

# Open Access Monographs

A message from David Ball, UKeIG Chair

There has been exponential growth over the past fifty years in the number of academic research journals and the articles they contain. The huge majority of such articles treat science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) subjects and are impenetrable to (lay) readers outside their discipline.

Over the past twenty years, the Open Access (OA) movement has brought about a fundamental change in the traditional publishing model for STEM journals, ensuring that a high proportion of the research funded, directly and indirectly, by the tax payer and charities is available free to anyone with an Internet connection.

While this is a major benefit to the global research community in STEM, the highly specialised content is generally not accessible outside STEM researchers.

However, we are now seeing the application of the Open Access model to the arts, humanities and social sciences (AHSS), where publication of research is generally through long-form books (monographs), whose content in many instances is both accessible and of interest to the lay reader.

One critical driver is the recent insistence by [UK Research and Innovation](#) (the seven research councils), that 'from 1 January 2024, monographs, book chapters and edited collections that acknowledge UKRI funding will ... need to be published Open Access.'

To give some indication of current numbers, the [Directory of Open Access Books](#) (DOAB) comprises over 65,000 academic peer-reviewed books in a wide range of subjects from many different publishers.

These numbers are expected to increase as the new movement towards university presses takes hold. Most of these new presses are exclusively Open Access. One of the first of this new generation, started in 2015 and now well established, for instance, is [UCL Press](#).

Raising awareness, and the means of retrieval, of this growing, free, accessible resource is of direct benefit to the public; it also increases the real-world impact of the underlying funded research.

[David Ball will present on this topic at the [UKeIG](#) members' forum on the afternoon of Thursday June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023.]