



TOME Stakeholder Value Assessment

Final Report

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BlueSky to BluePrint

August 2023

Acknowledgements to ARL Visiting Program Officer Peter Potter and the TOME Advisory Board for their thoughtful feedback on drafts of this report.

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<https://doi.org/10.29242/report.tome2023>



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Foreword

In 2017, the Association of American Universities (AAU), the Association of Research Libraries (ARL), and the Association of University Presses (AUPresses) launched a five-year pilot project that became known as Toward an Open Monograph Ecosystem (TOME). Participating pilot universities pledged to pay up to three \$15,000 publishing grants per year for their faculty authors to publish open-access scholarly monographs with a willing university press.

This pilot’s objectives reflected the values and priorities of the partner associations, including producing digital works that are free to read, providing financial support to a network of university presses, and signaling to humanities and social science faculty that universities value and support their scholarship. The associations pledged that at the conclusion of the pilot—in close communication with institutional representatives and by monitoring usage and engagement with the works—they would share the results “widely within the higher education community to inform institutions and scholars of this initiative, which holds great promise to substantially expand the dissemination and use of scholarship in the humanities and qualitative social sciences and to stimulate the development of innovative new forms of digital scholarship.”

Five years later, the ecosystem for open monographs has blossomed with new models and experimentation. TOME has grown alongside other open-access book initiatives as well as new technology platforms and workflows to produce innovative and multi-modal works. We launched the TOME website (openmonographs.org) not only to promote TOME but to bring attention to related initiatives, declaring that TOME was a “movement, not a club.” We regularly included participants and speakers from adjacent open-monograph projects in our annual stakeholder meetings. In Canada, the US, UK, Europe, and elsewhere, support for open scholarship has been bolstered by new public policy directives accelerating open access in humanities and social science book publishing. The following report contains a

qualitative analysis of the TOME experience from the perspective of the institutions who provided the funding and the authors who published in the program. It also draws on prior research on the financial model from the perspective of participating university presses and includes some early usage data for the first 25 TOME books published.

Over the course of the pilot, TOME has been supported not only by institutional representatives and association staff but by an advisory board drawn from the AAU, ARL, and AUPresses constituencies (provosts, university librarians, and press directors) and a number of volunteer-led subcommittees, including marketing and impact assessment. From 2019 to 2022, Peter Potter, publishing director for the Virginia Tech University Libraries, served as a visiting program officer at ARL to lead TOME. Peter maintained vibrant community interaction through a BaseCamp instance, liaised with participating institutions and presses, planned annual TOME stakeholder meetings, presented extensively at national and international conferences about TOME, and kept meticulous track of usage statistics using TOME’s “referatory,” a Figshare site that maintains metadata for all published TOME books and links to open access (OA) versions on other platforms and repositories. AAU, ARL, and AUPresses are immensely grateful to Peter for his leadership of TOME.

The partner associations have learned much in this pilot. We offer the following reflections to accompany Nancy Maron’s rich description of the process, relationships, and decision-making that enabled authors to produce more than 150 open-access monographs over the past five years. Among the findings that suggest a TOME-like program is worthy of programmatic implementation post-pilot include:

- **Participating authors loved it:** Surveyed authors believe their (open) books have had more impact; they feel more connected to disciplines and communities outside their own; and they feel supported by their press with the same care that they have come to expect from traditional monograph publishing. They also feel

supported by their libraries and institutions who provided the funding.

- **That 67 university presses were willing participants in TOME shows that presses are open to open access.** Moreover, TOME was an ice-breaker for several presses that had not previously published an OA book. By all indications, those presses will look for opportunities to publish more OA books in the future.
- **There is a core engaged group (more than half of the 20 pilot institutions)** who have already pledged funds to continue providing TOME publishing grants for the next one to five years.
- **TOME is exceptional among OA endeavors** in that it is designed to expand the source of funding from an institution beyond just the library collections budget.
- **TOME is a unique funding model** in that the publishing grant travels with the author to the participating press of their choice.
- **TOME complements, and even collaborates with, other OA monograph endeavors** that have emerged in recent years; examples include Luminos and the Sustainable History Monograph Pilot (SHMP).
- **TOME helped expose shortcomings in OA book metrics, and the sponsors have been involved and engaged in the global development of metrics** to assess e-book usage, including the OA Book Usage Data Trust.

Lessons learned from the pilot that will be important to address in program implementation:

- **Academic leadership:** The number of universities participating in the pilot grew from 12 to 20 over the course of five years. While this growth is significant, it is less than what the sponsoring organizations had initially hoped. Representatives of the sponsoring organizations see this as an issue of visibility to academic leadership. While they never tested this premise, they

believe that humanities and social sciences deans and associate deans of research would have been a better outreach target than provosts, for whom this was likely too narrow a project.

