave, and Routledge are all explicitly commercial entities and have published work by our humanities faculty. Many of their lists have strong reputations. Then there are smaller publishers, often based outside North America, that are extremely important to particular disciplines. Thus, notwithstanding our concerns about commercial publishers as participants in a direct subvention model, there may well be good

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<sup>6</sup> The figure of \$200 million/year in revenue was arrived at by examining the annual revenue of top commercial publishers and comparing it to that of AAUP member presses. Setting the revenue threshold at \$200 million/year would allow a publisher like the University of Chicago Press to be eligible, but would exclude Cambridge and Oxford university presses from eligibility.

<sup>7</sup> We examined dossiers in humanities and humanistic social science areas for faculty promoted to associate or full professor from 2010-2015, finding that roughly 18% of the works identified as “significant” in the promotion cases were published by Oxford University Press or Cambridge University Press.

arguments for including some commercial presses, and some faculty members will make such arguments. Adoption of a set of *a priori* principles that would determine eligibility will require engaged faculty input.

A reason for limiting participation to nonprofits is that there is a possibility that some for-profit entities could respond to a direct subvention system by choosing to publish books of low quality and low cost, much as a number of journal publishers have invented new, academically weak, “peer reviewed” journals that exploit the desirability of open access via inflated article processing charges. The mission-driven nature of university presses, coupled with their identity as academic institutions and their concern with reputation, would at least attenuate such incentives for university presses.

If we decide that commercial presses should not be eligible, how will we define what is not “commercial”? One could use membership in the Association of American University Presses as a proxy, as AAUP’s mission is to support the work of explicitly non-profit publishers.<sup>8</sup> This would not exclude Oxford and Cambridge since both are members of AAUP. A concern would be that while AAUP has a robust set of qualifications for accepting new members, the organization does not seem to have effective mechanisms for determining when publishers should be removed from membership because of misconduct or because they no longer fit with the mission of the organization. Without such a mechanism, there is the possibility that some AAUP members will exploit the direct subvention system.

Regardless of how eligibility is determined, the research team, faculty participants, and administrators agree that having a system to handle exceptions and appeals will be essential to successful implementation, as it is likely that no list of publishers determined *a priori* will be sufficient for all humanistic disciplines. In addition, the system would require continuing faculty oversight.

*“This is a decision the faculty has to own. We can’t make it for them... But if the humanists don’t want this, and it backfires, it won’t succeed. It has to come up from below.”*  
— Provost Martha Pollack

To implement a pilot system for direct subventions, the research team tentatively recommends placing responsibility for the initial selection of publishers and the handling of exceptions and appeals with the committee of faculty already charged with operating our existing subvention program. To take on this additional workload and to provide the necessary expertise, the committee must be augmented with additional members, and must represent the diversity of the humanities and humanistic social science disciplines. It is also possible that creation of a new committee would be preferable. Either way, we anticipate that this will be an interesting and arduous committee assignment.

### **2.2.3 Obligations of eligible publishers**

To be eligible to receive subvention support, the publisher must ensure the highest standards of peer review in selecting and evaluating scholarly objects. As faculty raised a number of concerns (see below) related to peer review, the possibility of vanity publishing, and quality of resulting published works, the necessity of publishers to continue to fulfill the role of certifying academic quality through specialist review, the judgment of acquisitions editors, and developmental editing are vital. Both publishers’ reputations and the success of this

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<sup>8</sup> Association of American University Presses, “About AAUP,” <http://www.aaupnet.org/about-aaup>.



model rely on commitment to the highest standards of academic publishing. In fulfilling this role, publishers (particularly university presses) should see themselves as mission-driven academic units, rather than commercial entities focused on sales. This would require that presses and their home institutions build stronger relationships, and could necessitate adjustments in the budgetary status of presses.<sup>9</sup>

In addition to ensuring editorial excellence, publishers must be able to provide a detailed accounting of the costs required to produce and distribute the required openly accessible version of the scholarly object. This is already required of publishers who receive funds under our existing subvention program, although the requirements that would be part of our preferred subvention program would be more extensive.<sup>10</sup> Such transparency would aid both institutions like ours that seek to understand the costs of publishing to support the work of their faculty, and university presses that seek to understand the fully-loaded costs of publishing to reach financial stability.

## **2.3 What perceived and real concerns and opportunities might the implementation of the model present in different faculty communities within the university?**

In our six faculty salons, the research team found a range of responses to the current state of university press publishing. On the one hand, we heard from faculty that they and their Michigan colleagues did not have difficulty publishing their work. As one attendee expressed it: “The urgency isn’t there.” We also heard from some faculty that they have had little discussion with their editors at scholarly presses about the conditions of academic publishing. Others expressed concern that the relationship with editors for those new to publishing means that they have a disincentive to negotiate complicated contracts that involve digital and print versions of books. On the other extreme, we talked with faculty concerned about the fetishization of the long-form monograph and the lack of heterogeneity in the modes of scholarly communication supported by presses.

### **2.3.1 Concerns**

#### **Recognition of the magnitude of the problem**

A number of salon participants noted they were generally aware that faculty at other institutions might have trouble getting their work published, and that their graduate students may well face this difficulty. They did not see this as a problem for Michigan faculty. In addition, a vocal minority of attendees expressed skepticism that academic publishers (and university presses in particular) are in precarious economic times and that university presses are at risk for survival in the fairly near future.

*“I’m trying to figure out where the push is coming from that assumes university presses are potentially expendable like parking garages.”*

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<sup>9</sup> University of Michigan Press recently transitioned from “auxiliary” status judged mainly on its ability to produce revenue to “designated” status where business success is secondary to achievement of mission. Today, the University of Michigan Press has a budgetary status as unit within the library, and while some revenue is still expected and encouraged, the Press’s mission is explicitly aligned with its home unit and with the larger academic mission of the university as a whole.

<sup>10</sup> University of Michigan Office of Research, “Publication Subvention,” <http://research.umich.edu/publication-subvention>. Note that the application packet requires both a budget and budget justification.

*“My publisher is Cambridge University Press. They are completely independent, and they have no financial issues. How are they able to do this?”*

*“These problems are not significant to many of our faculty. Our faculty don’t have a problem getting published.”*

In recognition of the widespread view at Michigan that there is no publication crisis in the humanities, support among many faculty for a direct subvention plan will require that participants be persuaded of the value of open access publishing to humanities scholarship; of the importance of digital enhancements to their own work and that of their (mostly junior) colleagues that require an open publishing environment; and of the long-term benefits that would derive from a system of scholarly communication that aligns institutional interests with the interests of university presses. All of these arguments can be successfully made; and, indeed, a substantial majority of the participants in our salons is persuaded of one or more of them.

### **Loss of the book as we’ve known it**

A number of faculty participants in the salons expressed suspicion of the rush to open access and digital books (two concepts frequently conflated, although of course digital books do not need to be open access). As one attendee insisted:

*“We need to hold on to physical formats. I’m committed to writing for a broader audience, and you could say that’s an OA value. But people who buy my books aren’t necessarily ‘into computers.’ The book remains an object of value. I don’t think the only goal should be open access. The complementary goal should be recognizing the value of print books. What if publishers stop making print books?”*

Faculty who expressed concern about the shift from print to digital bookishness focused on the sense of permanency attached to the printed book form versus the ephemerality of digital platforms and the problems of preservation. They also noted the low quality of digital books in common formats. One faculty member said he didn’t want the passages in languages other than English to “look like crap.” There was also concern expressed that students prefer to read print books rather than digital books.

There are two critical issues to address with regard to this concern: presses would need to develop high-quality digital versions of books that are far more user-friendly to read; and preservation matters pertaining to digital forms of bookishness have to be resolved. With regard to reading practices, it is at least as likely that students, now increasingly reading across print and digital platforms, would enjoy open access availability of humanities books instead of having to pay significant monies for printed books. Finally, humanities scholars would be free to negotiate printed versions with publishers along with OA versions of the book, and there is a strong presumption that these versions of open access monographs would be more affordable for students than current print books because fixed costs would already have been covered through the subvention.

And as an aside: Most academic publications will have a digital form, with or without this subvention plan. But the digital format won’t be the only form. In areas in which book publishing is especially expensive, other solutions are needed. There will never be a one-size-fits-all solution. Widespread is not the same as universal.

### **Vanity publishing and the dangers of contaminating the current publishing system and its prestige in the academy**

A number of faculty participants brought up the concept of “vanity publishing,” and the possibility that works receiving a subvention could be perceived as somehow less legitimate or rigorous. However, faculty already take advantage of existing subvention programs at our own institution, and are familiar with similar forms of support available from other sources, including professional societies. An attendee who serves as series editor in area studies at a small university press noted that roughly half the books in the series receive some form of financial support, including subventions. Faculty were quick to dismiss the fact that subventions alone would make a work qualify as “vanity publishing,” but the frequency with which this concern was raised indicates the need for proactive communication and the necessity of senior faculty participation.

### **Suspicion of open access publishing**

Faculty expressed varying degrees of understanding of open access during the salons, including some misperceptions that required an immediate response from the research team. For instance, one faculty member asserted that open access is a “library ideal” not held by publishers. Certainly it is the case that libraries give things away and until recently presses sold things. But that schematic binary fails to recognize a transformation happening among publishers and faculty authors regarding open access.

Another attendee asserted there would be no sales if a book was openly accessible. But it’s not clear that having an open version of a book eliminates sales, or even reduces sales. There is emerging evidence that open editions can enhance sales by getting information about books out faster and sooner, building a wider audience for a given book. At Michigan, the UM Press publishes an entire series (Digital Culture Books) in both open and for sale editions, and the books sell quite well despite being freely available online. Other presses are embracing this model, including University of California Press, which still expects to sell books in its new open access initiative, Luminos.<sup>11</sup>

Faculty also raised the possibility that libraries would not purchase books that have open access versions. Surely some libraries will make that choice, but as long as the direct subvention program covers the costs necessary for the press to publish the object, this is not a threat to the viability of such a program or to the system of scholarly publishing generally.

### **Peer review**

Related to the issue of vanity publishing, a number of faculty attendees asked questions about how quality and rigor of funded work would be guaranteed. In a number of salons, this question was linked to the blanket assumption that open access scholarship is not peer reviewed. In the current system of scholarly communication, a system in which modest subventions are already in play, presses build their reputations on the quality of the work they publish. For this new subvention system to succeed, publishers will need to continue to serve as the locus for quality assurance by means of robust methods of peer review and editorial selection and enrichment. In the course of the salon discussions, faculty concerns about quality were generally allayed when the team explained that presses would be expected to maintain current mechanisms of review and selection. Concern about quality control through peer review further demonstrates the importance (and complexity) of determining which publishers would be eligible to receive funds, and of ensuring direct faculty involvement in the creation and maintenance of policies in support of this new system for funding humanities publications. Visible leadership from respected faculty will go a long way toward legitimizing the system. This should not be difficult to obtain, but it won’t happen by itself.

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<sup>11</sup> For more information, see <http://www.digitalculture.org/> and <http://www.luminosoa.org/>.

## Recouping of sales revenues

There was an intriguing discussion of what would happen if a book generated robust sales revenue, exceeding the cost of the subvention. Would the university providing the subvention have any access to the profits from the book? Would the author have to reimburse the university for the cost of the subvention? In the end, there was consensus that the author should not have to reimburse the university for the subvention monies.

However, revenues received by presses are an important consideration in determining how to fund a direct subvention publishing model. We discuss this issue at some length later in this paper.

## The unintended consequence of increasing inequality

One of the significant benefits from implementing a subvention program of the kind we are discussing is that the open access requirement will make humanities scholarship much more broadly available—to members of the academy and to the public—than is currently the case. While it is true to say that making technical literature accessible to the general public requires more than just a changed business model, readership will likely be expanded, and institutions that are able to purchase most scholarly monographs in the humanities will be able to provide access to their faculties and students at much lower cost than they can currently. But this democratization on the user side has the potential to exacerbate institutionally-based inequalities amongst authors.

Currently, authors from institutions with limited resources have access to the system of scholarly publishing via the standard mechanism of submitting proposals or manuscripts to acquiring editors. Such faculty from less well-funded universities and colleges, as well as unaffiliated scholars, publish with university presses. Under the open access subvention model, these scholars would likely not have access to the support required to participate in the system. This raises the question of whether we can democratize readership while avoiding exacerbating inequalities in publishing. Note that this is the flip side of the “free rider” problem, in which faculty from institutions that do not have presses benefit from the subsidies that are provided to presses by institutions that do have presses. By aligning institutional support for publication with faculty production of published work, we reduce support for production at institutions that are not equipped to provide such support.

