GUIDANCE TO APPLICANTS

* This is a first draft of the OBC Publishers’ Application Form — as some of the first applicants to the OBC, we very much welcome feedback on the form and the process of application. In that sense, you are part of the OBC collective experiment.
* We recognise that we do request quite a lot of information. If particular sections are difficult or overly time consuming to complete, please let us know in advance of submission and we can explore whether there are alternative ways of providing the relevant information, or whether it could be provided later. Given our desire to launch the OBC as soon as possible, we are keen that particular information requests do not delay applications.
* We have not included wordcounts. We do, however, often mention that we require ‘brief’ information. Please, therefore, do not feel the need to be exhaustive.

Publishers’ application form

## Why does OBC ask for this information?

This form is designed to allow publishers to provide the information needed for the Open Book Collective (OBC) to understand how presses are set up and how they maintain their Open Access (OA) operations. More specifically, it is used to help the OBC's Board of Stewards and its Membership Committee begin to assess whether a press’ values are in line with those of the Open Book Collective and whether a press’ membership package is suitable for inclusion on the OBC platform.

As an organisation dedicated to supporting a diverse range of publishers of differing sizes and with differing levels of administrative support, we do understand that some of the information requested in this form may be difficult to obtain for some presses. If so, please contact us to discuss how best to represent the work of your press.

## Who will be able to access this information?

This document is for internal use and will not be published by the OBC. OBC will safeguard all information provided, including personal / legal / financial information, in line with the General Data Protection Regulation.

We anticipate that much of the information included in this form is either not sensitive, or will already be in the public domain, in which case the purpose of this form is to allow it to be collated for the benefit of the OBC, including its Board of Stewards and its Membership Committee, as well those who will conduct outreach on behalf of the OBC. An exception may be financial information and/or legal information. While many presses may already share this information publicly, some may not. The OBC will ensure this information is only made available to those that require it for operational reasons. This information is therefore requested in a separate section.

It is worth noting, however, once an initiative has joined the OBC, they are expected to publicly share some information about their organisation and business model, in line with OBC’s commitment to openness and transparency.

For all presses, their profile page will include:

* Organizational type of the press/legal form
* Average number of OA books published in last 3 years
* Average cost per OA title
* Country of registration

Additionally, where possible/feasible, we encourage presses to share:

* Average annual revenue for the past 3 years
* Annual financial reports

# SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

## 1. Your relationship to the OBC

This information helps the OBC understand the press’ motivation for wanting to join the Collective, including any areas where our values overlap.

*In brief, why do you want to join the OBC and how do your values align with those of the OBC? (*[*More info on the mission and principles of the Open Book Collective here*](https://copim.pubpub.org/pub/open-book-collective-our-organisational-model/release/1)*)*

mediastudies.press is a nonprofit, scholar-led, open access publisher committed to a vision of OA that does not impose author paywalls in place of reader paywalls. We are committed to collective funding as a just alternative, and view the OBC as an exciting enactment of that core value. In addition, we are—like the OBC itself—committed to bibliodiversity, scaling small, mutual aid, and the campaign to reclaim scholarly publishing and its supporting infrastructure from the oligopolists.

## 2. Your press, books & audience

The answers to the following questions help the OBC evidence that it is providing support to publishers committed to producing high quality, scholarly content available on an open access basis. This is important to show we are fulfilling our charitable object as well as to be able to evidence the quality of participating presses to potential supporters.

### 2.1 Overview of the press

*In this section, please provide a brief overview of the press, addressing at least some of the following questions: What, if any, are its areas of specialised focus? What is the press’ mission/aim?*

mediastudies.press, launched in 2019, focuses on the fields of media, communication, and film studies. We publish living works, with iterative updates stitched into our process. We also encourage multi-modal submissions that reflect the environments our authors inhabit. We currently have four series: (1) Public Domain: newly-introduced and critically annotated republications of public-domain books that promise contemporary relevance; (2) Media Manifold: original monographs and other book-length works of contemporary media scholarship; (3) Open Reader: media themed open readers, collections of works available on the open web, selected and ordered with university courses in mind; and (4) History of Media Studies: monographs and other scholarly works centered on the history of media, communication, and film studies.