- **Unaffiliated or under-resourced scholars:** TOME was designed by institutional membership organizations for institutions. From the outset, the partners and participants recognized that scholars who are unaffiliated or at under-resourced institutions would not benefit from the pilot. However, a future implementation of TOME could address this issue in any number of ways. As it stands, we know of at least one participating institution that funded a faculty author at a nearby HBCU. Going forward, TOME could address this issue structurally through scale and surplus, and by including a voice in TOME governance directly representing authors and humanities and social sciences disciplines.
- **Expectations and requirements:** Requirements for digital file affordances, metadata, posting, and reporting were left purposely light in the design of the pilot, but the variety that sprung up made for occasional friction between institutions and publishers, which undoubtedly slowed progress towards attaining scale. The TOME pilot participants are well-positioned to take active roles in addressing these challenges in coordination with our larger global community of interest and practice.
- **Accessibility:** As digital publishing affordances have grown, accessibility standards and capacities have not always been in place to match. This is changing, as is the partner communities' understanding of and commitment to inclusive and accessible practices. Accessible book publishing requires retooling workflows and investing in new infrastructure. Many authors expressed a desire for accessible books, and at least one university press made the space in their production calendar to innovate with accessible standards. There is an opportunity here to invest financial and learning resources in the wider university-based publishing community toward this shared goal.

We hope a similar program will learn from and build on TOME's success into the future.

Association of American Universities

Association of Research Libraries

Association of University Presses

Introduction & Background

For many decades, the business model for scholarly monograph publishing remained fairly static: publishers chose which titles to publish, worked with authors to hone the manuscripts, and sold the finished product to libraries, distributors, scholars, and booksellers. The publisher invested in the development of the book and counted on sales to recoup the cost or, in the best case, generate a profit.

Today, many journal publishers have successfully found ways to publish articles using open-access models that fund the publication of the work while making it freely available to read. Publishers of scholarly monographs have faced substantial challenges in identifying viable models to do something similar. In part, this is because the cost of producing monographs is notably higher than producing journal articles and the sources of researcher support (in particular, external funding) are scarcer in the humanities and social sciences. The work of publishing monographs—involving experienced developmental and copy editors, as well as complex work around copyright, image permissions, peer review, and so forth—makes it much harder to replicate well or quickly. Early models created to open up scholarly books often focused on reallocating funds from existing customers (the libraries) to support already-published content. More recently, pilot projects have begun exploring more revolutionary ways to realign the value of the scholarly monograph with the sources of its support.

In 2017, the Association of American Universities (AAU), Association of Research Libraries (ARL), and Association of University Presses (AUPresses) launched a five-year pilot to test a new model for supporting the open publication of scholarly monographs, which came to be called *Toward an Open Monograph Ecosystem*, or TOME.¹ Scholars with book contracts in hand could request TOME funding from their institution to underwrite the publishers' costs; the resulting monographs would then be openly available in digital form immediately upon publication.

1 The foundational document describing the TOME initiative can be found in Appendix A.

The TOME pilot's goal was to explore the pathways through which institutional funding of authors' manuscripts could result in high-quality open-access monographs. The centrally defined requirements were deliberately minimal, with the understanding that the cultures of contributing institutions and participating presses are diverse, and each entity would manage implementation differently. While quantitative metrics (such as number of institutions, number of presses, number of books) were considered important, the pilot's main purpose was to understand and navigate the issues that might occur in an institutionally funded model of support for the publications of open-access books.

The only requirements for participating institutions were to:

- Provide a baseline university subvention of \$15,000 to support the publication of an open-access digital monograph of up to 90,000 words
- Support the publication of a minimum of three monographs per year
- Participate for five years

As the five-year pilot drew to a close in 2022, it was clear that TOME had been a success in many ways: 143 open access books had been published with more than 20 additional titles in the works. Participants included 151 authors; 67 presses had been willing to participate and, of those, 27 had published TOME books. By year five, 20 institutions were willing to test this new model to support scholarly publishing of monographs. As this report shows, the pilot also succeeded by highlighting the diversity of institutional and publisher responses, identifying some common pain points, and addressing these through tools such as common institutional addendum templates, standard acknowledgment wording, and consistent usage and engagement information—the latter an effort that continues to evolve. This learning forms a strong foundation for moving from pilot to program.

During the time of the pilot, several other experiments to test new open-monograph publishing models emerged from a range of

individual actors, including public and private funders, commercial publishers, and universities. The University of California Press’s Luminos initiative (2015), University of Michigan’s Fund to Mission (2021), MIT’s Direct to Open (2021), and Central European University Press and Liverpool University Press’s implementation of Opening the Future (2021) suggest different models to fund open monographs at the press level, through institutional and community support. Cambridge University Press’s Flip it Open (2022) offers the promise that once a predetermined “revenue threshold” is reached through traditional sales channels, certain books will be made freely available. The University of North Carolina (UNC) Press’s Andrew W. Mellon Foundation–funded Sustainable History Monograph Pilot (SHMP, 2017–2020) has approached the question in a different way, testing the waters to see if more streamlined, pared-down production workflows might fundamentally lower the cost of producing the books.² The TOME model is unique among these initiatives in its emphasis on the need for institutional funding from outside library acquisitions budgets and its attempt to define a model that transcends individual presses and can be applied more broadly throughout the scholarly publishing landscape.

The pursuit of successful models to support sustainable monograph publishing is likely to continue for the foreseeable future. Some of the reasons for this movement include:

- Scholars continue to search for ways to more broadly share their research and demonstrate its value and impact.
- The last few years of COVID-induced distance learning have made a clear case for the value of online content.
- Evolving US federal guidelines and mandates require taxpayer-funded research to be openly available.

² In addition, several efforts fund the “opening” of books that have already been published. The US National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) Fellowships Open Book Program addresses recently published books funded by NEH and NEH, and Mellon’s Humanities Open Book Program targets significant monographs that have gone out of print.