*“But this is the paradox. Open access is dear to our hearts, but it can’t lead to inequality among scholars.”*

*“We can’t solve the problems of developing countries...”*

*“But we shouldn’t make the problems of community colleges worse.”*

— Two faculty members in conversation

*“There are very complicated questions about money and labor that are bigger than this project.”*

*“You can’t get rid of ‘filthy lucre.’”*

The desire to make positive change in the system while avoiding unintended consequences for the “have nots” was a central concern of the research team, a common refrain in every faculty salon, and a point of serious concern for many of our participants. A number of our colleagues proposed that the subvention amounts should be set to produce a small surplus that could be used to provide “scholarships” to authors who were not

affiliated with participating institutions, although it's not clear how and by whom such a system would be administered.<sup>12</sup>

It is arguable that “have not” institutions would see benefits from open access to scholarly production in the humanities, and could, in principle, devote these savings to providing direct subventions on behalf of members of their faculties. But who are the “have nots” and where do they publish? Lacking information on the affiliations of authors who publish at the relevant set of presses (a related study by Joe Esposito and Karen Barch will not have this information, according to the principal investigators) we can't estimate the net fiscal effect on different kinds of institutions. However, we did conduct a cursory examination of authors at our own university press, and the results indicate that the amount of publishing by “have-nots” may be significant, implying a need for further study. Looking at books published by the University of Michigan Press in the last three years, we found that a little less than half of authors were affiliated with institutions at which an AAUP-member press was located. Approximately 57% were affiliated with institutions at the doctoral-granting level and above according to Carnegie Classification data.<sup>13</sup> No doubt some of the remaining 43% percent are from foreign countries, and some are from relatively well-off liberal arts colleges or from other institutions that could afford and would be willing to provide direct subvention. And of course UM Press may not be typical, but our cursory study suggests that it's plausible that a non-trivial fraction of its authors are from institutions we might consider “have nots.” This system-wide issue, and the complementary question of how much the “have nots” would save in acquisitions, are important elements in evaluating the viability and desirability of a widespread direct subvention model.

### **The status of non-tenure-track faculty**

The tenured faculty members in attendance expressed concern that faculty in our lecturer ranks and faculty in the library be eligible for subvention funds. To include all faculty in the plan is to issue a statement of support for all faculty across tenure-track and non-tenure-track ranks. It is to recognize that many non-tenure-track faculty do scholarly and creative work, that they publish, and that the creative writers among them may well publish regularly. It is to project a vision of one faculty. To exclude them from participation is to reinforce the two-tier concept of faculty, and to exacerbate the financial and status gap between the two faculties.

### **Support for faculty publishing in short-form modes**

There are article fields and disciplines within the humanities and humanistic social sciences. Among them are some branches of philosophy, linguistics, sociology, and political science. Moreover, increasingly, tenure profiles are becoming less unified around the gold standard of the scholarly monograph. A system that directs significant subvention monies to some faculty and not to others publishing in short-form venues will raise

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<sup>12</sup> The basic idea is akin to the widespread practice of setting tuition sufficiently high to produce revenue sufficient to support need-based financial aid. Subvention amounts could be set high enough to create a pool to cover costs of authors whose institutions cannot pay or who are not affiliated with institutions. We note that the current system “taxes” some institutions (the ones with presses) to benefit other institutions and independent scholars, so what we are talking about here is a change in the configuration of entities that pay for the system of humanities publication. In and of itself, that is not infeasible. However, design and administration of the redistribution to support those without sources of subventions would not be trivial. We do not know of any entities that are currently organized to perform these functions. Our colleagues at Indiana have suggested that perhaps subventions to presses could include additional funding allowing them to build “waiver” funds, but we are not sure if presses themselves are well set up to handle such a system. Perhaps the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation would be interested in exploring the problem.

<sup>13</sup> Our analysis of UM Press authors was limited by our reliance on Carnegie Classification data, which does not allow us to accurately describe the prestige and attendant resources of liberal arts colleges and international institutions. For more information on our study of UM Press Authors, see Appendix D.

concerns about the relative values administrators and faculty colleagues place on long-form versus short-form inquiry and analysis.

Several current Mellon grants are examining different aspects of journal publishing, open access, and the economic models needed to support journal publishing in the humanities and humanistic social sciences. In a comprehensive plan for financial support for academic publishing in its various modes, there is a need to join a vision of support for short-form scholarly communication to the direct subvention model for long-form scholarly communication that we have been discussing.<sup>14</sup>

### **2.3.2 Opportunities**

We come out of the series of faculty salons and conversations with administrators with a sense that there is much to be gained under a system of direct subvention that would support open access publishing in the humanities and humanistic social sciences. But, as we have discussed above, one of the most serious challenges of implementing such a plan at Michigan is that most of our faculty are doing just fine under the current system. Finding traction with this constituency will depend on finding functionality or opportunities that add to our capacities and that don't degrade what we already do. Here are some of the positive aspects that could appeal to various constituencies.

#### **Administrative recognition of the press as an institutional good**

If the problem of the "free rider" is addressed—at least in part—by a subvention system, university administrators and boards would need to reorient their vision of the university press as a public good, a prestige activity, and a means of enhancing the impact and visibility of the university and its humanities faculty.

#### **Addressing professorial rank problems**

This subvention model provides opportunities to support faculty throughout the career life cycle. We have noted above the first-book issue of relevance to tenure-track faculty seeking contracts for their first long-form publication. We should also note the problem of the associate professor rank, which is of concern to faculty, chairs, and deans across the country. In the humanities in particular, the concern is with the extended time to promotion to full professor. Faculty in the humanities often advance slowly, and with years in rank at the associate professor level they see weak merit raises and are often called upon to undertake significant administrative roles that slow down progress toward advancement to full professor. The College of Literature, Sciences, and the Arts at Michigan has been developing a number of interventions designed to move faculty from associate to full professor. A subvention model that assures faculty a robust pot of money to support an open access version of their next long-form publication would signal confidence in their continued scholarly activity and excitement about the broader accessibility of their work, and it would dovetail nicely with these other programs.

#### **Effects of greater accessibility**

There are many opportunities provided by a publishing system that enables greater accessibility to humanities scholarship. The fundamental academic argument for open access is that it enables scholars to get access to scholarly work even if they aren't at major universities. When our graduate students leave Michigan and enter a world without the support of a robust university library, they discover the experience of teaching and

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<sup>14</sup> See especially the "Pay It Forward" project at the University of California, [http://icis.ucdavis.edu/?page\\_id=286](http://icis.ucdavis.edu/?page_id=286).

conducting research on the wrong side of the “paywall.” Under the subvention model we discuss, even if they are teaching at less resource-rich institutions they will have access to the latest scholarship for their own research and for classroom use. Additionally, as one participant observed:

*“Our students assume that if it isn’t digital it doesn’t exist. To think of the monograph as the gold standard is out of step with current reality. Students assume that things should be open and digital. They don’t default to going to the library to look for a book or a recording.”*

Faculty will benefit as they assemble reading lists for their courses. They will be able to assign books and other long-form works that they otherwise might not include as required reading because students can’t afford them. Under the direct subvention program, there would be a digital version available for free. Moreover, over time the number of works that are easily available will grow.

There is the opportunity to make unusual niche projects available through this kind of system. The internet makes possible new kinds of scholarly projects, such as the one a member of the music faculty discussed with us. That project developed a history of bibliographic references to a particular instrument and its music, and the work is now being extended to include audio renditions that are linked to the bibliographic references. This kind of work is very difficult to publish under the current business model for university presses, as there is really no market for it. But the direct subvention program could support such publication and an associated set of scholarly and artistic interests. As this participant observed: “Making this [project] widely available can help us change the global understanding of our instrument.”

Finally, there are opportunities to reach readers outside the academy and also outside North America. The National Endowment for the Humanities has recently explored the idea of the Humanities in the Public Square as part of their Common Good initiative (<http://www.neh.gov/commongood>), notably for publishers in their partnership with the Mellon Foundation to fund the Humanities Open Book Program. Open access allows humanities scholars to reach public policy makers, scholars in the developing world, amateur enthusiasts, high school teachers, and a range of other, sometimes unexpected, audiences.

### **Incentivizing Risk**

With the infusion of subvention funds into the system of scholarly publishing, there are opportunities for publishers to take on projects that might be financially risky in the current system. For instance, they might open up lists focused on areas outside the U.S. that aren’t economically viable, such as some fields of area studies.

*“Series editors have to confront the fact that certain international topics don’t have a market. If we don’t have to worry about sales for these titles, we could get them published.”*

Additionally, ideas independent of corporate and government control are central to the robustness of the democratic polity. To the degree that this program works to secure the sustainability of academic presses, it supports the vision of a system of heterogeneous presses out there looking for new and provocative ideas.

*“If the work is out there and easy to get to, it is hard to suppress.”*

Faculty and librarians in the salons recognized this greater flexibility and opportunity for risk as an upside of a subvention system.

*“We won’t have to turn away good books that won’t sell.”*

*“This seems like it might change how the market works. University presses are going to take on different projects, and maybe commercial presses won’t be such big players in the academic market.”*

*“We are dealing with the map as it is now, but this will change the map.”*

### **Innovation and Experimentation in Scholarly Objects**

Providing subvention support in the system may spur more institutional support for experimental innovation. The team was mindful throughout this process of the unintended consequence of continuing to fetishize the long-form book (or book-like forms) as the gold standard of scholarly work in the humanities and humanistic social sciences. Indeed the challenge of having these conversations was to try to keep the heterogeneity of the “object” to be communicated in play. The fall-back position was to use the term “book.” Some participants noted the definitional problem of the project. One of them observed: “The notion of the scholarly object you’ve given us is fixed rather than dynamic.” The challenge of developing a model that would encompass dynamic projects involves establishing a funding model that accounts for the significant costs of emergent modes of scholarly communication, among them hosting and preservation, collaborative ideation, and tool-building. Emergent scholarly objects and environments also pose challenges in terms of the potential openness of the end product, and multiple versioning, as well as challenges with multimedia elements.

As this discussion emerged it became clear that there are objects (a static version of record) and there are projects (dynamic collections of material without a single manifestation). From one point of view there is a distinction between the two. From another there is only an artificial boundary between them. This grant is talking about objects, to be sure, but with an emphasis on using digital enhancements, so there has to be room for dynamic projects. The problem is that we may not know how to cost these out in advance, how to support them, or how to set limits.

The provision of indefinite continued accessibility of published work—which is necessary to scholarly activity—is something that only libraries are equipped to undertake. Just as now, it is libraries that “publish”—make public—out of print works. The logic extends to digital projects. With this system we have the opportunity to push the system toward new forms of work:

*“It’s clear that we are suppressing creative imagination by not embracing or legitimizing new forms of scholarship. That seems like the most compelling part of this. Scholarship is changing. Our rituals of appraisal and assessment don’t accommodate these new forms.”*

*“The tyranny of the monograph is astounding.”*

This opportunity takes us, in an important way, beyond the project itself. We know the long-form book isn’t the only possible expression of scholarly excellence. If the funding plan for subventions was sufficient to



support publications associated with promotion and tenure, the publications could take many different forms. The critical phrase here is “sufficient to support” since many of the costs of these new-form projects are as yet unknown.

## **2.4 Which disciplinary groups and levels of the professoriate (tenure line, non-tenure research or teaching, contingent, emeritus, etc.) would or would not be eligible to participate and what costs and benefits will be attended to in determining inclusion?**

Regarding levels of the professoriate, we see the subvention model principally serving the tenured and tenure-track faculty. Faculty at all three ranks of the tenured and tenure-track would be eligible to participate. Emeritus faculty, if included, would have low priority (even though we recognize that many emeriti continue their scholarly activities). Subvention support might be a component of an agreement for faculty anticipating retirement.