*2.2 Published books*

*How many books (long-form works — examples include monographs, edited collections, textbooks, critical editions, experimental books), has your press published so far? If not all of these books are Open Access, how many are Open Access and how many are not Open Access?*

### We have published four books, all of them open access, with three more slated for publication this fall.

### 2.3 Areas of geographic focus

*Are there particular geographic areas of focus for your press? If so, please briefly summarise these here.*

We do not have any areas of geographic focus, though are committed to publishing works on regions that are under-represented in the existing literature.

### 2.4 Open Access content & licenses

*For books made available on an open access basis, please give details about which licenses you use. If your output includes a mixture of OA and non-OA content (including charging for access to certain digital content/formats and embargos), why is this? Do all your authors retain copyright to their work? If not, why?*

All of our books are published open access, with author retention of copyright. Our default option for authors is CC BY-NC 4.0, with authors permitted to select another Creative Commons license upon consultation with the press.

### 2.5 Peer review

*Please give a brief overview of the peer review procedure(s) you use for assessing potential books for publication. If not all the books that you have published have been peer reviewed, why is this?*

All mediastudies.press manuscripts undergo peer review: double-anonymous by default with at least two subject experts, as well as more open modes at authors’ discretion. Manuscripts are first reviewed by both the director and the associate director, to assess scholarly quality and suitability for the press. Authors that pass this first round of review are consulted about their peer review preferences. In addition to the double-anonymous review default, authors may select signed/open or community review. The review type is indicated in the published book’s front matter.

### 2.6 Metadata & discoverability

*Overall, how would you characterise the quality of your book metadata? How consistent is this metadata? Are there areas where you could benefit from more support?*

Our metadata is in excellent shape, in part because we have been able to use the COPIM-sponsored Thoth platform

*Which of the following practices do you use — and to what extent? Please indicate accordingly (N.B. we understand that not all publishers have the capacity to follow metadata management best practices — we ask this question mainly to understand where we could potentially support publishers):*

* *At least one ISBN per book (Always/Mostly/Occasionally/Never) — always*
* *One ISBN per book format (Always/Mostly/Occasionally/Never) — always: one for print, one for electronic formats (PDF, html, epPub)*
* *One DOI per book (Always/Mostly/Occasionally/Never) — always*
* *One DOI per chapter (Always/Mostly/Occasionally/Never) — always*
* *Submission to the Directory of Open Access Books (Always/Mostly/Occasionally/Never) — always*
* *Submission to other platforms (Please describe) – PubPub, OAPEN, Internet Archive, Project MUSE, Library of Congress, Worldcat, Apple Books, Google Books, Amazon*
* *Use THOTH metadata management system (Always/Mostly/Occasionally/Never) — always*
* *Other metadata management system? (Please describe) —Thoth is supplemented by Airtable*

### 2.7 Usage

*While the OBC is somewhat sceptical about the value/accuracy of usage statistics, it is anticipated that many library members may request information about these. What usage information do you collect (if any)? If you don’t collect usage data, why not? How readily available would this be when reporting to subscribing members? If you do collect usage information and it’s readily accessible, please feel free to provide some indicative data.*

We collect usage data, platform by platform: PubPub, Amazon, MUSE, OAPEN, Internet Archive, Apple Books, and Google Books. Our metrics are linked to from our site, at https://airtable.com/shrefGFoEtseie8T9/tblJd9kNmiu3tuonU

3. Your values & activities

The answers to following questions help us talk to potential supporters about your values and any areas of particular priority for your organization.

### 3.1 Community engagement

*It is not a requirement for press to be involved in forms of community engagement (and indeed, we leave it up to you to define what a relevant community might be), however it is useful for OBC to know if your organisation is involved in any such work, partly to inform its outreach work. Community engagement might include direct engagement by the organisation/its representatives with formal or informal academic or non-academic communities, advocacy organisations, and other open access organisations. If you can, please briefly detail any such work in this section, also in terms of sharing knowledge and expertise as a form of mutual support. If you do not undertake community engagement, please detail why.*

mediastudies.press is a proud member of ScholarLed, the coalition of mission-oriented OA publishers. Both the director and associate director are on the board of Libraria, the OA-justice group for anthropology and adjacent disciplines. The director is co-founder and co-lead of MediArXiv, the OA repository for the media studies fields. He serves on the communication field’s main society’s OA task force, and writes frequently on OA and epistemic justice issues.

