

BASLER AFRIKA BIBLIOGRAPHIEN

Namibia Resource Centre - Southern Africa Library

Essential Info

2026-2028

OPENING
THE FUTURE

Summary of the OtF model

Opening the Future funds BPC-free open access book publishing while also broadening your own collection through an affordable subscription to closed content.

We're reshaping how knowledge dissemination is funded and accessed, by leveraging the collective contributions of academic libraries worldwide. Your *Opening the Future* membership funds the press to publish new OA monographs, while your library benefits from access to closed content, and no single institution bears a disproportionate burden. For a modest annual fee your library gets DRM-free, unlimited access to a closed-access selection of our backlist, with perpetual access after three years. The membership revenue is used by Basler Afrika Bibliographien (BAB) solely to produce new frontlist OA monographs, moving towards an affordable, sustainable model for academic publishing and creating a collection of OA books that are open for the world.

Through investing in OtF, your local collection grows while funding future OA books at a fraction of the price usually required by publishers to cover Book Processing Charges for a single OA book.

Publishing the frontlist OA titles is a rolling process with no thresholds to meet: as soon as we have accrued enough membership funds to produce a title the press publishes the next book in line, and so on.

Be part of something special. Join over 100 Universities around the world already committed to *Opening the Future*.

Opening the Future in a nutshell

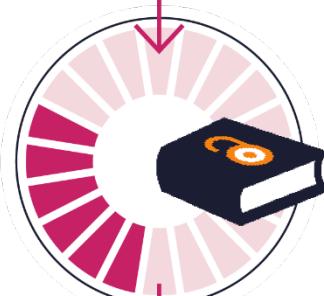
Library subscribes to specially-curated package of non-OA backlist books offered at reduced price.



Publisher make backlist package of non-OA books available to members, DRM-free and with perpetual access after 3 years.



Member fees are assigned solely to funding new frontlist OA books. As more library members join, the pot of funding gradually grows.



Working one-book-at-a-time, when enough has accrued, the press uses combined member fees to publish the next frontlist book in the pipeline as OA.



The OA books are made available to anyone globally, listed on DOAB, OAPEN, JSTOR etc.



The OtF backlist package at BAB

Southern Africa & Namibia Studies

The package of 58 titles is drawn from across BAB's different title lists. It offers a holistic and multi-faceted overview of Namibia and Southern Africa, covering its history, politics, and culture from the 19th century to the present, with a specific focus on 20th-century politics, colonialism, socio-cultural change, and Namibian identity. The collection primarily consists of monographs but includes diverse perspectives, from academic analysis to biographical accounts. It is a vital collection on southern Africa past and present and is further enriched by a dedicated African Studies series with a continental scope, featuring lectures by internationally recognised scholars such as Toyin Falola, Francis B. Nyamnjoh, and Mirjam de Brujin.

Number of backlist titles: 58

(Seven additional already open access titles are included to complement and expand on the core themes of the collection.)

bab.openingthefuture.net

The website has more detailed metadata on the titles included in each package, with downloadable spreadsheets of all title lists.

Value for money

A three-year commitment to receive perpetual access to 58 titles - and simultaneously fund new OA books at BAB - is less than half an average BPC typically charged to produce a single new OA book at many publishers.*

* This does depend on what you call an average BPC but some studies have suggested €10,000 - €12,500 is not uncommon. Through OtF even the largest libraries pay only approximately €2500 *a year*, which includes access to 58 e-books. The collected funds are pooled to cover the cost of new frontlist OA publishing.

Financially-speaking it's very cost effective – and you retain perpetual access after 3 years' membership or by paying for 3 years up front in one go.