The subvention system could be expanded to a number of constituencies. There are faculty in other parts of the university (librarians, archivists, etc.) who could benefit from this system, and we recommend that faculty in those units have access to funds to support this activity. (For librarians, such a plan would likely involve support for one book per year for the whole unit.) How a subvention system might work would be up to faculty and administrators in those units to decide. There are also a considerable number of non-tenure track faculty in the humanities and humanistic social sciences, and there was almost unanimous support among faculty salon participants for expanding the eligibility criteria to include non-tenure track faculty. We recommend there be a program of subvention support for non-tenure-track faculty on a competitive model. Exactly how such a competitive system might be structured will be complex, due in part to the constraints of union contracts currently in effect at the University of Michigan. The cost of expanding the eligible faculty is principally monetary, dependent on the level of support. The benefit of expansion is the inclusion of groups that are often excluded, and a recognition of the value and importance of non-tenure-track faculty.

Finally, in some of our discussions there was interest in extending eligibility to first books (or projects) by our recent PhDs. This possibility came up in the context of the discussion of the unintended consequences of exacerbating the gap between resource-rich and resource-constrained institutions. One model for support for our graduates would be to establish an annual subvention prize for a first book by humanities graduates from our programs.

## **2.5 In general, among which groups and sub-groups might the greatest opportunities for implementation lie?**

Interest in, even excitement about, this subvention model is not evenly distributed across humanities units and subgroups within the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts (where the majority of potential recipients are appointed) and across the professional schools.

On the one hand, there are units where skepticism on the part of senior faculty may take time to allay, if that is possible. Additionally, this model may be less compelling for faculty in areas where books have marketability

and promise of sales (certain areas of history, classics, American studies, communication, etc.). The key here will be a plan that enables choice: eligible faculty can decide whether to publish under the terms of the plan or to publish in other ways, including the traditional sales model. They would only receive the direct publication subvention if they agreed to its terms, including open access. However, some subvention funds, specifically those that are used to support extraordinary costs, should remain available to those who choose not to participate in the new model of distribution.

On the other hand, some faculty are drawn to the potential of this subvention program because they are seeking to conceptualize and experiment with new digital enhancements, hybrid platforms, and new modes of long-form scholarly communication. It is important to note that given that the subvention model translates most easily into a model for supporting publication of the traditional long-form book, there may be a mismatch between the economic modeling of per-book cost and the faculty move into more expensive and complicated objects that are either born-digital or located in different forms of materiality.

Further, this subvention model for support of long-form scholarship has more potential purchase for faculty in certain emergent areas where the readership is not yet predictable or in established areas where readership is relatively small.

Finally, those who expressed enthusiasm for this subvention model don't all come from units typically understood as humanities departments. Participants in the salons included faculty from the schools of Music, Art and Design, and Information.

The team believes there is enough interest in this subvention plan to design a pilot initiative at substantial scale. In the pilot phase of a subvention plan, the key to success will be to gain support from senior faculty in large and small departments. Here at Michigan we see potential for senior faculty participation in English, American Studies, Afroamerican and African Studies, German Studies, Art and Design, the School of Information, and the School of Music.

## **2.6 What is the anticipated cost of implementing a system to support humanities publishing?**

### **2.6.1 Estimated number of eligible books**

To determine the cost of a system to support humanities publishing, we need to estimate the number of works that would be eligible and the average subvention amount per work necessary to cover publication costs incurred by the publisher.

Our best estimate of the number of works that would be eligible relies on data from a group of librarians who examine faculty publications annually. They find that approximately fifty scholarly monographs in the humanities and humanistic social sciences were published by UM faculty in 2014.<sup>15</sup> These books represent the kinds of scholarship our system seeks to support, namely high-quality works published by reputable presses,

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<sup>15</sup> While this list of published books is the best estimate we could find, we are aware that it is not comprehensive or complete, as there are likely some books that are missing. For further discussion, see Appendix A.

which are not textbooks, non-scholarly trade items, new editions of previously published works, or edited volumes.

Our estimate from the librarians is roughly consistent with the size of the faculty. There are 461 people (436 FTE) with appointments in disciplines that are likely to be eligible. If eligible faculty publish an average of one book every nine years (many publish more, but some publish less) the number of books that could be part of a system of direct author subvention would be roughly fifty per year. Taking fifty books a year as a rough estimate of the number of potentially eligible works, the number of works receiving subventions under a direct subvention system would surely be less. Some authors will choose to opt out and some works will be by authors who have exhausted their eligibility. On the other side, our estimate of fifty books probably misses some books (but not very many) that were published by our faculty and could be eligible for funding. Pulling all of this together, we think that a plausible upper bound for the number of funded works per year is fifty, with the expectation that the actual number will be less, possibly quite a bit less. We would expect that if the program works well for those who use it, there will be a demonstration effect and the actual number will grow, but for the foreseeable future, there will always be some faculty who publish in more traditional ways, so there will always be some eligible works that will not receive direct author subventions.

## 2.6.2 Magnitude of the voucher

Estimating the range and average amounts of the vouchers is not straightforward. We know that the voucher should make the publishing press whole for the costs incurred in publishing a monograph or other long-form work. But the relevant concept of costs incurred can range from fully-loaded cost—basically average cost incorporating all press activities—to the cost of producing a book at the margin. The right level will depend in part on other sources of revenue (including revenue from sales) available to the press, and on other claims on the press’s revenue (including resources for experiment and innovation).

In connection with the work we are reporting on here, Scott Smart and Nick Fitzgerald at Indiana University undertook an investigation of monograph costs and press economics. That study estimated the average “cost” of monographs published by the University of Michigan Press and Indiana University Press, where “cost” includes direct costs tied to producing monographs as well as overhead for the press at large. This figure excludes printing costs and the costs of paying royalties. We excluded printing costs because we wanted our cost estimates to reflect the cost of the “zeroth copy” of a monograph, and because we anticipate that more works will be published on an open access basis in the future. Similarly, we excluded royalties because payments to authors whose work is funded by subventions and is published on an open access basis may not receive royalties in the future. Of course, presses will continue to incur royalty expenses for monographs published under the current funding system. The estimates include all other costs related to scholarly monographs, including estimates of the costs of physical space that the presses occupy. In addition, it’s important to recognize that since these figures are averages, they do not account for the differing costs of highly complex vs. “typical,” more straightforward works.

University of Michigan Press = \$27,576/book

Indiana University Press = \$26,714/book

Appendix E provides a detailed description of the method used to estimate monograph costs at Michigan and Indiana, and it provides additional context by comparing our estimates to others in the existing literature. Though Ithaka S+R has not yet finished compiling its cost data for university press monographs, in a

conversation with Nancy Maron the research team learned that these figures are in line with what Ithaca S+R is expecting to learn from its own investigation. We are hopeful that the numbers from Ithaca S+R will provide additional information about the spread between “complex” and “typical” books, as well as an idea of how costs vary across presses of different sizes and in different geographical locations.

If we assume the magnitude of the voucher provided to UM faculty is roughly consistent with the figures derived in Appendix E, and that the number of books supported annually is consistent with our estimate of up to fifty books per year, the total annual cost of the program at UM could be as much as \$1.35 million ( $\$27,000$  per book x 50 books = total cost). However, given that we assume not all faculty will participate, and that not all books will require a subvention in that amount, it is very likely the actual cost of the program will be substantially lower.

Additionally, there will be at least some sources of partially offsetting revenue to recipient presses, and this could also reduce the net cost for a book to the paying institutions.

## **2.7 Are there sources of institutional funds that could be allocated to this model? And what is their magnitude?**

There are several existing sources of humanistic support that could be allocated to this model in theory. These are surveyed below. In each case, however, there are reasons why addition of new monies is needed (at least during the transition phase) rather than subtraction from existing funds. The extent and trajectory of available Library budgets and Press revenues in particular are difficult to forecast, and while the system we propose has been met with enthusiasm by campus administrators, we do not know how long it might take to become established here at Michigan and at other institutions.

- There are existing subvention programs administered and funded by schools and colleges, notably LS&A, and also by the U-M Office of Research. Based on data from the Dean’s Office, faculty in the College of LS&A have received a total of approximately \$80,000 to \$90,000 per year in subventions for the last few years. This figure takes into account funding from the UM Office of Research, the College of LS&A, its departments, external sponsors, and non-LS&A campus units. This funding supported from 16 to 22 projects per year, with a median award of \$5,000. Not all of these funds would be allocated to this model, because there will still be traditional forms of publishing, especially in image-rich fields, that would continue to require additional financial support beyond what the system we propose might support.
- There are also a number of publishing operations in departments, centers, and museums that plausibly could be run more efficiently. However, the activities they support do not always correspond exactly to the kind of publishing our system is designed to support, making reallocation of funds politically impractical. We do not include these in our estimates of resources that could be redeployed, because we do not advocate any reductions in the level or type of publishing activity. Also we were unable to determine the precise amount of funding deployed in supporting them because the University’s accounting systems do not have any consistent code for tracking publishing support.
- A portion of the University of Michigan Press’s subsidy (currently \$600,000 per year) could be used to support direct subventions for our own faculty. Changing the model of much monographic publishing, and making the behavior of publishers more transparent, surely will involve reallocation of resources

devoted to publishing. However, we do not expect the basic economics of academic publishing to change quickly, so we do not anticipate that the current Press subsidy will become an appreciable source of funds in the near future.

- Revenue generated by the University of Michigan Press could be a source of support. This revenue could be earned in connection with publishing under this model and from print-on-demand sales, other print sales (including the backlist), other products associated with higher-end sales, and licensing. However, this surplus could and should also be used for other purposes, including providing support for innovative publishing projects in support of sustaining digital scholarship.
- The Library materials budget could also be considered as a source of potential funding. In 2014, campus libraries at the University of Michigan expended over \$25 million on materials of which approximately \$7 million was spent on books.<sup>16</sup> Given the many demands on its materials budget, it is difficult to estimate how much of the Library acquisitions budget could be repurposed. The challenge of increasing prices both for subscription resources and monographs currently requires annual top-ups from the Provost's office. And while there would be no purchase cost in acquiring open access monographs, the Library would still incur processing costs in cataloging and preserving the files. In addition, it is likely that repurposing a portion of the Library acquisitions budget would disproportionately impact the very humanists we are seeking to support, given the differing practices and pricing of scholarly literature in the humanities versus the sciences.

Given the challenges of tapping into such existing sources, where would new funds come from? The two Deans with whom we spoke (LS&A and Art & Design) are enthusiastic about the possibilities of a direct subvention program and would be willing to commit expanded resources to such a program, because, in the words of the LS&A Dean, "it's the right thing to do." We expect that other deans would be willing to provide direct subventions for their faculties to engage in open access publishing in the humanities, arts, and humanistic social sciences, although the numbers would be small, except in LS&A. The Provost indicated that she would be interested in contributing to a pilot of such a program, and to evaluating permanent commitments subsequent to a pilot.

We did not get precise commitments from the deans and the provost, but neither the Dean of LS&A nor the Provost ruled out the possibility of providing support of several hundred thousand dollars a year, and both found it quite appealing to provide a noticeable amount of subsidy for publications in the humanities, which these amounts surely would be. The model of guaranteed subvention for new hires at all tenured and tenure-track ranks is appealing, especially in light of startup packages and provision of core facilities in the sciences and quantitative social sciences. While \$1.35 million dollars per year (the possible upper bound of the cost of the program) sounds like a large number in the context of the humanities, when compared to startup packages in the sciences, support at this level is not unheard of for individual faculty members. In summary, we are seeking to support the work of dozens of humanists for the cost of approximately one scientist.

## 2.8 Discussion

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<sup>16</sup> <http://www.lib.umich.edu/statistical-highlights>. Monograph acquisitions are no longer explicitly broken out in library reporting so the \$7m estimate reflects one-time resource purchases as a proxy. Since monographs are a subset of these one-time purchases, the total may be on the high side.

A system in which direct author subventions are widely employed would appear to be sustainable; by definition, the presses would receive sufficient resources to cover the costs of publishing in this model. In the long run, some of the resources would be redeployments of existing activity, including activity that would produce continuing revenue. It is less clear how we would get there from here.