### 3.2 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

*Does your organisation undertake any specific activities relating to supporting diversity, equity and inclusion? If not, how could OBC support your organisation to do so? (OBC’s own Diversity, Equity and Inclusion statement is included below, in Appendix 1)*

We fully endorse the values and commitments expressed in the OBC’s DEI statement. We are committed to expanding the range of voices that we publish, with Latin American scholars a particular interest for outreach. mediastudies.press publishes a journal, *History of Media Studies,* whose main editorial mission is to expand the field’s historiography beyond the English-speaking North Atlantic. The Board is slated to draft and review a DEI policy as its main fall-meeting agenda item.

### 3.3 Transparency

*Is transparency important for your organisation (and/or would you like it to be)? If so, where/how? If there are ways in which you would like to be more transparent, how could OBC support your organisation to do so?*

Transparency is one of our core values. We have maintained a Transparency page, with filings, reports, meeting minutes, metrics, and even financials available for review: https://www.mediastudies.press/transparency

### 3.4 Additional information

*You can use this section to optionally provide further information about your values or any activities/commitments not covered by the above questions.*

# SECTION 2: LEGAL & FINANCIAL INFORMATION

## 4. Legal information

The answers to following questions form an important part of our due diligence, including helping the OBC understand how the press’ work might be shaped by any existing legal commitments/obligations, as well as enabling us to ascertain any potential conflicts of interests with the OBC and, if relevant, how these might be managed.

### 4.1 Country of registration

United States

### 4.2 Registered address

414 W. Broad St., Bethlehem, PA 18018 USA

### 4.3 Legal form

*Please detail your press’ specific organisational type, as per your country of registration (e.g. company, foundation, charity, other type of not for profit).*

mediastudies.press is a nonprofit corporation registered in Pennsylvania, with federal 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status.

### 4.4 Name and country of bank (no bank account details needed at this stage)

M & T Bank, USA

### 4.4 Governance

*Please detail any relevant governance/oversight structures*

mediastudies.press is structured by its Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws, which are available on our website. We are governed by a Board of Directors, who appoint an executive director and other staff. The press also maintains an Advisory Board of scholarly publishing and/or media studies expertise. We are interested in adopting some of the values and design of the OBC governance model.

### 4.5 Legal relationships

*Please detail any other relevant legal relationships/obligations (e.g. to academic institution, organisational partners) that could directly impact any of the following: (a) your publishing activities, (b) your finances, (c) how OBC revenue would be used (d) your ability to independently enter into contractual obligations with authors. If so, how are these managed to ensure they do not unduly impact the independence of the press?*

None

### 4.6 Conflicts of interest with the OBC

*Does the press and/or do key members of the press have any existing legal or personal relationships with any members of OBC, including its Board of Stewards and/or its Membership Committee? If so, detail these here, so that that the OBC can take steps to avoid any potential conflicts of interest.*

None

## 5. Financial information

### 5.1 Overview of business model

The answers to the following questions help us understand the financial context informing the pricing of membership package(s) detailed in the next section. It is important for the OBC to be able to confirm that it has assessed that membership packages are priced fairly in relation to a press’ financial needs/model.

*Please give a brief overview of your current business model. How do you currently fund open access books?*

Our existing business model is driven by financial donations and the donated labor of the director and associate director, supplemented by book sales and institutional or other funds provided by authors. We do not, however, charge BPCs on principle, and instead merely ask authors of accepted manuscripts to check for existing funds.

### 5.2 First copy costs

*If you are able to, please give information about your average first copy-cost/per-title cost, making clear what costs are included in this figure. Alternatively, please give a sense of a range of possible costs, as well as information about at least 2 case study titles. If providing case study based information, it would be helpful to have an idea of what your costs are for a 'standard' monograph (few/no images, straightforward editorial process, standard workflow etc.) and for an outlier in which more work was required, for whatever reason.*

Our cost per book is difficult to estimate. We expect that number to stabilize around $5,000 per book. Currently direct costs are primarily copy-editing, ranging from $1,000 to $2,000 per book, with cover design costing between $100 to $500. The per title Project MUSE fee is $100, and reviewers honoraria is another $200 dollars (or $300 with a second-round). The other steps in the process are run on a volunteer basis: ingestion, editing, peer review management, typesetting, distribution and marketing. We have overhead that is difficult to translate into per-book terms: software (e.g., Adobe CC, Airtable) and memberships (e.g., OASPA, Knowledge Futures Group) as the main expenses. Our aspiration is to provide compensation for facets of the operation that are now provided on a volunteer basis, with the expectation that our per-title costs will rise to $4,500 to $5,500. We would also greatly benefit, as we have in so many other ways, from the example of our better-established peers when it comes to budgeting and accounting.