- Scholarly presses are keenly aware that the “old” method of selling monographs increasingly fails to cover the costs incurred to produce them.

For scholars to continue to write books, have them edited and published by skilled editors and publishers, and have them read by as wide an audience as possible, publishers, university administrators, and authors will need to come together in creative ways to support new and sustainable models building on the experience of projects like TOME.

Methodology

This assessment had a very specific focus: rather than a point-by-point evaluation of quantitative outcomes, this assessment was designed to help the project team gather data to help pinpoint the value proposition of TOME’s unique approach amidst a growing field of experiments and to answer the question: “What next”?

To that end, the assessment methodology was designed as an in-depth examination of attitudes and motivations of two key stakeholder groups—the institutional partners and TOME authors—to investigate the experiences of those who participated in the program.³ The aim was to learn as much as possible about how the process and outcomes were experienced by those who engaged in TOME and to surface any lingering issues or obstacles to future participation. Most important, the study was designed to help the project team hear directly from participants about improvements they hoped would be made in a future implementation of the program.

While this report focuses on people’s experience of implementing TOME, both the pilot and its assessment were complicated by institutional turnover among the partners who conceived of and planned TOME. While the teams from ARL and AUPresses have remained relatively stable, the founding team at AAU has turned over, and all the provosts who were the driving force behind TOME have retired or changed institutions since 2017. This has led to some loss of institutional memory and less input from top academic leadership in guiding the evolution of the pilot than was originally expected.

Going forward, it will be especially important to examine and strengthen the role of senior administrators in designing and implementing TOME-like publishing models. The real originality of the TOME pilot, unlike most other open monograph initiatives, is in attempting to realign the monograph-funding source within the

3 An earlier phase of assessment focused on TOME’s university press participants. See Nancy Maron and Kimberly Schmelzinger, *The Cost to Publish TOME Monographs: A Preliminary Report* (Association of University Presses, 2022), <https://doi.org/10.17613/pvek-7g97>.

university to directly benefit faculty/authors. If the publication of a monograph is understood as a significant professional benefit to the scholars whose work is published, the logical source of funding is therefore the institution (whether the author's parent department or college) not the institution's library. At a time when the library's acquisitions budget for monographs is increasingly targeted by other open access initiatives, recognizing the value of publication for faculty member success is a major shift that should be embraced.

Institutional Partners

The TOME pilot relied heavily upon representatives from each of the 20 participating funding institutions to serve as liaisons for the project. Typically, these representatives were the main point of contact with prospective TOME authors on their campuses as well as with the publishers.

All 20 institutional partners received an invitation via email to participate in the assessment survey on September 22, 2022. The survey was administered by online form, and after two weeks, 12 complete responses were collected from institutional representatives. Ten follow-up interviews were conducted: eight with the primary institutional contact and another two with senior administrators recommended by the interviewees.

The survey and subsequent interviews were extremely useful in understanding the experiences of over half of the participating institutions. The conversations should be understood as a means of surfacing the range of experiences, benefits, and challenges that arose during the pilot, and of gauging interest and support for the program going forward. It is worth noting that the total number of participating institutions—20—is itself a small number.⁴

4 TOME's founders had originally hoped for more institutional participation, including from institutions that do not support a university press, as most of the participating institutions do. This study did not examine the reasons for nonparticipation from institutions, although this will be important to understand going forward.

Authors

Of the 153 authors who participated in the pilot, 132 (those whose contact information was available) received a survey invitation email on November 1, 2022. After 17 days, a total of 77 authors had submitted responses. Due to the high response rate and the robust data collected via the surveys, no follow-up interviews were conducted. Still, it is important to note that the results shared in this report reflect the opinions of those authors who chose to respond to the survey. It is possible that there was response bias. In addition, the scope of the study did not permit examination of “nonparticipants,” authors who were not part of the TOME pilot at all. In the future, it would be useful to speak with some of these authors to gain a fuller sense of faculty awareness of and attitudes towards the program.

Publishers

Participating publishers were not surveyed as part of this assessment because a separate publisher assessment was undertaken in 2021 with the support of the Association of University Presses. That assessment was designed to understand the publishers’ experience in producing books under the TOME pilot with special attention given to better understanding the extent to which publishers found the \$15,000 grant to be sufficient to cover publications costs. The study included three parts: (1) financial data gathering, where press contacts were asked to complete a Microsoft Excel form with detailed instructions about how to define key financial terms; (2) a publisher questionnaire in Microsoft Word including five questions concerning what aspects of the publishing process, if any, they felt were different from what they would normally undertake to publish an academic monograph; and (3) follow-up interviews with several press directors to have them elaborate on the responses they had provided. The full findings of this report are summarized here and are available in the report *The Cost to Publish TOME Monographs*.⁵

5 Maron and Schmelzinger, *The Cost to Publish TOME Monographs*.

Findings

As the TOME pilot ends, questions about whether and how to take this model forward will depend upon the experiences of those who participated in it, the value they see in the model, and their interest and ability to continue participating. The sections that follow share what we heard from each of the stakeholder groups—publishers, institutions, and authors—about the impact of the TOME pilot on the publishing process and what they felt were the most compelling benefits and most challenging features of this model.

The Publisher Experience

Process

The TOME project began with 62 university presses, whose directors agreed to participate. Over the course of the pilot, the number of participating presses increased to 67.