Suppose, for example, that the University of Michigan, Indiana University, and a few other institutions moved to a direct subvention system for their faculty. Michigan authors would be able to publish their works on an open access basis, and many of them would choose to do so. The costs of those books or other long-form scholarly objects would be borne by the University and the presses that published the works would at least break even on them, but the bottom lines for those presses would not be greatly affected, because the vast majority of works that they publish would not be paid for under the subvention system. On average, however, the presses that publish works with direct author subventions should be at least as well off as they are now, again providing that the subvention amounts covered their costs. The typical academic monograph that would receive a direct author subvention does not cover its costs in sales today. So if costs were covered by the subvention, the net effect on the publishing press's financial results would be positive.<sup>17</sup>

The logic of the preceding paragraph suggests that presses would be able to manage the transition from the current system to one in which there were first some, and then many, works produced with direct author subventions. The first part of this proposition would be testable with a significant pilot project, provided that presses supplied good information about their finances, a condition that we have argued should be a requirement of the direct subvention regime.

In moving forward with a pilot, we recommend implementing a modified and partial version of the plan described by Andrew Martin, Dean of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts. In this pilot, newly-hired junior faculty would be assured direct subvention along the lines discussed in this paper for up to three appropriate scholarly objects over the course of a successful academic career. A selection of senior faculty would be eligible to receive subventions as well to legitimize the program and compel participation by tenured colleagues. Participants at the ranks of Associate Professor and Professor would receive direct subventions for two works and one work, respectively. Moving forward with a pilot will require securing specific financial commitments from the provost and relevant deans.<sup>18</sup>

The research team recommends placing responsibility for the development of documentation and procedures for the pilot with the committee of faculty already charged with operating our existing subvention program. To take on this additional workload and to provide the necessary expertise, the committee will be augmented with additional members reflecting the diversity of the humanities and humanistic social science disciplines. In consultation with relevant campus administrators, the committee will develop an initial list of eligible publishers, procedures for handling of exceptions and appeals, and an "opt out" process for newly hired junior faculty who elect not to participate. In consultation with appropriate experts on campus, the committee will also need to develop clear requirements for publishers, including how to account for costs required to produce

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<sup>17</sup> Assuming that authors and presses are rational and can make judgments about likely commercial success that are better than random, presses and authors would likely choose to produce some works commercially, without subvention. These works would also cover their costs (or more) on average, because the presses would have had the option of accepting the direct subvention and covering costs that way.

<sup>18</sup> Campus administrators may also want to address the question of whether and how to ensure access to subvention funds for non-tenure track faculty such as lecturers and those on research appointments.

and distribute the required openly accessible version of the scholarly object, and requirements for its accessibility and preservation.

To determine a more accurate cost of the program for implementation and to monitor and assess the program over time, the administrative body charged with implementing the direct author subvention system will need more accurate data than we have had access to for this project. We faced considerable difficulties in answering questions about where our faculty publish and how often they do so. Under a direct author subvention model, it will be important to be able to answer such questions with greater certainty and with relative ease. For that reason, we recommend implementation of standardized activity reporting across campus units participating in such a program, and eventual adoption of a research information management system that can accommodate the work of humanists. Together, these measures would have benefits beyond the implementation of this pilot, as they would reduce faculty effort in compiling and reporting materials for annual merit reviews, promotion dossiers, regulatory compliance, and other needs both within and beyond the university.

Having raised the question of whether a system of direct author subventions should include “commercial” publishers (and ostensibly non-profit presses like Cambridge and Oxford university presses), we recommend that in an initial pilot phase of this system the faculty committee charged with developing policies and procedures make a decision regarding the eligibility of Cambridge and Oxford university presses. If the pilot is successful and the system matures beyond a handful of departments, publisher eligibility (beyond just Cambridge and Oxford university presses) will need to be reexamined. And given that open access monographs are a relatively new and dynamic idea, it is possible that significant changes in publisher policies and orientation toward open access will occur during the course of a pilot phase, which could impact decisions regarding eligibility for CUP, OUP, and other commercial publishers.

### 3.0 Indiana University Case Study

At Indiana University (IU), Associate Professor of Folklore and Mathers Museum of World Cultures Director Jason Baird Jackson coordinated the faculty and administrator discussions that helped shape the proposals given below. He is the main author of this section. This work was done in parallel with efforts undertaken at UM; the IU proposals are not dissimilar to those developed for UM. The proposals share much because faculty and administration views expressed on the two campuses are similar.

At IU, in both faculty focus groups and in discussions with faculty-administrators there was wide support for the implementation of some version of the proposals for humanities publishing reform broadly articulated by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation (Mellon hereafter) and the Association of American Universities and Association of Research Libraries (AAU/ARL hereafter). As was expected from the outset, faculty vary in the degree to which they recognize and understand the challenges that the Mellon and AAU/ARL proposals aim to address, but the degree of enthusiasm and commonality found in the IU discussions is noteworthy, particularly in light of the greater variance in views that were manifest in earlier campus discussions of scholarly communication reform.

Whether before or after engaging in discussion of the Mellon and AAU/ARL proposals, all IU faculty and administrators engaged during spring and summer 2015 recognized the reality of the sustainability and innovation problems now faced by the American university press system, the free rider problem increasingly felt by press-supporting universities such as IU, and the scholarly communications needs that remain crucial to humanities faculty and their institutions. All supported adopting some variation on the schemes outlined by Mellon and AAU/ARL—both systematically within North American higher education and at IU. Many also recognized the crucial ways that the systematic adoption of such a system would be advantageous on the campus, school, and departmental levels and positively transformative within North American higher education overall. Most recognized the important links connecting a strong university press-centered publishing system in the humanities and interpretive social sciences and three key needs of the scholarly communities in these fields and their host universities. These are (1) the tenure and promotion system for tenure-track faculty, (2) the need for universities to secure the wide dissemination of faculty research, and (3) the desirability of moving toward an open access framework for the circulation of long-form works in these fields. Some, but not all, also endorsed the prospects—stated most clearly in Mellon’s proposals—of creating circumstances in which university presses and authors both have the capacity to innovate technically and generically, moving in creative ways beyond the linear scholarly text to non-linear, media rich scholarly works.

Nearly everyone also flagged concerns that need to be addressed as such a program is implemented in North America and at IU. Some—such as promoting faculty awareness of the underlying issues and motivations for such a program—are educational in nature and can be pursued before and after such a program is begun. Others are structural in nature and reflect wider challenges in the disciplines and in academe today. The proposals articulated by Mellon, AAU/ARL, by our colleagues at the University of Michigan, and in this (IU-focused) section of the white paper all aim to strengthen the disciplines and American higher education, as well as the communities that they serve, but we acknowledge that not all problems can be fully solved by an initiative such as this one. Strategies for mitigating two such structural problems (tenure-line versus non-tenure-track inequality and the problems of authors with weak or no institutional affiliations) are discussed below.



## 3.1 Challenges and proposals

In the sections below, a number of key issues of relevance to the implementation of a humanities book subvention program at IU are addressed. These are: (1) identifying subvention eligible publishers, (2) identifying eligible disciplines and faculty, (3) identifying eligible faculty and roles and processes for supporting otherwise excluded faculty, and (4) the system-wide problem of scholarly authors without suitable subvention-providing institutional affiliations. After discussion of these challenges, the white paper continues with a proposed implementation framework for IU.

### 3.1.1 Publisher inclusion, bounding the eligible press universe

**Concern:** In discussion with stakeholders, the proposed subvention program was discussed fruitfully as a series of (sometimes difficult) questions to be answered en route to implementation. One of these questions concerns the population of publishers who would be eligible to receive IU subvention funds. Different cases can be made from all sides of this question. Thankfully, this is a question that can be solved variably across institutions of higher education. The case for maximal inclusivity, in which all or most publishers would be eligible to receive an IU subvention is built around the proposition that authors should be free to choose the publisher best suited to developing and circulating their work (regardless of their for-profit or not-for-profit status).<sup>19</sup> The case against such inclusivity observes that a key goal of the Mellon and AAU/ARL proposals is the preservation and strengthening of the university press system at the center of humanities publishing in the United States. This argument notes that, under the subvention proposals, American colleges and universities (as a community) are being encouraged to support their presses in a new way. This view also notes that the crisis in university press publishing has, to some significant degree, been increased through the practices—particularly journal publishing practices—of the large and profitable commercial scholarly publishers. The case against including such commercial publishers in a campus subvention program thus argues that doing so would undermine goals at the center of the endeavor. These goals include publishing valuable scholarship for which there is not a viable commercial market. Providing subventions to very profitable commercial firms would also be needlessly wasteful of scarce resources, directing them to where they are least needed.

**Proposal:** The Association of American University Presses (AAUP) is the main organization representing nonprofit scholarly publishers. Its membership is divided into four categories—full members, associate members, international members, and introductory members. Full members “are nonprofit university presses, defined as the scholarly publishing arm of a university or college or group of such institutions within a state or geographic region, located within the Americas and publishing primarily in English.” Full membership entails other criteria that speak to questions of the quality and professionalism of a university press. Other categories of AAUP membership embrace other categories of scholarly publishers.<sup>20</sup> For purposes of the IU subvention program, a press whitelist will be established that corresponds to the full members of the AAUP. The faculty advisory board discussed below may respond to a documented petition from an IU faculty member or department seeking to add an additional nonprofit scholarly publisher to the campus whitelist. Under exceptional circumstances, the faculty advisory board may also remove a press from the campus whitelist in

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<sup>19</sup> Author choice remains central to all of the proposals discussed here. What is not fully open to negotiation is the question of where an institutional subvention may be invested. Authors are free to continue publishing their work with the publishers of their choice. No faculty author is obligated to participate in the subvention program described in this proposal.

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.aaupnet.org/aaup-members/becoming-a-member/guidelines-for-membership>, accessed August 1, 2015.

response to a suitably documented petition. The addition of nonprofit scholarly publishers to the whitelist through a careful, faculty-governed process will provide a path by which key publishers in specific disciplinary communities can be made eligible, thereby addressing the concerns of scholars in fields (such as in literary studies in languages other than English) in which key publishers exist outside the list of Full AAUP members.

### **3.1.2 Faculty inclusion, bounding the humanities and interpretive social sciences**

**Concern:** The aims of the proposals articulated by Mellon and AAU/ARL and endorsed here "include sustaining and enhancing the system of university press publishing that has proven central to the work of scholars in the book disciplines"—those fields in the humanities and in neighboring interpretive social sciences (cultural anthropology, sociolinguistics, qualitative sociology, science studies, etc.) in which peer-reviewed books have become central to the communication of scholarly data and arguments and to the evaluation of successful scholarly careers. Finding the specific boundaries of this domain has long been challenging and, in an era of increased interdisciplinarity, this difficulty will not grow less. Quite understandably, IU faculty do not wish to endorse a system that is arbitrary and inflexible in its conception of humanities and interpretive social sciences for purposes of the inclusion of a faculty author in a campus subvention program.

**Proposal:** At the initiation of any IU subvention initiative, an initial whitelist of eligible departments would be established. In these fields, tenure track and tenured faculty would be presumed to be eligible to receive a subvention. This initial list would include the Department of Musicology in the Jacobs School of Music and those disciplines identified as arts and humanities fields by the College of Arts and Sciences (departments appearing on its Arts and Humanities Division list), along with the following College departments: African American and African Diaspora Studies, American Studies, Anthropology, Gender Studies, History, History and Philosophy of Science, Linguistics (from the Social and Historical Sciences Division), and Central Eurasian Studies, East Asian Languages and Cultures, and Near Eastern Languages and Cultures (from the Global and International Programs Division/School of Global and International Studies). As appropriate, the faculty advisory body discussed below would be responsible for adding or removing departments from the eligibility whitelist.

Under the guidance of the faculty advisory body and in consultation with relevant Deans, provisions would be made available for including individual humanities faculty in the program under circumstances in which they are pursuing humanities book publishing from within departments or schools for which this is appropriate for their individual work but not a departmental or school norm. Such individual eligibility decisions would typically be made at career inflection points such as initial hiring or promotion. As reflected here, IU faculty and administrators are aware that scholars in the humanities and interpretive social sciences are now found in a wide range of schools, departments, and programs and that this pattern is likely to continue expanding. The necessity of individual arrangements when blanket ones will not serve will be a key concern not only when initially implementing the subvention program but in its ongoing work.