### 5.3 Output

*Please give a brief overview of your past and planned output. There is no need to provide title level detail, rather an overview of how many titles have been published in recent years, as well as estimated numbers of titles to be published in the coming years*

Since our founding in 2019 we have published four titles. In the near future (2022–2025) our output will rise to, and settle at, five titles per year across our four book series. We endorse the “scaling small” philosophy of helping newer presses over growth for its own sake.

## 6. Membership package(s)

This information is used to understand how a press’ membership package will be priced so that this can be assessed in relation to the financial information provided in the previous section, as well as more about how OBC revenue will be allocated. This information will also be potentially be used to discuss potential collaborations between your press and other presses in collective packages.

### 6.1 Your membership package(s)

*If you already have a library membership programme, or have information about how a potential membership package might be structured, please describe it here. If you do not and would like guidance on creating a new membership package, please simply indicate in this section that you would like OBC guidance.*

*If relevant, please include details of fees that you would charge on the OBC (including tiered pricing, where relevant). Is your membership offered on other platforms, if so where? Is your pricing structure on the OBC platform going to be the same or different? If there is a significant discrepancy in price between other platforms and your offering on the OBC platform, can you please explain why?*

*Please also detail what benefits are available to those that support the programme (e.g. annual reports, metadata, usage information, access to backlists – feel free to be as creative as you can in offering potential benefits, as these greatly aid our outreach work).*

We do not have an existing membership program. Our plan is for the OBC to serve as our one and only membership platform, with an individual listing as well as inclusion in a the ScholarLed package. We have not determined our tiered fees as yet, but plan to keep those in the same band as, and in consultation with, other small scholar-led presses, notably Mattering, Meson, and African Minds.

Among the benefits for supporters would be (as outlined above) a semi-structured set of information on the listing page, including projected output, access to usage data, governance and budgetary details. The point will be to diminish what is currently a major hassle for librarians and other funders, even for individual membership programs: vetting. LYRASIS’s OACIP uses a structured set of questions that are intended to streamline and pre-vet in this regard. Annual reporting could be guided and semi-structured for similar reasons.

### 6.2 Collective membership packages

*The OBC offers the possibility for initiatives to be supported not just individually but also via collective membership packages. Are there any existing initiatives hosted on the platform that your package could potentially be included in a collective package with? Are there initiatives not currently on the OBC, or other organisations that have applied to join the OBC, that you would ideally like to be included in a collective package with?*

As members of the ScholarLed collation, we would aim to be included in that collective membership package.

### 6.3 Allocating & integrating OBC revenue

### In line with its anticipated charitable object, OBC revenue can only be used to fund Open Access works and infrastructures. Please describe (a) how OBC funding will be used and integrated with other existing revenue streams and (b) how you will evidence how future OBC revenue is used (both to the OBC and subscribers).

### As mentioned above, mediastudies.press also publishes a journal, History of Media Studies, which was successfully funded through OACIP. We are in the process of setting up a separate bank account, with segregated budgeting, for those journal funds and operations, vs. any OBC funds intended for our book publishing. We intend to create an annual report for OBC funders, and we support requirements for OBC member presses to include important information (while allowing some leeway on what else to include).

## 7. Future outlook

This information is used to understand the potential impacts of OBC funds in the medium to longer term.

*Please give a brief overview of how you see your organisation developing, once you begin to receive revenue from the OBC. For hybrid presses whose frontlist output is either currently, or will be in future, less than 75% OA, are you willing, prior to the launch of your membership programme on the OBC, to develop a roadmap, potentially based on OBC income targets, that will detail how you could transition to regularly meeting or exceeding this threshold?*

We envision OBC as the crucial collective-funding component of our plan for sustainability, joining book sales and available institutional funds. As noted above, we currently operate only with the aid of donated funds and labor. Our aspiration is to provide Board-supervised compensation for editorial and production work, at the five-book-a-year level that we intend to maintain regardless.

## 8. Additional information

*Please use this section to add any other information not included in the above sections that may be helpful for the OBC to understand your organisation.*

None

## 9. Information security

*OBC will safeguard all personal / legal / financial information in line with the General Data Protection Regulation. Nonetheless, please use this section to make the OBC aware of any information included in this form that is particularly sensitive / confidential.*

None.