Based on research conducted for the report *The Cost to Publish TOME Monographs*, publishers found that the experience of publishing open-access monographs with TOME was very similar to their standard publishing process. When considering a book by a TOME-eligible author, some publishers acknowledged being keenly aware of the potential for subvention funds, but all described maintaining high standards for the works acquired. Some publishers noted that certain characteristics could discourage them from choosing to publish a title using the TOME model: “If there was a complicated, highly visual book, this would likely preclude it from TOME due to the potential high cost to produce. A full-color book would also likely fall into this category.” Others described weighing “market potential” before considering a title for TOME: “We estimated whether we could still generate enough sales in an OA context to offset the loss of revenue.”⁶

⁶ While publisher assessment of future market potential might continue to be an obstacle to open-access publishing, production costs of over \$15,000 are not necessarily a deal breaker. TOME established \$15,000 as a starting point; some institutional partners were open to supporting higher production costs for monographs, to meet demonstrated need. Maron and Schmelzinger, *The Cost to Publish TOME Monographs*, 2.

Once a title was accepted, however, all publishers we heard from maintained that the editorial investments made—for development, copy editing, and other work to prepare a manuscript for publication—were largely identical to those they devoted to other books on their list. “All of our TOME books go through the same editorial process as the other books in our scholarly program,” noted one press director, “from peer review and developmental editing to copy editing and proofreading. The editorial process and the costs of this process for TOME books are similar to other books in our scholarly program.”

However, publishers pointed to specific tasks associated with open-access (OA) editions that required additional time and effort to accommodate into their existing workflows. Examples include:

- **Contracts**—TOME books require addenda to the author agreements or separate agreements with funding institutions. For books with third-party images and texts that require permission to include, the need to explain and clear OA rights also added work.
- **Production**—OA editions require changes to the front matter (such as special acknowledgment language, open-license information, DOIs, and extra ISBNs) and additional attention to accessibility requirements to ensure inclusive access for all potential readers, many of whom would lack support from a university disability services unit or similar entity.
- **Post-production**—metadata must be created for the digital editions, and then files (PDF and/or ePub) must be properly distributed/uploaded to platforms such as JSTOR, MUSE, OAPEN, etc.

None of these tasks is especially time consuming on its own, but taken together they require additional time, which adds to the costs of publishing.

Benefits and Challenges

For decades publishers have been grappling with declining sales of scholarly monographs, specifically “a steady decline in cloth edition (sales),” as one described it. “We wonder if we should continue to produce a cloth edition at all....” Publishers routinely seek out external sources of support for monographs they publish, because book sales have become an unreliable way to earn back costs.

The most obvious benefit of the TOME program for publishers is the baseline grant of \$15,000, which at the very least reduces some of the risk posed to print sales by simultaneously releasing an open-access edition. As one publisher noted, “None of these books would be OA without the existence of a program like TOME, unless the univ[ersity] came up with other funding.”

The decline in monograph sales and the new risk to revenue that comes with making a digital version freely available⁷ made the subvention a necessary starting point for publishers to test this new model. Knowing that a title comes with a \$15,000 subsidy, said one publisher, is “like having a bestselling monograph...a guaranteed hit out of the gate, without worrying about it, whether it sells one single copy in print.”

Aside from addressing concerns about the potential loss of sales, the TOME grant enabled some publishers to take editorial “risks” as well. One representative pointed out that it can also be risky when a press moves into a new subject area or tests the boundaries of its list. She described a book that was “a bit unusual” in its use of political philosophy to consider spirituality, ecology, and empire in the early-modern world. She went on to explain that, despite concerns about readership, the peer reviewers made a strong case for the book’s innovative approach. “The TOME grant offered support that allowed us to publish this book and make it available to a wider scope of readers

7 AUPresses is currently studying the impact of open access on print sales. See “AUPresses Receives NEH Grant to Study Impact of Open Access on Print Sales,” AUPresses, January 11, 2022, <https://aupresses.org/news/neh-grant-to-study-open-access-impact/>.

while also expanding our list and pushing our boundaries into new areas of exploration.”

If reducing risk was a clear benefit of TOME, publishers were still very interested in seeing what impact—financial and nonfinancial—the monographs would generate. The financial analysis in the preliminary report, *The Costs to Publish TOME Monographs* reported an average cost for the 57 monographs studied of \$19,954, well above the \$15,000 baseline grant. In most cases, sales for all paid versions of those titles, when added to the \$15,000 subsidy, helped the press to reach break-even. In a few exceptional cases, books generated significant revenue, far surpassing the costs to produce them.

It is often said that the monograph remains the “coin of the realm” for humanities and humanistic social science scholars, but, if that is the case, then sales of print copies has become a poor indicator of value. With open-access e-books, the value is in impact, although precise definitions and measures for impact are still emerging. As the TOME pilot reached its end, TOME leadership collected usage data for the first 25 books published in the pilot to gain a better sense of how to measure impact for these books. As of July 2022, the first 25 TOME books had been downloaded an average of 7,754 times.⁸ These numbers were especially striking when viewed alongside print sales figures for these same titles. Based on data provided by the publishers, the print editions (cloth and paper) of the first 25 TOME books sold an average of 590 copies.

8 See Peter Potter, “TOME Sheds Light on Sustainable Open Access Book Publishing,” Digital Science, February 16, 2023, <https://www.digital-science.com/blog/2023/02/tome-sheds-light-on-sustainable-open-access-book-publishing/>.