### **3.1.3 The problem of non-tenure track faculty authors**

**Concern:** A matter of inequality discussed by faculty and by the research team concerns the question of faculty inclusion and exclusion on a particular campus. Here the problem will likely be solved in different ways at different institutions. In an ideal world, any faculty member, staff member, or student affiliated within an institution would have access to a local subvention with which to publish their significant book-length works of peer-reviewed scholarship. Under real-world circumstances it is unlikely that any campus will be in a position

to provide a subvention to all possible campus authors. Thus, for instance, a tenure-track assistant professor who has been hired with the expectation that they will publish a peer-reviewed book will have a stronger claim on a campus subvention than will a Non Tenure Track (NTT) lecturer who, despite having a teaching-focused appointment, also completes a peer-reviewed book project of interest to a university press. IU faculty recognize this as a vexing problem and a new domain in which already existing inequalities will be reaffirmed.

**Proposal:** It will not be possible to provide a default subvention for all IU-based authors. While there is a strong preference (discussed below) against establishing new competitive campus processes through which subventions will be allocated, it is recommended that a modest competitive fund be established and managed by the Office of the Vice Provost for Research. The target population for this fund will be campus NTT authors in the humanities and interpretive social sciences who otherwise lack access to subventions. The same criteria for eligibility required of all subvention-recipients (peer-review, full formal contract, whitelisted press, open access license, etc.) apply to such recipients, but receipt of funding is based on a competitive process through which a limited pool of funds are allocated, thereby keeping expenditures modest and allowing for the prioritization of the most mission-appropriate projects. (For instance, priority might be given to a book by a senior lecturer that focuses on teaching innovation within a humanities field. Alternatively, the work of a research scholar in the interpretive social sciences might be prioritized because, despite their lacking a tenure-track position, they are employed by the university specifically to pursue research and its publication.)

Different institutions will adopt different approaches to faculty inclusion. IU will need to make a reasonable decision aligned with the criteria under which scholars in the humanities and interpretive social sciences are hired and evaluated while doing what it can to support the publication aspirations of those in the campus community not in tenure ladder positions. This solution is in alignment with the faculty-focused goals articulated in the Bicentennial Strategic Plan of the Bloomington campus (<https://strategicplan.iu.edu/>), which was developed on the basis of active faculty consultation.

### **3.1.4 The problem faced by scholars working outside the world of participating institutions**

**Concern:** On gaining understanding of the systematic change sought by Mellon and ARL/AAU, all faculty endorsed the proposals but most recognized a problem that they wish to see addressed. At present, consideration of market prospects is the crucial factor shaping university press publishing decisions. As reflected by a degrading scholarly publishing landscape and the problems highlighted by Mellon and AAU/ARL, this fact means that a growing proportion of excellent scholarship struggles to get published. Thus there are already exclusions present in the system. Under the new system envisioned here, the problem shifts to scholarly authors unaffiliated with a subsidy-providing institution. In light of the already stark inequalities currently characterizing careers in the humanities and interpretive social sciences, faculty at IU are eager not to adopt a system that produces a new form inequality. While they acknowledge that the broader forces at play are beyond the scope of even an ambitious publishing reform program to address, they want to at least build in some form of mitigation to buffer a stark “haves” versus “have nots” situation.

**Proposal:** It is proposed that subsidy-receiving presses must agree to set aside a specific amount of title-based subsidy revenue for the publication of a targeted number of works by authors without an affiliation to a subsidy-providing institution. Institutions adopting the subvention model (such as IU) should understand that the presses have been specifically charged by the community to add a surcharge to each subvention for purposes of funding this target allotment of non-subvention books. It is proposed here that these figures will be finalized on the basis of discussions between participating AAU universities, other relevant college and

university consortia, AAUP member presses, ARL, and Mellon. They will be developed initially on the basis of Mellon-supported research and woven into the terms of Mellon's proposed seed funding.

Addressing this problem can only be done at the collective level, but IU should support efforts to adopt such a collective solution, being willing to pay a reasonable surcharge for the sake of the fields in which it works, including preserving (to the degree possible) the capacity of its own graduates to publish their scholarly work.

### 3.1.5 Day-to-day management of the subvention program

**Concern:** For IU, like any peer-institution, implementation of the envisioned subsidy program raises practical administrative questions, one of which is identifying the locally appropriate administrative structure through which to deliver such a program in an ongoing way. The research team discussed this question actively within the group and with consulted stakeholders. Some potential solutions have been identified as less desirable, but there are two options remaining under consideration. Final decision on a particular framework will be conditioned by other crucial decisions, such as the mix of funding to be deployed in support of the program.<sup>21</sup>

The College Arts and Humanities Institute was explored as a possible administrative locus for the subsidy program, but this solution was deemed less than ideal because, as a College unit, it structurally excludes humanities and interpretive social science activity pursued in other Schools.

The Office of the Vice Provost for Faculty and Academic Affairs (OVPF AA) was also considered as a possible administrative locus, but discussion with the (then serving) Vice Provost revealed that OVPF AA has appropriately sought to shed responsibility for administering funding programs as a means of avoiding conflicts of interest associated with its core function of administering tenure and promotion processes.

As discussed in the Proposal section that follows, the Office of the Vice Provost for Research and the Departments (within the Schools) were also considered.

**Proposal:** The leading candidate for administrative responsibility of the subvention program is the Office of the Vice Provost for Research, in which it is anticipated the program would become part of the portfolio of the Associate Vice Provost for Research coordinating activity in the arts and humanities. The nature and scope of this responsibility is dependent upon other choices under discussion here. We anticipate that the Office of the Vice Provost will have either a direct administrative role or a coordinating (record keeping, evaluation, assurance) role. The Office of the Vice Provost for Research will facilitate the work of the needed shared governance processes, including oversight, consultation, and whitelist deliberation. (See discussion of the faculty advisory body below.)

An alternative proposal, made by a relevant administrator after the focus group series was complete (and thus not discussed therein), is to place oversight for the program with the relevant department chairs. This model is closely aligned with the startup funds/research funds model and builds upon current practices associated with

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<sup>21</sup> Explaining why this matter is left incompletely resolved in this version of the white paper, we note that a system in which all or most subvention funds originated centrally with the Provost could logically prompt a more centralized administrative structure whereas a decentralized system funded by individual schools would likely mean that Deans would seek to administer funds within their schools. The IU Provost understands this distinction and acknowledges that it would be resolved in actual implementation based on funding and related considerations.

such funds allocated to particular faculty members. While it is usually a departmental fiscal officer (rather than the department chair) who facilitates the purchase of a piece of equipment or an instance of research travel, such a fiscal officer works under the direction the chair. Unlike the purchase of a piece of furniture, the fiscal officer will not be in a position to insure that all of the requirements of a publishing subvention are in place, but given their disciplinary background, a chair could, according to this model, sign off on the subvention. (This would require training for chairs—educating them on campus subvention requirements—as well as broader campus oversight.)<sup>22</sup>

In a situation in which a department chair operates what we have informally referred to as the “teller window,” then a higher level administrative actor or faculty body would need to monitor the program from a campus point of view, keeping track of key statistics (numbers of subvention titles per year, amounts spent) and ensuring that campus requirements are being followed (open access license, whitelisted press, etc.).

Whether the Vice Provost for Research (through the Associate Vice Provost for Research for the Arts and Humanities) staffs the teller window or the relevant department chairs do so, a faculty advisory body will need to monitor, support, and advise the campus regarding the program and its implementation. This group will have specific duties such as maintaining the press and departmental whitelists. If the more decentralized system focused on department chairs is adopted, then the Vice Provost for Research (through the Associate Vice Provost for Research for the Arts and Humanities) will monitor and guide this work for the campus. In either case, they will liaise with the faculty advisory body mentioned above and discussed here.

Although such a group is essential to the implementation of the subvention program, this white paper does not specify the constitution of the faculty advisory body. It could be that this group is administratively appointed with fixed terms of service or it could be that the duties of the faculty advisory body are taken up by a committee or subcommittee of the Bloomington Faculty Council (BFC). We note that success on either of these paths is dependent on members engaging actively with the work of the subvention program on the basis of broad knowledge of humanities practice at IU and a real willingness to learn and address the details of a changing scholarly publishing landscape. It may be that the faculty advisory board for the Office of Scholarly Publishing could be adapted to advance the subvention program. If such an administrative committee structure is adopted, it may be advisable to request membership suggestions from the BFC and/or College Policy Committee leadership.

### **3.1.6 What the faculty do not want**

While generally very amenable to implementing changes that Mellon and AAU/ARL have advocated, IU faculty and others we talked to have stressed a strong preference for avoiding the creation of new competitive campus programs. We note that this preference was felt with equal strength by the faculty at Michigan. An aspect of this preference is rooted in a desire not to further increase the service burden that research active faculty already experience, but more important is the view that a competitive campus program undermines one of the key goals found in the subvention initiative being proposed. The Mellon and AAU/ARL proposals take the form that they do because there is an underlying goal to preserve and strengthen the work of American university presses. Fundamental to the values that we attach to our university presses are their role as

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<sup>22</sup> In a context in which the funds are allocated on the startup fund/research fund model and in which funds are primarily sourced from the schools, the Associate Dean for Humanities in the College of Arts and Sciences has also expressed support for local administration within departments.

instruments of robust and independent peer-review. The subvention proposals focus on a faculty subvention being “unlocked” by a publishing contract that follows from successful press-organized peer-review, author revision, editorial review, and final approval by a press editorial board. These activities are among those that a subvention program aims to support and strengthen. These are undermined or redundant if a separate yes/no decision is made by a campus body. The only justification for such a decision would be assessments of content and quality, suggesting how passing through such a campus gate would not only duplicate (less well) press review processes but also later tenure or promotion evaluations. More could be said on this topic, but we note here the strong preference of the faculty for avoiding an additional campus evaluative stage. Instead, the plan outlined here emphasizes an eligibility checklist of requirements that, if met, automatically result in the bestowal of a subvention.

### **3.1.7 Is participation mandatory?**

Participation in the subvention program is not mandatory for eligible faculty. Faculty can continue to publish with any publisher of their choice on mutually agreeable terms. This stance is in accord with IU policies, is present in the Mellon and AAU/ARL proposals, and is expected by the faculty whom we have consulted.

### **3.1.8 What is IU paying for when it provides an author subvention?**

As outlined by Mellon and AAU/ARL, an institutional author subvention will result in “a well designed digital publication” that would be made freely available in “at least one trusted preservation repository with full metadata.” The published work would be circulated under an “agreed upon Creative Commons license,” would be promoted by the press, and submitted for consideration for appropriate awards and prizes. Because of the open access edition, the work would be freely accessible over the internet by students, communities of special interest, the scholarly community, policy makers, and other interested parties.<sup>23</sup>

### **3.1.9 Could presses make money from the subvention-supported volume?**

IU faculty with whom we engaged support the proposition found in the Mellon proposal that presses could produce and sell derivative works and augmented versions of subvention-benefitting works, including print-on-demand copies. This provision encourages press innovation and enables presses to pursue revenue above and beyond subvention revenue.

### **3.1.10 What is the eligibility checklist?**

Based on the issues and discussions summarized above, an IU eligibility checklist would include the following elements. These characteristics determine the eligibility of a particular work. The eligibility of a faculty member for subsidy support is a different matter, as discussed above.

- The author’s press is on the IU press whitelist, which initially is coterminous with the list of full AAUP member presses.

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<sup>23</sup> The requirements outlined in this section are drawn from slides presented by the Mellon Foundation’s Donald Waters at a June 23, 2014 meeting of the Association of American University Presses. In the sentence just given, communities of special interest is used as a means of referring to the diversity of publics in society with special interest in humanities scholarship. Citizens of a particular city or town have a logical interest in a work of history focused on their community, while an ethnography treating life within a subcultural, indigenous, ethnic (etc.) group will be of special interest to that group. Fans of a particular author similarly constitute a community of special interest for a work of literary criticism dealing with that author.

- The author has been offered a publication contract from a whitelisted press, the terms of which are compatible with the terms of the subvention program (as outlined in the eligibility checklist).
- The press agrees to publish the volume in a well designed and technically appropriate format.
- An open access edition of the final work will be made available in one or more trusted repositories with full metadata.
- The work will be published under an appropriate Creative Commons license. The specific license is not here specified as long as the chosen license allows for the full range of scholarly uses.
- In the publishing contract, specific plans for marketing and promoting the volume are described.
- Publishers receiving campus subventions will be required to provide detailed accounting information on the costs required produce, promote, and distribute the required openly accessible version of the work, inclusive of agreed upon set asides (as discussed in section 3.1.4 “The Problem Faced by Scholars Working Outside the World of Participating Institutions” above).