Benefits of membership

- 1 The backlist/frontlist combination provides a unique dual-route for acquisition librarians. Many institutions do not have dedicated OA funds, particularly for monographs: the fact that the backlist remains a subscription (or staggered purchase really, since you get perpetual access) means that these libraries are able to justify the expenditure on books to which they would otherwise not have access. It's a purchase or acquisition basically. At the same time, every year of membership grows their (open) collection too.
- 2 Libraries that prefer to pay with their OA budgets are able to justify the expenditure because the new frontlist titles are openly accessible with no embargo. This also allows institutions that have access to block grants for OA to use this pot to fund the purchase.
- 3 If the target is met and the frontlist in the series is openly accessible each year, any surplus membership revenue will go towards funding more OA books at BAB.
- 4 Publishing the OA titles is a rolling process with no threshold to be met: as soon as they have the funds to produce a title the press will publish the next book in line OA, and so on. Membership/subscription funds are directed purely towards ensuring that future press outputs are OA.
- 5 Backlist access for BAB titles is via the African Books Collective (ABC), established in 1989 to provide infrastructure for African publishers who were finding it difficult to disseminate their books to buyers and libraries in other regions. Since this time, the ABC have responded to the evolving needs of publishers and now distribute and market eBooks, undertake production work, and provide marketing services. They remain a vital infrastructure for over 150 academic and trade publishers in the region, leveraging economies of scale on their behalf to ensure their eBooks are available on major global platforms. We're pleased to be partnering with them for OtF too.
Authentication supported by the ABC includes IP range, OpenAthens ID and EZProxy. They offer COUNTER-compliant stats, MARC & KBART.

Benefits continued

- 6** The backlist books are provided in accessible PDF format. Library members/patrons have unlimited concurrent access, DRM-free for the duration of membership. At the expiry of the three years, libraries own the package in perpetuity but have the option to renew membership and subscribe to another package of different titles or switch to an OA Supporter Membership without the backlist.
- 7** Titles included in the package are based on editorial insight to ensure they are relevant, current, and represent good value-for-money.
- 8** No catches and no hidden fees – trust and transparency is the only way this will work for everyone. Members are not asked to pay more on top of their annual fee to access ‘more’ or ‘better’ titles. The package won’t suddenly change; there is no bait and switch.