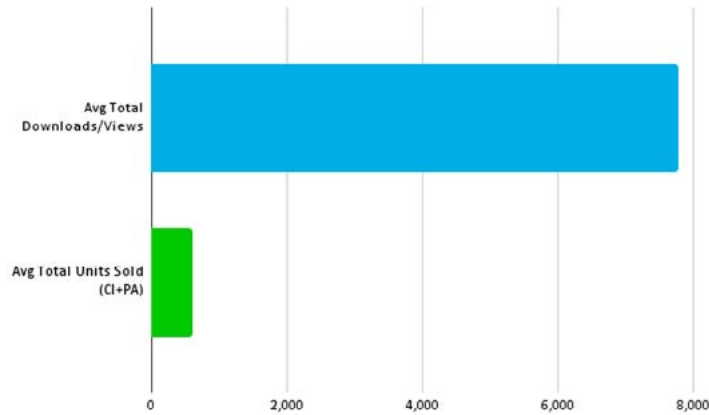


Figure 1. Downloads and Sales Stats for the First 25 TOME Books

The Author Experience

Process

For authors who responded to the survey, the process of publishing a book via the TOME pilot was almost entirely a positive one. Scholars learned about the program in a variety of ways, often from the library or another campus unit, or from their publisher. At several participating university presses, acquisitions editors took a very active role in spreading the word about TOME and counseling authors about why they should participate.

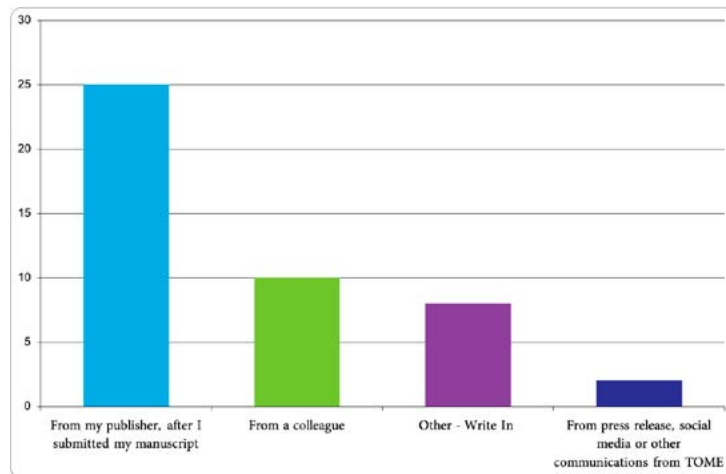


Figure 2. Author Awareness of TOME Pilot

For those who responded to the survey, agreeing to participate in making their monograph OA was an easy choice: 73% of survey respondents reported that their initial response was “very positive. I was enthusiastic about the program.” Another 26% reported that they were “willing to try but had some concerns.”

TOME authors who responded to the survey were more likely to be tenured (60%) than not and more likely to have already published a monograph prior to participating in TOME (58%).

While the survey population skewed somewhat toward tenured faculty, the overall population of TOME authors skewed even further towards those in senior, stable positions. According to TOME’s administrative records, about two-thirds of the pilot’s authors (99) were tenured, including 46 associate professors and 53 full professors. The remaining one-third (52) were not. It is impossible to tell if this reflects what is often viewed as a persistent reluctance of nontenured faculty to engage in open-access publishing due to concerns over the tenure process.

Of responding authors, 58% had already published a monograph prior to participating in the TOME project. The vast majority of those experienced authors (84%) reported that their experience with TOME did not differ from their other publishing experiences. For those who did report a difference, the changes they cited were mainly very positive:

- “TOME provided a helpful push for the publisher to move forward with what would have otherwise been an expensive project due to its length.”
- “The online options for supplementing the text were very attractive.”
- “TOME meant better planning about whom the book should reach, and how; it also encouraged a deeper conversation with the publisher about the possibilities of digital publication, which were formative for the book’s development.”

If the publishing process itself seemed largely unchanged, TOME authors perceived significant change in the impact of the book, post-publication. When asked if authors felt their “TOME monograph has had a greater (or different) impact than it would have if it were not OA,” 92% agreed that it had. Those few who reported either no change, or even a decrease in readership, were those who reported having published prior to the TOME pilot.

The greatest perceived increase in impact reported were the number and diversity of readers,⁹ while some also felt engagement increased. Some authors added additional categories: One noted a significant increase in course adoption; another noted a significant decrease in book award nominations and book reviews. The lack of consistency in the responses should be placed in the context of a very small sample size, which is too low to assign causative interpretations.

	Significantly decreased	Somewhat decreased	No Change	Somewhat increased	Significantly increased	Total # Responses
Number of readers of my monograph	3.3%	1.6%	1.6%	29.5%	63.9%	61
Diversity of readership	3.1%	0%	4.7%	28.1%	64.1%	64
Direct engagement with my readers	1.7%	0%	40%	45%	13.3%	60
Types of engagement with my readers	1.7%	0%	40%	40%	18.3%	60

Figure 3. Authors’ Perception of OA Impact

Benefits and Challenges

Authors noted a range of benefits in OA publishing via the TOME pilot. The most significant benefit authors noted was the ability of OA to “make my scholarly work more accessible to a wider readership.”

⁹ The definition of “diversity” was not established in the survey; nor did we ask authors to justify their means of measuring this. All the same, this response demonstrates the strong perception of positive impact, which may well encourage authors to continue supporting OA publishing.