### 3.1.11 What costs will IU assume under this subvention program?

The deep dive into data from the IU and UM presses (Appendix D) can be combined with forthcoming research results from a larger sample of presses being studied with Mellon support by Ithaka S+R in a project titled “The Study of the Costs of Publishing Monographs.”<sup>24</sup> Here we direct readers to the results of these studies for the relevant per work costs. It is expected that this research will condition per book guidelines that Mellon devises in connection with its proposed seed grants. Mellon’s grantmaking in support of the transition to institutional subventions is likely to have a great effect on the establishment of new norms both on participating campus and in participating university presses.

The costs per work articulate with the key question of how many books per year might be covered under an IU campus subvention program. It is not possible to model this cost with complete assurance, but some useful indicators are available. An investigation of seven IU humanities units (Comparative Literature (CMLT), Folklore and Ethnomusicology (FOLK), French and Italian (FRIT), German (GER), History (HIST), Religious Studies (REL), and Art History within Fine Arts (FINA)) for the years 2012, 2013, and 2014 revealed that approximately 7% of the tenure-ladder humanities faculty in the sample departments published a scholarly monograph in a particular year. If (as seems likely) this estimate held across all humanities and interpretive social science units and faculty, the estimated annual cost would constitute 7% of the eligible faculty multiplied by the established subvention amount, totaling about 24 monographs per year.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> <http://sr.ithaka.org/blog-individual/how-much-does-it-cost-publish-monograph>, accessed August 1, 2015.

<sup>25</sup> Calculating the number tenured and tenure track humanities faculty at IU is not particularly easy in light of the constant flow of faculty into and out of its humanities units, the large number and growing number of joint appointments found in these units, and the nature of borderline cases, such as the presence of scientifically-oriented linguists in language and culture units and the work of scientifically and humanistically oriented scholars in fields such as archaeology inside the Department of Anthropology. Based on lists maintained on departmental websites and attempting to account for joint appointments and known retirements, the lead author of this section has estimated the number T/TT humanities faculty in the humanities (as conceived in section 3.1.2 above) as 335. If used with the 7% estimate noted above, this means that this segment of the IU faculty produces approximately twenty-four humanities books each year.

A very small number of IU humanities faculty publish more than one monograph in a year and a rather small number publish more than one in a three-year window. A few of these exceptional authors contributed to the 7% per year estimate given above.

### **3.1.12 How might the scheme be rolled out on a partial basis?**

The goal articulated here is that every tenure ladder humanities faculty member would have access to a subvention whenever they have an eligible monograph accepted for publication by an eligible press. As reflected in the AAU/ARL proposal, it is possible to limit focus to first monographs (those produced by pre-tenure assistant professors). While not producing all of the systemic transformations envisioned by Mellon, such an approach would significantly help improve the circumstances of a campus' pre-tenure research faculty while offering some additional support for university presses working in areas of relevance to the campus' faculty.

If an initial campus humanities book subvention program were, of necessity, begun in a limited way, there is consensus that first books and assistant professors are an appropriate focus. There is a preference for fully supporting book publishing by tenure ladder humanities faculty, but an emphasis on assistant professors would be in keeping with a number of campus strategic goals (as would a further focus on second works and associate professors). The simplest way of administering such a limited system is to make a book subvention a part of the startup costs allocated when a new humanities faculty member is appointed. Such a subvention would be dispersed according to the norms articulated above. In a program expanded somewhat from this baseline, a second book subvention could similarly be awarded upon tenure and promotion and dispersed similarly. This focus on associate rank faculty is in keeping with campus priorities and represents the second priority of many of those consulted on the subvention proposal. These priorities registered, the weight of opinion rests on the aspiration of making subventions available for all research faculty in the humanities and neighboring social sciences.

### **3.1.13 How open are faculty to books published under arrangements such as those proposed by Mellon, AAU, and ARL?**

Salon participants at IU seemingly self-selected on the basis of interest in, and openness to, change in scholarly publishing in the humanities and interpretive social sciences. In contrast to the gatherings at UM, most (but not all) participants in campus salons were junior. Alongside tenure track faculty, non-tenure-line faculty and non-instructional faculty (including librarians) were active in salon discussions. These factors mean that the salons do not represent, in themselves, a satisfactory source of insight into the whole of the campus humanities faculty. In combination with earlier discussions, it seems safe to say that the key elements found in the Mellon, AAU/ARL, UM, and IU proposals will meet the expectations of the most conservative faculty vis-à-vis tenure and promotion and evaluation standards. Books continue to be published by respected university presses who will maintain strong subject area lists on the basis of peer- and editorial-review. They continue to be available in print form (for as long as this remains desirable), and they continue to be marketed and presented for award consideration. The proposals thereby remove many often heard objections to changes in humanities book publishing.

### **3.1.14 Through what sources of funds within the university would a subvention program be funded?**



The sources of funding required to implement the subvention program at IU are not yet identified, but discussions held with the Executive Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and with the Provost suggest that this is an effort that is understood as achievable and thus fundable. Prompted by early and tentative proposals made by Mellon, there is, as might be expected, strong interest in developing competitive campus proposals through which external funding might be secured to assist in making the systemic transition envisioned here. But these leaders acknowledge that the medium-term goal is to make such funding a part of work supporting humanities scholars and scholarship on campus. The systemic nature of the change proposed, of course, matters to them. This relates both to a critical mass of institutions changing their practices and reaching a place in which subventions to the IU Press (and to other campus hosted presses at peer institutions) could be reduced, with those funds moving to author subventions. As with the UM study, this is a long-term goal subject to a number of variables.

## 4.0 Shared IU and UM Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on local experiences at Indiana University and University of Michigan. They are particular to the culture, political history, and organizational structure of our respective campuses. As described above, there are areas where we disagree but sufficient common ground exists to set forth some shared recommendations concerning faculty eligibility, program design and funding, publisher qualification, publication requirements, and the general implementation and management of a monograph subvention program.

### **Faculty Eligibility**

We recommend that the subvention program be made available to (but not required for) all tenured and tenure-track faculty. Non-tenured track faculty would be awarded subventions on a competitive basis.

### **Design of the Program**

We suggest that the optimal program would include a startup package for new faculty, while Assistant Professors, Associate Professors, and Professors would qualify for a set number of subventions. Overseeing a competitive program for non-tenure-track faculty, and coordinating the dispersal of subvention funds across departments would also be locally decided.

### **Funding the Program**

We expect that as a direct subvention system is implemented there will be little or no relief on funds currently used in support of humanities publication and scholarship. This implies that at least for a transitional period the resources requisite for this program should come primarily from other sources.

### **Publisher Qualification**

We recommend that the non-profit publishers who are full members of the Association of American University Presses qualify to receive subvention support through this program. Individual campuses may want to discuss the eligibility of other publishers. Any qualified publisher should be demonstrably committed to a rigorous peer review process and be required to supply comprehensive expenditure information for the monographs supported by this program.

### **Publication Requirements**

We recommend that monographs published with subvention support through this program be made freely available, with full metadata and a Creative Commons license, in one or more trusted digital repositories. We also recommend that the publisher be permitted to monetize derivative electronic and print-on-demand editions of the monograph.

We recognize that all of the detailed program features we have discussed above will be unique to the campuses that implement them. We recommend that the monograph subvention program move forward as a closely monitored and carefully assessed set of first phase initiatives, shaped by such local context and considerations.

## APPENDIX A: Methodology

This section describes the methodologies deployed for the gathering of data. The section on Indiana was written by Jason Baird Jackson and the section on Michigan by Meredith Kahn.

### Indiana University Salons and Interviews

Via email invitation from the Provost, sent to all campus faculty, faculty were invited to attend one or more of five salons on “Academic Publishing in the Arts and Humanities.” These five salons were held at prominent locations (Indiana Memorial Union, Wells Library) on five separate days between March 25 and April 7, 2015. The invitation email, as well as subsequent advertising in the campus e-newsletter (received by all staff and faculty) included links to background information for interested participants at which details on the discussions and proposals could be found. This more detailed information included a one-page project summary, links to Jennifer Howard’s short June 27, 2014 story in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, and to detailed information on the AAU/ARL proposal. Contact information for Carolyn Walters was provided for those with questions about the salons or project.

Jason Baird Jackson hosted each of the salons, presenting the Mellon and AAU/ARL proposals and working with attendees in discussion of the them, of their own concerns, and questions that would need to be answered in (1) advancing a subvention program at IU and (2) administering one should that be the choice of the campus.

Attendance at the salons was disappointing (between 1 and 4 attendees per gathering) and this low attendance was not expected given much higher attendance at past campus salons on the state of academic publishing—including those hosted by the Office of Scholarly Publishing. As the same people organized both sets of gatherings in the same manner using the same communication strategies, the same basic formats, locations, etc., it may be that our campus’ faculty are now saturated on these topics. Jackson received numerous regrets, indicating that there was awareness that the salons were taking place. Other than librarians, no one active in earlier discussions also participated in these salons. Thus at least these conversations included fresh voices. While attendance was not what was intended, the discussions with those who did attend were very fruitful and are reflected here. Full and associate rank faculty from the College, a Professor of Practice from the College, a professional staff member supporting a humanities center, several librarians involved in the humanities or library administration, and a graduate student all contributed to the discussions.

Discussions with administrators took place in one-on-one meetings with Jason Jackson. It was not possible to schedule the anticipated lunch meetings or small group meetings. Administrator schedules were very tight and we are grateful for the discussions that were held in this somewhat shifted format. In one instance, a discussion was productively held via Skype. Meetings were held with the Director of the College Arts and Humanities Institute, with the Associate Dean for Arts and Humanities in the College of Arts and Sciences, with the Executive Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, with the Associate Vice Provost for Research for the Arts and Humanities, with the Vice Provost for Faculty and Academic Affairs, and with the Provost.

## University of Michigan Salons and Interviews

The research team held six open meetings in April and May 2015 to discuss potential systems of support for humanities book publishing. The UM Institute for the Humanities assisted with recruiting attendees, promoting the salons via targeted emails to their distribution list of University of Michigan faculty in the humanities. Sara Blair, Vice Provost for Academic and Faculty Affairs, also assisted with promotion by allowing the targeted emails to be sent in her name and on her behalf. A number of department chairs also distributed announcements to their faculty, and liaison librarians were encouraged to share the announcement as well.

A total of 31 faculty members<sup>26</sup> attended the salons, representing the following campus units:

- 6 - University Library
- 5 - History
- 4 - Classics
- 3 - German
- 2 - Communication Studies
- 2 - History of Art
- 2 - Judaic Studies
- 2 - Music
- 1 - Comparative Literature
- 1 - English
- 1 - Information
- 1 - Women's Studies
- 1 - Other

Faculty without tenure were notably absent from the salons.<sup>27</sup> We presume this could be due to two factors: untenured faculty members are not yet concerned enough about publication to attend a discussion of subventions for humanities books; or the prospect of expressing opinions in front of a group of relatively senior faculty colleagues discouraged attendance.

In addition to the faculty salons, the research team interviewed a number of campus administrators, including:

- Toni Antonucci, Associate Vice President for Research for the Social Sciences & Humanities
- S. Jack Hu, Interim Vice President for Research
- Deborah Keller-Cohen, Associate Dean for the Humanities & Arts, Rackham Graduate School
- Andrew D. Martin, Dean, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts
- Gunalan Nadarajan, Dean, Penny W. Stamps School of Art and Design
- Martha Pollack, Provost

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<sup>26</sup> Many of the faculty members in attendance have appointments in multiple units, so the departmental representation noted above is at best an approximation rather than a full accounting of attendees' affiliations. Faculty members in the list above were attributed to one unit, even if they had multiple, funded appointments across campus.

<sup>27</sup> Six staff members from the library attended, including a number of individuals with librarian appointments. Archivists and librarians at the University of Michigan have faculty status, but do not have tenure. One additional attendee (noted above as "other") was a staff member from another university unit. This attendee has a PhD in a humanities discipline, and is currently employed in an "alternative academic" position without faculty status or tenure.

