



Subscribe to Open at Project MUSE



COMING IN 2025!



Subscribe to Open (S2O) is an equitable model for scholarly journals that enables subscription titles to open access to their current content without Article Processing Charges (APCs). The Project MUSE S2O program is built around our current journal collections model, and will launch with the calendar year 2025 subscription term. With more than 800 current journals in the humanities and social sciences, from close to 200 nonprofit publishers, MUSE is uniquely positioned to develop and deploy an S2O program at scale for a significant number of its journals. Through the support of MUSE's vast community of publishers and libraries worldwide, the S2O program will open a wealth of vital scholarship in disciplines not well served by other open access (OA) models.

The MUSE S2O Program makes open access to the current year's content of participating journals contingent on the continued support of MUSE subscribers. Each year, MUSE will set the minimum sustainability threshold required to fund the participating S2O journals that year. If the sustainability threshold is reached, the current year's content will be opened to all readers. If the threshold is not reached, the content will remain gated. Additionally, subscribers will continue to enjoy access to MUSE's deep backfile content. Nearly 200 journals have complete runs – from volume 1, issue 1 – available on the MUSE platform, and many journals in the MUSE collections have several decades of back volumes.

Supporters of MUSE understand the enormous value of humanities scholarship both in academic studies and in public spheres: shaping our understanding of the world and our place within it. Our community believes that humanities content from nonprofit publishers does not belong behind a paywall. In order to make this shift to open access a reality, we need a unified approach. The success of the MUSE S2O Program relies on the collective support and collaboration of various stakeholders, including researchers, institutions, libraries, funders, and publishers. By participating in the movement towards more open access and financially backing this important scholarship, we are all contributing to a more inclusive and equitable scholarly ecosystem.

The MUSE S2O Program builds upon the foundation of MUSE's existing journal collections model – a valued platform for nonprofit university press and society publishers and a trusted resource in university libraries for nearly 30 years. The model provides a low-risk path to increasing access to a journal's content that benefits both libraries and publishers in many ways:

- Makes high-quality humanities research from nonprofit publishers widely available to readers without barriers to access.
- Ensures that subscribing libraries maintain uninterrupted access to both current scholarship and archival backfile content.
- Costs no more than a library's current conventional subscription.
- Allows journals to publish an entire year's output of articles open access without requiring authors to pay APCs.
- Provides a stable and guaranteed royalty structure to support nonprofit journals and maintain the quality and integrity of their publications while making the transition to open access.

► Keep up with the latest developments regarding Subscribe to Open at Project MUSE



about.muse.jhu.edu/muse/s2o

Frequently Asked Questions About S2O

This is a selection of the most frequently asked questions about Subscribe to Open at MUSE.

▶ See our complete FAQ online for more about how S2O works for both libraries and publishers



about.muse.jhu.edu/muse/s2o/#faq

? How do libraries participate in the MUSE S2O program?

Libraries will simply renew their current collection subscriptions annually, and beginning in 2025, those subscriptions will support a portion of the titles in the collection in making all their current-year content open access. S2O does not require new investment from libraries – just continued support for a trusted, vital scholarly resource.

The titles participating in S2O will continue to be included in their current MUSE collection(s) along with conventional subscription journals. You participate in the MUSE S2O program by renewing your existing subscription, by the annual participation deadline.

Libraries not currently subscribing to one of Project MUSE's Journal Collections may participate by taking up a subscription to any collection which includes S2O-participating journals.

"I wholeheartedly applaud the innovative MUSE S2O Program and strongly encourage more journals to join this endeavor to make genuine fee-free OA a reality for both authors and readers."

ZAIJUN YUAN

Editor, *The China Review: An Interdisciplinary Journal on Greater China*

? Will Project MUSE offer new or different Journal Collections?

We will continue to offer the same suite of interdisciplinary and broadly discipline-specific collections that have been available for many years. Building our S2O program around these flagship collections means that libraries can support journals transitioning to open access, simply by renewing their subscriptions to these trusted, essential resources. The titles included in the collections

will not change – the titles from each collection that participate in the S2O program will simply make their new content OA if the program is successful.

? Will pricing for Project MUSE Journal Collections change with S2O?

Libraries can expect to continue paying the same amount for their collection subscriptions under our S2O program. MUSE has always moderated annual price increases. Modest increases are necessary to cover platform innovation and compliance with evolving industry standards, the addition of carefully curated new content to the collections, and increases in our operating costs. As a division of a nonprofit university press, Project MUSE invests any surplus back into improving our platform, sustaining our participating publishers, and supporting the ecosystem of academy-owned scholarly communications.