Institutions and Authors appreciated the value of sharing scholarship more widely	
Institutional Partners	Authors
1. Making scholarly content widely available	1. Making my scholarly work available to a wider readership
2. Participating in an important pilot to revolutionize monograph publishing	2. Making my scholarly work available for free
3. Making scholarly content freely available	3. Making print books more affordable
4. Bringing wider attention to my institution's research	4. Participating in an important pilot to revolutionize monograph publishing
5. Supporting faculty who wish to publish	5. Bringing wider attention to my institution's research

Figure 4. Ranking of Institutional Partner and Author Perceptions of OA Value

In terms of challenges, authors noted two main themes: a lack of promotion on campus for the program; and not enough access to the data on impact of these OA monographs.

- “I would like to see information about how many people have engaged with the open-access version of my book. I don’t have any idea how many people have downloaded or read it through OA, though I’m so glad it’s available.”
- “My only recommendation might be for TOME to set up tables at conferences to help promote the books. Of course, the Press promotes them, but they are promoted at conferences as print publications. It would be helpful to draw readers’ attention to digital versions available OA.”

That said, authors' perceptions of the additional types of impact they noted were wide-ranging and significant:¹⁰

- “Picked up a rental car on an island in Greece and the guy behind the counter had a printout of my book!”
- “I have had multiple graduate students from outside the US contact me saying they had read my book and wanted to discuss parts of it with me, something that has never happened with any previous publications.”
- “Have been able to share the book easily with people who were interested in reading/citing it but who might not have bothered to actually buy it.”
- “My book was published just at the beginning of the Covid pandemic in the US. Many instructors were suddenly looking for ways to pivot to online teaching and learning.... Many more than I expected ended up assigning my book, which I learned about when they invited me to speak with their students.”
- “I have received many more international requests for talks, from places it might have been harder to reach had it not been for OA.”
- “Made many surprising connections with ‘lay’ readers, surprising directions unfolding.”

The Institutional Partner Experience

Process

If most publishers and authors reported few changes in the process of publishing under the TOME pilot, that was not at all the case for the institutional partners, who were an entirely new player in this story.

While it is common for university presses to seek grants and other sorts of external support to fund scholarly book publishing, most decision-making concerning publication occurs between an author and their publisher. The TOME pilot, by inserting the university in the process as the primary funder (so, in a sense also the client and contractual

¹⁰ For a full listing of benefits noted, see Appendix C: Survey Results: Authors.

party), introduced some complexities, but also offered a valuable way to observe different publisher practices and better understand where further clarification is still needed about what it means to publish an open-access monograph.

Some of the steps of the process that institutional partners highlighted for us in the survey and subsequent interviews are described below.

Obtaining Approval for Funding from the Institution

The pilot depended heavily on the engagement of representatives of the institutional partner. These representatives served as the liaison between stakeholder groups, often project managing the funding and publication process, creatively troubleshooting when challenges arose. Most often, these people were staff located at the university library in a range of roles, including:

- Associate Professor, Scholarly Sharing Strategist
- Associate University Librarian (AUL) for Publishing
- Digital Scholarly Publishing Specialist
- Head of Scholarly Communication
- Information Literacy Librarian
- Librarian for Education and Open Scholarship
- Manager of Collections Strategy
- Open Publishing Program Coordinator
- Publishing Services Librarian
- Scholarly Communication Librarian
- Senior Associate Director for Publishing

Beyond investigating the day-to-day experience of managing the program, this study asked where funds originated. In some cases, the initiative was supported early on by very senior members of the library—the dean of libraries, university librarian, AUL for publishing. But in other cases the primary contact was someone to whom TOME was assigned as a project.

But financial support for TOME didn't just come from the library: 42% of respondents noted that the provost's office was the primary source

of funding; 17% reported that it was the dean’s office. Over a quarter reported that funding primarily came from the library. Regardless of where funding came from, however, the library was usually tasked with promoting the TOME grant opportunities. This contrasts with other awards and supports designed to help individual scholars maximize the impact of their research. It also diverges from the original intentions of TOME’s provostial founders, who anticipated more engagement from provosts’ offices, vice presidents for research, and deans.¹¹ However, TOME’s founding provostial champions retired early in the pilot implementation, and COVID-19 pandemic played out in its midst.

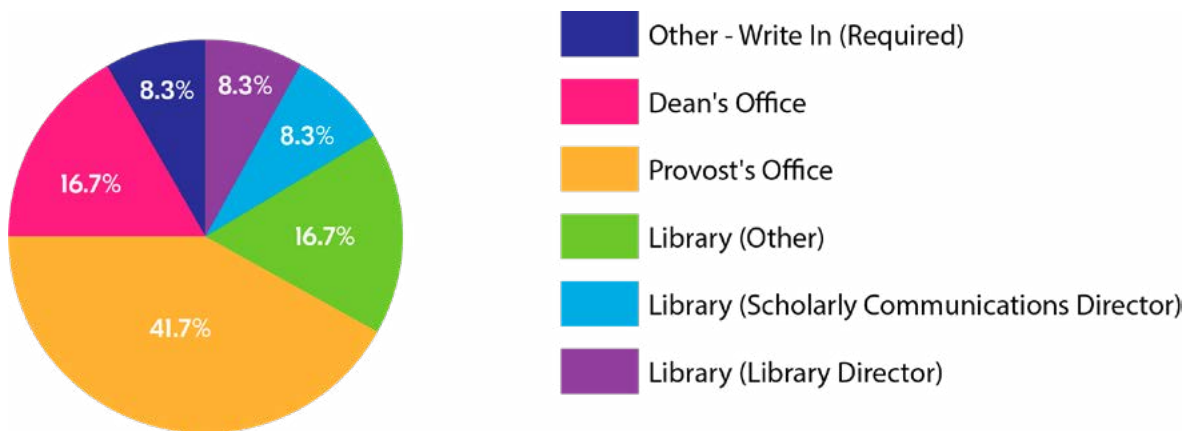


Figure 5. Source of Financial Support for TOME (reported by institutional partners)