- David Porter, incoming chair, Department of English Language & Literature

The team is confident that this set of faculty members (some of whom are department chairs) and administrators (who in several instances are humanities faculty) gives us a good sampling of the humanities faculty as a whole. There was a range of responses across the faculty. A small number voiced suspicion of the subvention model and affirmed the value for the humanities of the current situation for book publishing. At the other end, a few faculty voiced impatience with the slow pace of change in publishing models. The latter faculty were enthusiastic about the proposed subvention model and its open access requirement. So too were the majority of faculty in the salons. Those faculty who noted that they would not take advantage of such a system—and they were few—had no objection to other people taking up a subvention opportunity.

## **Estimating the Number of Humanists and Books Published by UM Faculty**

To estimate the population of humanists and humanistic social scientists presently on campus, we focused on the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts (LS&A), as we knew that would be the primary unit in which a majority of these faculty would be appointed. LS&A produced a spreadsheet of faculty names, ranks, and appointment percentages for units in both its humanities and social sciences divisions (we excluded the natural sciences division of the College). We deemed all faculty appointed in the humanities division's departments to be "humanists" for the purpose of this analysis. Among the social sciences departments, we examined faculty members in anthropology, communication studies, organizational studies, sociology, and women's studies to determine how many faculty in each department could be considered "humanistic social scientists." This distinction was made by examining the publications of each faculty member, to determine if their work addressed topics or used methodologies that could be considered humanistic.

We used data compiled by a University Library committee that tracks UM faculty publications to estimate the number of scholarly books published per year by our faculty which resemble the kinds of scholarly objects a system of direct author subventions would support. The bulk of the committee's data comes from our library's primary English-language approval plan vendor, Coutts Information Services, which records author affiliations in the metadata for newly published materials. A small number of titles the committee compiles are reported by subject liaison librarians. We used data from 2014 to generate a list of potential titles, and then examined each title to narrow the list down by excluding previously published material, textbooks, edited volumes, and titles deemed outside of humanities and humanistic social sciences. While the data we have represent the best available information on UM faculty publication (as we do not have a research information management system for the entire campus), we are aware that it might ultimately be an undercount due to missing publications. The list of books published by UM faculty in 2014 we deemed representative examples of the kinds of scholarly objects a system of direct author subventions would support is available at <http://hdl.handle.net/2027.42/113093>. Our complete data includes information on nine additional titles (translations and works of creative writing) which were not included in our estimate of the number of books published by our faculty per year, but could represent an additional category of works eligible for support, depending on how a system of direct author subventions is implemented in the future. As noted above, these calculations suggest that UM faculty produce no more than 50 eligible university press monographs per year.

## Estimating the Number of Humanists and Books Published by IU Faculty

As discussed in 3.1.11 above, a rough estimate of the rate of humanities book publishing at IU was calculated by using departmental web pages and WorldCat to enumerate actual university press-published monographs (edited volumes were not inventoried) by tenured and tenure-track faculty in seven departments: Comparative Literature, Folklore and Ethnomusicology, French and Italian, German, History, Religious Studies, and Art History within Fine Arts for the years 2012, 2013, and 2014. While some titles for 2015 were identified, these were excluded because that year was not yet complete. While some of these units were more productive than others in book publishing during the period under review, the results appear generalizable in aggregate. As noted above, this census identified 7% as the number of relevant faculty publishing a book in a given year. As noted in a note in 3.1.11 above, the number of tenure and tenure track faculty in the humanities was estimated by reviewing the web faculty lists maintained by those departments proposed for the initial campus humanities departments list discussed in section 3.1.2. A count of tenure track and tenured faculty in these units was made by department, eliminating duplication caused by joint appointments and omitting a small number of faculty known to the researcher to have retired or departed from IU. This figure of 335 should be treated as a reasonable estimate, but it is imperfect in that it is not always possible to determine the place (especially the future place) of university book publishing in a scholar's research career. Linguists appointed in language and culture units (and in general) provide an accessible example of the general problem. As noted above, these calculations suggest that IU faculty produce about 24 university press monographs per year.

## **APPENDIX B: Scenarios Presented to Faculty Participants at Michigan**

Faculty participants received the following scenarios as prompts for discussion, and were encouraged to suggest alternate possibilities, combinations or modifications to the scenarios below, and other ideas as they saw fit.

### **A. Startup Package**

At time of hire, faculty receive a voucher which can be redeemed at a later date. When they have acquired a publication agreement with an eligible publisher, the department/unit chair signs off on the voucher, and an administrative officer confirms that the project and the publisher meet eligibility criteria. Voucher funds are then distributed to the publisher.

### **B. Award at Time of Hire and at Promotion**

Newly hired faculty receive a voucher at time of hire as in model A. In addition, current faculty receive a voucher at time of promotion. Faculty may receive additional vouchers at time of future promotions. As in the scenario above, the department/unit chair signs off on the voucher, an administrative officer confirms the project and the publisher meet eligibility criteria, and funds are then distributed to the publisher.

### **C. Entitlement Available to All Faculty at All Ranks at Time of Contract**

Faculty at all ranks may request a voucher at any time during their employment. To secure a voucher, faculty present a publication agreement. As in the scenario above, the department/unit chair signs off on the voucher, an administrative officer confirms the project and that the publisher meets eligibility criteria, and funds are then distributed to the publisher. (A variant of this scenario could put a limit of one redemption every seven [or six or eight] years.)

### **D. Competitive System**

Faculty at all ranks may apply for a voucher at any time during their employment. A committee of appointed faculty reviews applications and awards vouchers on an annual basis. As in the scenario above, the department/unit chair signs off on the voucher, an administrative officer confirms the project and the publisher meet eligibility criteria, and funds are then distributed to the publisher.

# **APPENDIX C: Publishers of Faculty Works at Michigan and Indiana at the Time of Promotion to Associate Professor and Professor**

## **University of Michigan Faculty Works at Time of Promotion**

At the University of Michigan, we compiled a list of publishers with whom faculty promoted to the ranks of associate professor and professor in the last five years (2010-2015) have published their work. It was derived from publicly available Regents' Communications, which include a section on "Recent and Significant Publications" for each faculty member promoted. We included faculty from the following departments: Afroamerican and African Studies (DAAS), American Culture, Asian Languages and Cultures, Classical Studies, Communication Studies, Comparative Literature, English Language & Literature, Germanic Languages and Literatures, History, History of Art, Center for Judaic Studies, Linguistics, Near Eastern Studies, Philosophy, Romance Languages and Literatures, Screen Arts & Cultures, Slavic Languages and Literatures, and Women's Studies. While these departments do not represent all humanists and humanistic social scientists on campus, they include most of them. The complete list of published works is available at <http://hdl.handle.net/2027.42/113093>. Undergraduate student Emily Campbell was instrumental in gathering this data. Out of 245 books, 43 were published by Oxford and Cambridge University Presses, 122 were published by other university presses, 51 by commercial presses, 24 by independent or small presses, with 5 unknown.

## **Indiana University Faculty Works at Time of Promotion**

At Indiana, the lists of faculty promoted to associate professor and professor from 2009-2014 were derived from the published minutes of the Indiana University Board of Trustees. Faculty from the following departments were included: African American and African Diaspora Studies, American Studies, Anthropology, Central Eurasian Studies, Classical Studies, Communication and Culture, Comparative Literature, East Asian Languages and Cultures, English, Folklore and Ethnomusicology, French and Italian, Gender Studies, Germanic Studies, History, History and Philosophy of Science and Medicine, History of Art, Linguistics, Music Theory, Musicology, Near Eastern Languages and Cultures, Philosophy, Religious Studies, Spanish and Portuguese, Theatre and Drama. Like the University of Michigan, these departments do not represent all humanists and humanistic social sciences, but most are included. The complete list of authors with publishers is available at <http://hdl.handle.net/2022/20358>. Amy Cope was invaluable in compiling this information. Out of 208 books, 22 were published by Oxford and Cambridge University Presses, 124 were published by other university presses, 42 by commercial presses, 14 by independent or small presses, with 6 unknown.



## **APPENDIX D: Institutional Affiliations of Authors who Published Books with Indiana University Press and University of Michigan Press**

A major concern expressed by faculty members who attended the salons was about the potential of an author subvention system to disenfranchise colleagues at less well-funded institutions. To begin to estimate the potential dimensions of this problem, the team examined the institutional affiliations of authors who published with the University of Michigan Press and Indiana University Press. This represents a small sample and can only begin to suggest patterns. Since the concern is such a major one, further research is warranted on a more national level and Paul Courant assisted by librarian Terri Geitgey will engage with this in the fall of 2015.

### **University of Michigan Press Author Affiliations**

To determine affiliations of UM Press authors, a student hourly employee examined seasonal catalogs distributed by the Press, pulling author affiliation from descriptive copy for each book. We excluded the Press's regional and textbook lists, instead focusing on the explicitly scholarly titles, which matched the kind of scholarly objects on which this study focuses. For the years 2013, 2014, and 2015 there were 264 unique titles (multiple formats were not double-counted) with 316 unique authors. Author affiliations were compared against Association of American University Presses membership to determine the number of UM Press authors who hailed from institutions at which there was also an AAUP-member press. Carnegie Classification data (specifically the "Basic Classification") was applied to determine an institution's status as a "have" or "have not," allowing us to distinguish between institutions with significant financial resources to support publishing and those with less ability to do so.

We are aware of several limitations in our author affiliation data. First, we did not double-check the affiliations listed in seasonal catalogs for currency and accuracy. If no affiliation was listed, we did not do further research on an author to determine it. Second, in choosing to use Carnegie Classification data to categorize institutions, liberal arts colleges are not well accounted for given their focus on undergraduate education. International institutions are not accounted for at all, and neither are organizations outside of the academy. In addition, Carnegie Classification data (particularly the "Basic" classification data we used) does not always reflect the financial resources of an institution, leading to a mischaracterization of some institutions as "have nots" when they are decidedly "haves." Finally, our use of AAUP member presses as something of a proxy for the "free rider" problem has similar limitations, in that not all university presses are AAUP members, and not all AAUP member presses are equally well resourced.

Of the 325 titles in the sample, approximately 47% were from institutions with AAUP member presses. We found that 57% of the authors were from doctoral-granting institutions or above. No doubt some the remaining 43% percent are from foreign countries, and some are from relatively well-off liberal arts colleges or from other institutions that could afford and would be willing to provide direct subvention.

The complete data on author affiliations and institutional Carnegie Classifications is available at <http://hdl.handle.net/2027.42/113093>. Undergraduate student Emily Campbell was instrumental in gathering this data.

## Indiana University Press Author Affiliations

Using AllBooks, the IU Press title/inventory database, scholarly titles published between 2013 and the first half of 2016 were extracted and reviewed. Regional and trade titles were excluded in order to determine scholarly titles most likely to be eligible for subvention. Only one author was noted for each title. During 2013, 2014, and 2015 there were 186 unique titles and in early 2016 there will be an additional 31 for a total of 217. Author affiliations were compared against the Association of American University Presses membership to determine how many authors were from institutions with member presses. Author affiliation was determined by using the data in AllBooks. If the data was incomplete, further searching was done to update author information.

A Carnegie Classification was assigned to each title based on the institutional affiliation of the lead author. Like our Michigan colleagues, we recognize the limitations of using the Carnegie Classification to determine the financial abilities of an institution to fund a subvention. In addition, foreign universities, including those with AAUP member Canadian presses, are excluded as are non-university institutions.

Of the 217 titles in the sample, approximately 36% were from institutions with AAUP member presses. We found that 45% of the authors were from doctoral-granting institutions or above. The balance were from liberal arts colleges, institutes, and foreign universities or were unaffiliated.

The complete data on IU Press author affiliations and Carnegie classification can be found in IUScholarWorks: <http://hdl.handle.net/2022/20358>. Amy Cope and undergraduate student Trevor Stone gathered and collated the data.

# APPENDIX E: Determining the Financial Cost of Scholarly Publishing

## Introduction

Scott Smart, a finance professor at Indiana University, and his graduate student, Nick Fitzgerald, investigated the cost of producing a scholarly monograph at the University of Michigan Press and Indiana University Press. This section of the report presents their work. The intent of their study was not to develop a “profit-and-loss” statement for each press. In particular, revenue and other revenue-related considerations (such as royalties, which are a function of revenue) were identified, considered, and ultimately removed from the final analysis, keeping in mind that the goal was simply to estimate the per-monograph cost of publication. The estimates described here focus on the average cost of producing a scholarly monograph.