# APPENDIX 1: OBC DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION STATEMENT

The Open Book Collective works towards an open access (OA) future where OA books are freely available to a global readership, easily discoverable, free from technological and economic barriers, and easily accessible to the broadest possible readership. Thus, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility are fundamental to our work, which is grounded in our [core value](https://www.openbookcollective.org/cms/fixed_page/values/)s. We envision an OA landscape and infrastructure which is diverse in its content, forms, and participants, and encourages and supports full participation of under-supported communities. This commitment is manifested in several ways:

1. The OBC enforces a [Code of Conduct (CoC)](https://cloud.copim.ac.uk/apps/onlyoffice/273949?filePath=%2FWP2%2FPlatform%20Governance%2FOpen%20Book%20Collective%20Code%20of%20Conduct.docx) banning behaviour that is [disrespectful or that excludes, intimidates, or causes discomfort to others](https://copim.pubpub.org/pub/code-of-conduct/release/2). We do not tolerate discrimination or [harassment](https://copim.pubpub.org/pub/code-of-conduct/release/2) based on characteristics that include, but are not limited to, gender identity, sexual orientation, visible or invisible disability, physical appearance, body size, citizenship, nationality, ethnic or social origin, pregnancy, familial status, veteran status, religion or belief (or lack thereof),  age, education, socio-economic status  or  experience level. The reporting process for breaches of this code can be found in the [Code](https://cloud.copim.ac.uk/apps/onlyoffice/273949?filePath=%2FWP2%2FPlatform%20Governance%2FOpen%20Book%20Collective%20Code%20of%20Conduct.docx).
2. The OBC conducts outreach to small and medium publishers serving niche and  emerging disciplines in order to support the diversity of the OA books landscape through a process we call [scaling small](https://doi.org/10.16997/wpcc.918). Supporting small-to-medium publishers and helping them to transition to open access without relying on Book Processing Charges is key to our mission.
3. In keeping with our pursuit of [equity rather than equality](https://sparcopen.github.io/opencon-dei-report/intro.html), OBC membership costs are banded according to the supporting institution’s size and budget.
4. The OBC actively supports the publication and dissemination of multiple alternative formats and experimental genres in book publishing. We support and disseminate  works in multiple languages and encourage maximum accessibility of publications.
5. OBC encourages, and through its metadata management system  Thoth facilitates, the provision of open and freely accessible metadata for all books supported via the OBC - removing barriers to interoperability, discovery and accessibility.
6. The OBC will undertake outreach to under-served readerships, publishers, libraries and communities and actively seeks to expand participation of these communities.
7. The OBC is governed by its membership. All members have the opportunity to become involved in our governance at every level, from the General Assembly of Custodians to the Board of Stewards and its Membership Committee. We recognise that simple ‘openness to participation’ is not enough to support under-served communities in entering structures of governance (Dunbar-Hester 2019; Hart and Adema 2022), as potential members a) need to be aware of the opportunity to be involved in governance and b) might need to be practically supported to make use of it. Therefore, we actively seek to populate our Boards for balanced representation of our stakeholders not only in terms of function (libraries, publishers, infrastructure providers) but in terms of race, gender, ethnicity, nationality and geographic location.
8. Speakers and presenters at meetings are encouraged to make resources available in accessible formats, including large font sizes, easy-to-read fonts, captions, and contrasting colours. In scheduling meetings and events, we will attempt to be mindful of important calendar dates for multiple faiths and traditions, as well as different time zones (OpenCon 2017, 25). The OBC encourages and welcomes feedback on how to maximise accessibility  at meetings and at other events.

Implementation and Accountability

‘Principles are all very well but it all boils down to how they are implemented’ (Bilder et a. 2015, 4).

As recommended by  Wipperman and Skinner (2020) and Hart and Adema (2022), the OBC undertakes a regular self-audit to assess our progress in living up to our values at a concrete level. The OBC’s Board of Stewards will, as part of its commitment to regular (governance) self-assessment, analyse, amongst others:

* the number and nature of CoC breach reports and how these were managed, and with what results
* the demographic make-up of our Boards and Membership
* the demographic make-up of those nominated or self-nominated to the Boards
* the results of our outreach efforts to under-served communities
* the geographic spread of our site visitors
* the diversity of books we have supported

This Statement was first published on 26/08/2022.

Sources used in preparation of this statement:

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