Survey respondents were asked who they considered TOME’s “strongest champions” on campus, and while senior library leaders were frequently mentioned, they were by no means alone. In fact, it is clear that having champions beyond the library was extremely important. Among the roles named as being strong supporters of the TOME initiative on campus were:

¹¹ See, for example, the processes of allocation proposed in this preparatory study: James Hilton, Carolyn Walters, et al., “A Study of Direct Author Subvention for Publishing Humanities Books at Two Universities: A Report to the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation by Indiana University and University of Michigan,” University of Michigan Library Deep Blue Documents, 2015, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027.42/113671>.

- Faculty from the Libraries and the College of Arts & Humanities
- Dean of Arts and Sciences
- Dean of the Libraries
- Members of the Anthropology Department and the library
- Associate Dean for Humanities Research
- Dean of the college, the dean of faculty, and Scholarly Communications Office at the library
- Library and University Press
- Staff in the libraries who administer the pilot
- Libraries and departmental faculty/authors
- Dean of University Libraries; Associate Dean for Content & Access, University Libraries; Scholarly Sharing Strategist, University Libraries
- Director and staff of the University Press; TOME-funded authors on campus
- Heads of departments where TOME books have been supported

Having senior administrators on board was especially important. One respondent noted how impactful it was to have the dean of faculty support the pilot early on, reassuring faculty that monographs published in digital open-access editions would be given the same consideration in tenure and promotion review as those that in the past would have been published and sold in print only. Others described a process of having a particular department “get it.” One faculty member would participate, to be followed by others in the department, once they were able to observe the process for themselves.

Promoting and Socializing the Program on Campus

Institutional partners took a variety of paths for promoting the program to potential authors on campus. In some cases, a supporter—in one notable case, the dean of faculty—made a point of presenting the program to faculty, quelling concerns with assurances that publishing a monograph as OA would not be detrimental to future tenure and promotion decisions.

A few interviewees described the process of educating faculty about the program as labor-intensive. One liaison set up meetings and spoke with department chairs in the humanities and social sciences. “This was great, as far as getting the word out. Many did not know about OA at all, especially not what it meant about books. We absolutely got proposals from departments where we spoke with the chair.”

Others noted the benefits of word-of-mouth, where one faculty member might learn about the program from the publisher, and then the faculty member would spread the word to his or her department. As one institutional partner noted, “We tried to focus on departments where we know monographs are important. We used social media, press releases, blog posts; and a press release this summer about our success, announcing a new round of applications... One thing that seems to have worked: using the angle of ‘competition,’ peer pressure... showing examples of other faculty members who have gotten the award. This has meant getting multiple people in the same dept to apply for funding.” And as one noted, there can be some lag time between starting to talk about open access and seeing people take action; “we were not really getting proposals in the beginning; it took a year or two to get the word out.”

When asked if demand among faculty exceeded the three available grants per year on a campus, few if any representatives felt that this was the case. One institutional partner said, “We had just as many people as we had spots! For this go-round, there was not huge upfront demand.” Another noted, “Concerns about turning people away were unfounded.”

In other cases, the institutional partner was keenly aware of the small number of possible grants (typically three per year) and intentionally took a more laissez faire approach, on the grounds that “once faculty hear about TOME, they are excited about it. I had to be guarded about it.” A senior administrator at another institution echoed this sentiment, adding, “if the cost would come down, we could promote it more. Right

now, we have a line-up of faculty who would do this, but we are able to meet demand.”

Overall, few campuses appear to have sought to test the limits of the program, whether because they did not perceive strong demand... or were concerned that there might be too much demand. Some institutional representatives described the balance they sought in being able to meet demand, without needing to institute a selection process.¹² The notion of having to put an evaluation rubric into place was not appealing to several of the partners. This is an area that merits further exploration in the future.

Defining Terms, Setting Expectations

A book contract is an agreement between author and publisher. The TOME pilot introduced a third party into the process—the university-as-funder—and with this came the need to articulate the terms of funding with the publisher. Institutional partners, often library staff, took on the bulk of this work—as well as making sure that those terms were carried out by the publisher.

Among the issues that emerged in this process and would still benefit from more clarity are:

What does it mean to publish OA?

Publishers typically learned the requirements for publishing OA editions of TOME books from two sources: 1) the amendment to the author agreement and 2) guidelines provided on the TOME website.¹³ Even so, institutional partners noted that publishers were at different levels of readiness to make TOME books widely available. For instance, some institutions were content with a publisher depositing the open

¹² Examples of university processes are here: “Duke Open Monograph Award,” Duke University Libraries, accessed June 11, 2023, <https://scholarworks.duke.edu/open-access/open-monograph-award/>; “TOME Publishing Grant,” University of Michigan Library, accessed June 11, 2023, <https://www.lib.umich.edu/research-and-scholarship/awards-and-grants/tome-publishing-grant>.