## Process

### Isolating scholarly monographs from other publications

The first step was to identify the different types of published titles at each press. At Indiana University, for example, there are two primary types of monographs published: 1) scholarly monographs (works of scholarship written by academics, for academics, for the primary purpose of distinguishing the academic credentials of the author and thus adding prestige to the university’s imprint); and 2) trade books written primarily for a non-academic audience (e.g., “coffee-table” books on Indiana history, or a photobook of Indiana University’s campus). Different from scholarly monographs, trade books typically contain detailed visuals, more graphically interesting typography, and various charts and graphs, all of which make these books, in general, more costly to produce than scholarly monographs.

At the outset, then, it was important to have an understanding of the mix of books each press published (scholarly monograph vs. trade vs. any others), and how (or if) the existing mix differed from what the director of each press desired to produce in any given year.

### Data sources

At both Michigan and Indiana, the analysis focused on one fiscal year (fiscal year 2013-2014). At both presses, recent changes in the accounting systems, organizational structures (e.g., the ways in which presses were combined with other entities on campus), and methods for categorizing data made it very difficult to conduct analysis on fiscal years ending prior to July 2014. Rather than using each press’s finalized financial statements as a starting point, however, we chose instead to focus on each press’s general ledger: the statement of all financial transactions, inflows and outflows, for a given fiscal year. (Typically, a general ledger comes in the form of an Excel spreadsheet with tens of thousands of individual line-items.)

Smart and Fitzgerald worked closely with the accounting teams at each press to ensure a complete understanding of the data, and, once comfortable, they manually “rebuilt” the income statement of each press by aggregating line items by financial “code”—that is, whatever combination of letters and digits each press uses to catalog and differentiate between entries in the general ledger (e.g., travel expenses are given one code

apart from expenses for office supplies). Proceeding this way accomplished three important objectives critical to establishing a proper foundation for the investigation: 1) verify the completeness of each press's reported financial condition as expressed in the finalized financial statements against the "raw data" contained in the general ledger; 2) gain an important understanding of what costs in the aggregate were "material," that is, both significant in relative size and also critical to the operations of the press; and 3) clearly determine the impact of allocation of material costs on total monograph cost.

A note on materiality (as defined in 2 above): Aggregating cost transactions by category and then sorting them by size (thus determining the impact of each type of cost on both presses' overall cost structure) made it fairly easy to identify a proper threshold for cost importance. In the aggregate, costs below six figures were not considered material, because every cost in aggregate above \$100,000 comprised approximately 80 percent of total operational cost at each press (and these only included a handful of cost categories). This is not to say that we ignored cost items with values below \$100,000. Rather, the team simply invested more time to make sure that the analysis of the larger cost items was complete and correct.

### **A "steady-state" year**

Despite having only one year of workable data, the team made an effort to "normalize" the data to reflect at each university press what its directors—Charles Watkinson (Michigan) and Gary Dunham (Indiana)—would define as a "steady-state" (that is, typical) circumstance at each press. After discussing this concept with both directors, Smart and Fitzgerald attempted to define what a steady state environment would look like along two important financial dimensions: 1) labor costs; and 2) total press output of scholarly monographs.

Regarding labor: Both Michigan's and Indiana's presses were without a director for the majority of the fiscal year for which data were available. In addition, there were several press employees who were not employed the full year or whose positions were vacant, as well as positions for which the press had not yet hired, but had concrete plans to do so. The team believed that it would be unreasonable to attempt to calculate the cost of publishing a scholarly monograph without including and properly allocating the full-time salary and benefits for individuals, including the director, whose activities in the process of monograph publication are fundamental to the long-term operation (and therefore cost structure) of the press. (It is not as if the press could operate in perpetuity with only, say, one acquisitions editor when in reality it needs two—even though it may have done so for a short period of time.) Effectively ignoring what a "fully staffed" cost structure might look like would fail to account for the differences between fixed and variable costs in each press's cost structure and the respective impact that each type of cost has on the press's overall financial performance.

Regarding total press output: Consider that directors of university presses set objectives for their press's output in a given year. For example, suppose that at the start of a particular year, Gary Dunham sets a goal of publishing 135 books at Indiana during the course of the following year, ninety of which are to be scholarly monographs. Then suppose that Indiana University Press only publishes one hundred books in that year, sixty-two of which are scholarly monographs. It was insufficient to simply take that reduced output and proceed from there, as long as there was evidence to suggest that the goal of 135 books and the target mix of scholarly and trade books were reasonable given the recent history of the press. Both the number and mix of titles published in a given year fluctuates over time, and in many cases, a year in which output falls below expectations is followed by a year in which output exceeds expectations as titles delayed from the prior year spillover into the current year. Just as the cost estimates are built on "normalized" labor costs at each press, Smart and Fitzgerald used an output figure for each press that reflected what the press could reasonably be

expected to produce in a steady state year. In other words, the denominator in the cost per monograph calculation was the steady state number of monographs produced annually by each press. Normalizing both labor costs and output in this way provides a better estimate of the cost of producing a scholarly monograph than would a simple audit using actual labor costs and output figures in any single year.

## Cost allocation

It is important to keep in mind that, as mentioned earlier, both presses produce more than one type of published title, whether journals, monographs, trade books, or others. Given that this investigation involved determining the cost of scholarly monographs only, we needed to create a defensible methodology for separating and allocating costs that may inevitably overlap as part of regular press operations. For example, an acquisitions editor may spend some of her time on journals and some on scholarly monographs. The question is, how much time? And—returning again to our effort to “normalize” our results—is that time considered “typical”?

With this in mind, two (material) cost categories stood out as more difficult in terms of the difficulty in “unwinding” them to determine the proportions of each that could properly be allocated to the publication of scholarly monographs: labor costs and printing costs.

- 1) **Labor costs.** Theoretically, at both Michigan’s and Indiana’s presses, there would be individuals who worked 100 percent on monographs, 0 percent on monographs, and everywhere in between. Smart and Fitzgerald decided the best way to approach this was to interview the directors or department heads of each press and ask them what the ideal mix of each employee’s time should be on monographs vs. other types of publications. Following this, they worked closely with the accounting and human-resources teams at each press to collect salary and benefits data for each employee (including costs associated with unfilled positions and annualizing costs for positions filled for only part of the year) and, based on the breakdown provided by the press leadership, separated each employee’s total compensation into two buckets: “monograph” and “other.” For example, if an employee at Indiana University Press made \$100,000 in total salary and benefits and, ideally, 75 percent of her time should be spent on scholarly monographs in a given year, we allocated \$75,000 of that employee’s labor cost to monographs. This process was repeated for every professional employee at each press.
- 2) **Physical printing costs.** Printing posed a similar problem, not only because each press publishes a variety of publications but because each publication type has a different cost structure (this was touched upon briefly at the beginning of the “Process” section). Using Indiana University as an example, trade books comprise a significant portion of cost at that press. And within trade, printing costs vary a great deal from title to title. Press staff members grouped trade titles into three categories: high-cost, medium-cost, and low-cost books. They provided an average number of books in each category that Indiana’s press would, under ideal circumstances, publish in a year, and thus derived “weights” for each category in the press’s trade portfolio. For example, of the forty-five trade books Indiana University’s press published in fiscal year 2014, fifteen (33.3 percent) were deemed high-cost, ten (22.2 percent) medium-cost, and twenty (44.4 percent) low-cost. From there, Smart and Fitzgerald took a random sample of each cost-type of trade book (high, medium, and low), obtained actual printing costs for each title in the random sample, averaged costs for books in each category,

and then applied these average costs to the weights derived for each cost-type. In this way, the team determined an “average total cost” for desired trade printing at Indiana in a given year.

For scholarly monographs, Smart took a random sample of thirty recently published titles and averaged their printing costs. He then took that average per-monograph printing cost and applied it to the number of monographs that Indiana would, under ideal circumstances, publish in a year. In this way, Smart and Fitzgerald were able to determine an “average total cost” for scholarly monograph printing at Indiana in a given year.

By summing these average total costs across publication type (trade and monograph), the team could then generally determine the weight of monograph printing cost in the overall mix of the press’s total printing costs. This number was 60 percent. Given that the target mix at Indiana is two-thirds scholarly books and one-third trade, the 60 percent share of printing costs allocated to scholarly book reflects the lower average printing costs of scholarly monographs. That is, if both types of books were equally costly to print, the share of printing costs allocated to scholarly monographs would be 67 percent rather than 60 percent.

They applied a similar approach to Michigan’s press where applicable, although the list at Michigan is less complex than at Indiana (i.e., Michigan publishes fewer trade books, so a higher fraction of printing costs can be tied directly to scholarly monographs).

Smart and Fitzgerald also investigated the cost of physical space at each press. Sometimes universities allocate an explicit charge for space to a press, and sometimes they do not. We felt that it was appropriate to assess the cost of space (based on guidelines given to us by each university) regardless of whether presses paid rent to the university. On a per-monograph basis, the cost of space was relatively small, approximately \$1,000 at Michigan and under \$500 at Indiana.

For all other costs at both presses—those considered immaterial (under \$100,000 in the aggregate), or those for which sufficiently detailed data were not available—costs were allocated based on the desired monograph/other split at each press (90-percent monograph / 10-percent other at Michigan; 67-percent monograph / 33-percent other at Indiana).

## Results

After sharing the methodology with full teams at both the University of Michigan and Indiana University via conference call, the group decided that certain costs should be excluded to maintain a focus on the cost of the “zeroth” copy of a scholarly monograph: that is, all of the costs associated with transforming a manuscript to a published scholarly monograph up until printing. This immediately excluded two substantially material cost categories: printing and royalties. After excluding these costs, Smart and Fitzgerald arrived at their final per-monograph cost figures:<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Another justification for excluding royalties is that those costs are directly tied to revenue, which by definition far exceeds the royalty payments. With printing and royalty costs included, the per-monograph cost estimates are roughly \$35,000 at each press.

University of Michigan	Indiana University
\$27,576	\$26,714

Given that the mix of scholarly and trade books differs substantially between the two presses, and given that the cost allocation process started with the “raw data” from the general ledger, we were pleasantly surprised to find that the cost estimates at the two presses were so close. The cost-per-monograph figure at Michigan is 3.2% higher than the same figure at Indiana.

## Discussion

We realize that these numbers are difficult to interpret without additional context. They are certainly higher than the \$10,000 estimate used by Michael Elliott and his colleagues at Emory University, the \$15,000 that some scholarly publishers are using in experimental open access monograph schemes, or the \$20,000 used by Raym Crow in his background study for AAU/ARL.<sup>29</sup> These numbers are either explicitly hypothetical or are based on business strategies that see open access monographs as a relatively small part of a sustainable business. Fortunately, we have some more reasoned estimates in the literature and from ongoing research to which our figures are comparable.

Our first “check” on these numbers comes from a [paper](#) written in 1998 by Marlie Parker Wasserman, who was then—and is still—the director of Rutgers University Press. Importantly, she used a definition of “monograph” very similar to ours, and she provided “operating expense” numbers on a per-title basis for two individual monographs. These came in at \$22,075 and \$23,499. Assuming average inflation of 1 percent year between 1998 and 2015, these numbers grow to \$26,144 and \$27,830—nearly identical to our estimates.<sup>30</sup>

In addition, [Ithaka S+R](#), the higher-education strategic consulting and research firm, is currently involved in a study very similar to the one this paper has taken on, led by Nancy Maron. Ithaka also applied for and received a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon foundation and is currently in the final stages of completing its grant work. While its work is not yet complete, initial findings are promising: the latest per-monograph cost figures that Ithaka shared with us came in around the \$23,500 level for monographs produced by the university presses at Michigan and Indiana.

So, while research across the board is either dated or currently incomplete, it appears that the majority of figures are converging around the \$25,000 mark.

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<sup>29</sup> Michael A. Elliott et al (2015) *The Future of the Monograph in the Digital Era: A Report to the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation*; “The baseline Title Publication Fee is \$15,000” <http://www.luminosoa.org/site/faqs/>; Raym Crow (2012) [A Rational System for Funding Scholarly Monographs](#), AAU/ARL Task Force on Scholarly Communications.

<sup>30</sup> Wasserman, M. (1998) “How much does it cost to publish a monograph and why?” *Journal of Electronic Publishing* 4,1. <http://dx.doi.org/10.3998/3336451.0004.104>