? What happens if a library cancels its subscription?

Maintaining its MUSE subscription is the only way for a library to guarantee continued access to the current content and backfile content. An institution that cancels its MUSE Journal Collection subscription will lose access to both current and backfile content. As the S2O program's sustainability threshold requires very high participation by subscribers, the chances of being able to cancel and gain access via OA are quite small. Backfile content will remain gated even if the S2O program succeeds in opening the current year's content from participating titles. A subscription will still be required to access all content from titles in the collection that are not participating in the S2O program.

? What journals are eligible to participate in MUSE's S2O program?

Participation in the S2O program is open to any actively-publishing full-royalty journal in the MUSE Journal Collections. Virtually any title seeking broad, immediate access to its research will benefit from participating in the program. MUSE's S2O program provides a way to open access to the current content of journals on any subject, in any discipline, and with any type of audience.

Publishers may participate in the S2O program with as many or as few titles as they wish. Journals will be asked to commit to a minimum of three years of participation from the time they join the S2O program.

“This initiative provides a valuable opportunity for an Asian university press like ours to participate in the OA journal landscape. S2O promotes equitable access to scholarly information and fosters a more inclusive academic community on a global scale.”

GAN QI

Director, The Chinese University of Hong Kong Press

? Which journals are participating in the S2O program on MUSE?

We are asking publishers to formalize their journals’ participation in the S2O program before the end of the 2023 calendar year. See the back of this brochure for the preliminary list of publishers that have committed to participate with at least one title, and check our website for updates.

? Will back issues of S2O journals eventually become OA on MUSE?

No. Licensed access to valuable journal backfile content provides an incentive for libraries to continue to subscribe to MUSE. The S2O program will not open the backfile years.

? What is the “sustainability threshold”?

The S2O Sustainability Threshold represents the minimum subscription revenue required for the current year’s content to be opened.

MUSE will establish a revenue target each year that reflects the funding necessary to maintain the platform and its participating publishers. If subscription revenue reaches at least 98% of the revenue target – the “sustainability threshold” – by the S2O participation deadline, the current year’s content will be opened.

? How are the annual revenue target and the sustainability threshold determined?

MUSE will set the S2O sustainability threshold to provide the minimum funding necessary to open the participating journals. The revenue target represents the net subscription revenue MUSE needs to

maintain both Project MUSE’s operations and those of our participating publishers, many of whom rely significantly on the royalties they receive from MUSE to sustain their publishing activities. Achieving the sustainability threshold will allow MUSE to distribute royalties to the journals in its collections and to support the ongoing operation of the MUSE platform.

? What happens if subscription revenue does not achieve the S2O sustainability threshold in any given year?

If the sustainability threshold is not reached by the deadline, all content remains gated and available only to subscribers. No new content will be opened under the S2O program that year. Content that was published open access under prior year programs, or made open via alternative models, will remain open.

? How will MUSE ensure discovery of content opened by S2O?

MUSE will continue to distribute robust metadata for our journal collections to all major library discovery partners. We will be meticulous in the creation and dissemination of metadata, for both the OA content and remaining gated content, to help libraries maintain good records and to ensure the most robust discovery of the open content, particularly by users in the wider community outside of subscribing institutions.

? Will COUNTER-compliant usage reports be available for library subscribers?

MUSE will continue to provide COUNTER-compliant statistics to library subscribers, including details on all usage of content that can be authenticated to their institution, whether open or gated. Users may discover and connect to open access content in a wide variety of ways and not all usage of OA content may be able to be affiliated to a specific institution. MUSE is also working with a number of initiatives dedicated to the collection and reporting of data on open access content use.

“We see Subscribe to Open as a cornerstone in our efforts to make scholarship more accessible. We’re grateful to the participating libraries and our partners at Project MUSE for creating and supporting this innovative program.”

JOHN SHERER

Spangler Family Director,
The University of North Carolina Press

Subscribe to Open Participating Publishers

Participation in the Project MUSE S2O program is open to any actively publishing, full-royalty journal in the MUSE Journal Collections. Project MUSE publishers will decide which of their journals to enroll by the end of the 2023 calendar year. The following publishers have committed at least one journal to participate in the program, beginning in 2025.

The list of publishers and journals participating in the MUSE S2O program is growing dynamically, so visit our website for updates.

about.muse.jhu.edu/muse/s2o-participants



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