The small print

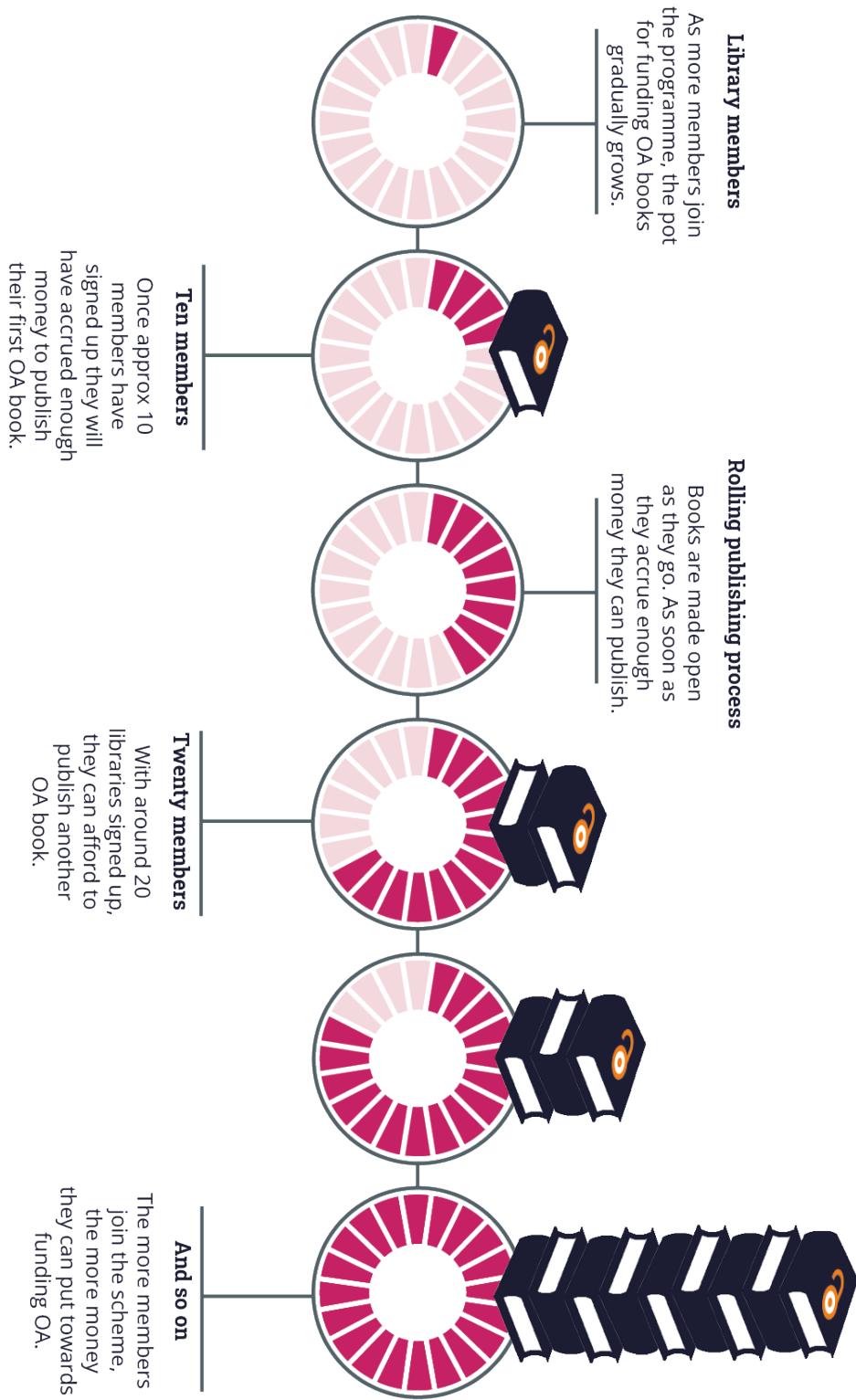
Access to titles will be provided within 2 weeks of invoicing. Access to the titles in the package becomes automatically perpetual at the end of the 3-year period or on payment of all 3 years upfront. Libraries can sign up and pay at any time of year, but the ongoing payment cycle is January to December. For example:

- (a) Institution starts participation anytime between January 1 - August 31, 2026. Access to books is granted immediately. They are invoiced immediately with payment applying to the 2026 calendar year. Subsequent invoices are sent in January 2027 and January 2028.
- (b) Institution starts participation between September 1 - December 31, 2026. Access to books is granted immediately. They are invoiced immediately with payment applying to the 2027 calendar year. Subsequent invoices are sent in January 2028 and January 2029.

This makes billing and planning easier to administer for the presses, platforms and invoicing partner. It gives libraries access to the books asap and ensures they get value-for-money since that access is ultimately perpetual.

Incremental OA

As BAB accrues enough funds from membership subscriptions, we can publish the next OA book in the publication pipeline.



How can I persuade my institution to support OtF and collective funding for open access books?

If you need to build a case for support in your library, this series of 3 blog posts gives some useful language, case studies, and arguments:

[Persuading my library to support collective funding for OA Books \(Part 1\)](#)

[Persuading my library to support collective funding for OA Books \(Part 2\)](#)

[Creating evaluation criteria to assess collective funding models for OA Books \(Part 3\)](#)

How to sign up

Your library can become a subscribing member through a simple sign-up form on the OtF website or by emailing Lyrasis on membersupport@lyrasis.org.

Lyrasis is a trusted non-profit library consortium based in the USA and can process sign ups wherever you are in the world.

bab.openingthefuture.net/packages

Questions, info & feedback

 Contact the team at
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 bab.openingthefuture.net

 Lyrasis.org/BAB

 www.baslerafrika.ch

 africanbookscollective.com

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