Embedding Open Access in Institutional Book Publishing Workflows: A Library-Led Diamond Model

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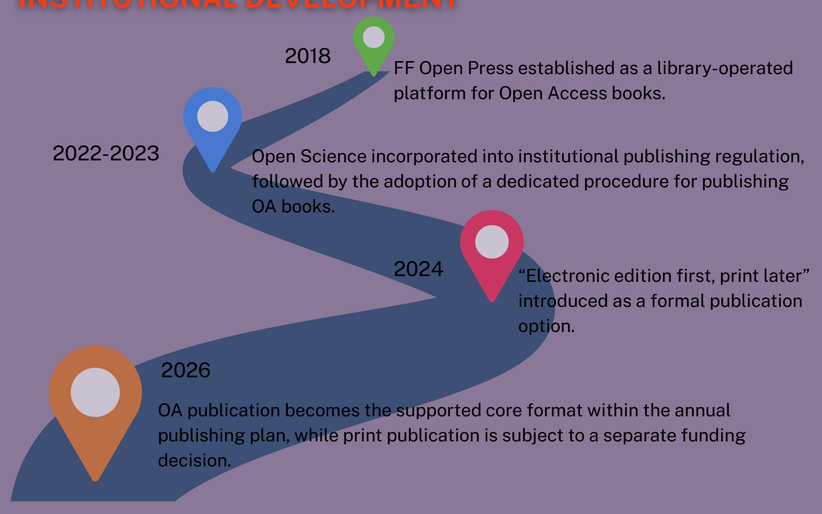
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FROM AN ADDITIONAL OUTPUT TO AN EMBEDDED WORKFLOW

Open Access for scholarly books in Croatia has developed largely through institutional initiatives rather than strong national mandates. At the University of Zagreb Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, print publishing has traditionally been managed by the Faculty press (FF Press), while the Library has operated FF Open Press since 2018.
Although the platform enabled books to be made openly available, digital publication was often planned only after, or as an addition to, print production. The emerging OA-first model embeds Open Access in institutional publishing from the initial planning stage.

The shift is not from print to digital, but from Open Access as an additional output to Open Access as an integral part of the institutional publishing workflow.

INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT



THE 2026 PUBLISHING WORKFLOW

01 Authors and editors submit proposals for the annual publishing plan and indicate the intended publication model.

02 Approved titles are assigned to thematic editors and proceed through manuscript preparation and peer review.

03 Authors and editors planning electronic publication are instructed to involve both FF Press and FF Open Press at an early stage.

04 Copyright, licensing, contributors’ consent and the use of third-party materials are addressed during manuscript preparation.

05 Following editorial and production processes, titles are published openly on FF Open Press.

OA publication is guaranteed for titles included in the publishing plan, subject to the prescribed workflow and deadlines. Print remains possible but depends on separate funding.

Diamond OA model

NO FEES FOR AUTHORS OR READERS
INSTITUTIONALLY SUPPORTED
AUTHORS RETAIN COPYRIGHT

UPTAKE OF THE AVAILABLE PUBLICATION MODELS

Categories:

- OA-only
- simultaneous OA and print
- OA with a time delay
- OA first, print later
- no publication on FF Open Press

The introduction of an explicit OA-first option in 2024 made it possible for authors and editors to separate open digital publication from decisions about subsequent print production. By 2026, delayed OA had become exceptional, while most proposals selected OA-only, OA-first or simultaneous OA and print publication.



Authors’ preferred publication models, 2021-2026

2026 publishing proposals and platform growth

72
TITLES SUBMITTED TO THE ANNUAL PUBLISHING PLAN

69/72
TITLES PLANNED FOR, OR ALREADY PUBLISHED ON, FF OPEN PRESS

200
OA BOOKS AVAILABLE ON THE PLATFORM

Of the remaining three titles, two were planned as print-only publications and one as an OA edition published by a co-publisher outside FF Open Press.

LIBRARY CONTRIBUTION

The Library had developed copyright and licensing expertise before the transition to the OA-first model. The revised workflow enables this expertise to be applied more systematically and earlier in publication planning.

Library support includes:

- contributing to institutional procedures and workflow design;
- providing early guidance on OA publication, copyright and licensing;
- supporting the consistent application of the default CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 licence, while allowing more permissive licences;
- clarifying which parts of a publication are covered by the CC licence and which third-party materials remain excluded;
- advising editors on obtaining and documenting contributors’ consent for digital publication;
- supporting the resolution of rights issues in retrospective electronic editions of previously printed books.

REMAINING CHALLENGES

Implementation remains uneven despite clearer procedures and guidance:

- authors and editors do not always involve the Library early enough;
- third-party materials continue to create copyright and licensing uncertainties;
- contributors’ consent may be difficult to obtain retrospectively for previously printed edited volumes;
- continued guidance, education and operational coordination are required.

In such situations, the Library advises authors and editors on legally and practically feasible publication options.

CONCLUSION

The case demonstrates that, even without strong external mandates, institutional Open Access book publishing can be advanced by aligning policy, funding, publishing procedures and specialist library support.

Embedding OA in the workflow, rather than only providing a platform, is essential for a sustainable institutional Diamond OA model.

FUTURE WORK

Further work will focus on consolidating institutional policy, standardising publishing workflows and continuing copyright and licensing support for authors and editors.

REFERENCES

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