¹³ TOME guidelines and other documentation are provided on the TOME website. See “TOME Documentation,” accessed June 11, 2023, <https://www.openmonographs.org/tome-documentation/>.

monograph into a small number of repositories, while others expected to see wider dissemination. In some instances, institutional partners were concerned that publishers did not make the existence of the OA edition more visible on their website (or the TOME acknowledgment language was missing from the copyright page) but usually the publishers were quick to correct the problem when notified.

Is \$15,000 a fixed rate? Or a suggested minimum? A maximum?

Institutional partners took different approaches to the \$15,000 grant as did publishers. Some campuses required publishers to submit a budget; others asked for a budget but chose not to interrogate the numbers too closely, so long as the amount requested was around \$15,000. Some publisher justifications included only “direct costs” of production, some included overhead also. Some publishers even defined a category of expense intended to account for potential “lost revenue.” While the program defines \$15,000 as a “baseline grant” at least one institution interpreted this as a maximum. Others were willing to pay it but were also fine paying less when presses requested less.

Preservation-related issues

Institutional partners raised the issue of long-term stewardship: who “owns” the digital copy, and where does the version of record reside? They wondered who would be responsible for maintaining, updating, assuring access to the copy to which the DOI points.

Upon publication, another set of issues emerged: how could the university verify that the terms of the contract had been met? If some elements were not met, what was the mechanism for resolving that? In most cases, institutional partners reported that publishers were willing to make changes they requested, but the process itself seems to have been a challenge.

At the start of the TOME pilot, project partners provided documentation, including sample publishing agreements. As some of the issues described above began to emerge, more documentation was

added to the TOME website, which helped to clarify several of these issues.¹⁴

Benefits and Challenges

For institutional partners—many of whom were in the library—the chief benefits of the program were its ability to “make scholarly content widely available.” But beyond that, survey respondents noted many ways in which the TOME pilot also helped forge stronger ties with faculty and support the university’s research mission (emphasis added):

- “**General goodwill from the faculty** toward the libraries! Since we ran the program out of the library, faculty were very excited that we were demonstrating a commitment to supporting their scholarship and publishing.”
- “Promoting a focused conversation about the **future of the humanities monograph** among administrative units that might not otherwise think about this.”
- “Opportunities for outreach to and **engagement with campus faculty** around open scholarly publishing, author’s rights, and open licensing of humanities and humanistic social sciences scholarship.”
- “Open access publishing **improves our institution’s Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS) ranking**. More fundamentally, we believe it is our responsibility to be part of the community of institutions that experiment in this

14 Sample publishing contracts (2018) and Open Monograph Amendment to Publishing Agreement Template (2020) are available at “TOME Documentation,” <https://www.openmonographs.org/tome-documentation/>. Documentation includes clauses addressing CC licensing; requirement to deposit a copy of the final digital file and media files in the author’s institutional repository; requirement that the publisher’s “website page for the book (a) clearly mentions the open electronic version of the book and (b) provides an easily findable link to one or more of the online open versions of the book”; requirements to distribute book cover and files to a choice of platforms, including HathiTrust, Internet Archive, JSTOR, MUSE Open, and OAPEN Library; and requirement to acknowledge the funding support of the institution in the front matter of all editions of the book.

space to find solutions for the dysfunctional system of scholarly communication.”

One purpose of the TOME pilot was to discover the challenges that might impede smooth flows of support between institutions and publishers in support of authors from those institutions. Survey respondents from institutions cited the following challenges:

- “Inconsistencies with pricing and policies across participating publishers.”
- “Our major issue was that we had to decide how to award the grants, which turned out to be a first-come-first-served model.”
- “Accessibility, accessibility, accessibility!!! It is a huge challenge to get participating publishers to do what is necessary to make the open access versions of their monographs compliant with current accessibility standards.”
- “Negotiations with publishers were more complicated than expected.”
- “The definition of ‘eligible publishers’ changed between the start of the pilot and its end. We had several faculty requests for OA book subventions that did not qualify as TOME.”
- “Communicating our expectations for open access to publishers, whose understandings were either different or undeveloped.”

By identifying common challenges at a diversity of institutions and publishers, the pilot can inform consistent approaches for future programs. Going forward, understanding these benefits—and recognizing that they extend well beyond the most obvious benefit of creating openly available digital monographs—as well as the challenges, and how to address them, will be important for the future success of this model and others like it.

Future Support for TOME

This report focuses on the experiences of institutional partners and authors who were part of the TOME pilot. How likely are these early adopters to continue? Authors were asked how likely they were to

“publish another OA monograph—whether through TOME or another OA initiative”; 77% answered, “extremely likely.” When asked about the likelihood that they would “publish through TOME (in particular)” 72% felt the same. Nearly all responded that they were somewhat or extremely likely to continue supporting OA monograph models in general, and TOME in particular.

But just as important as having authors’ support is having the support of the institutions who are making the grants available to their faculty members. And there, the enthusiasm was a bit more muted: While all institutional respondents noted they were “somewhat” or “extremely” likely to continue supporting OA monograph publishing in general, some (15%) did express hesitation about TOME in particular, saying that they were “somewhat unlikely” to continue supporting the program in the future.

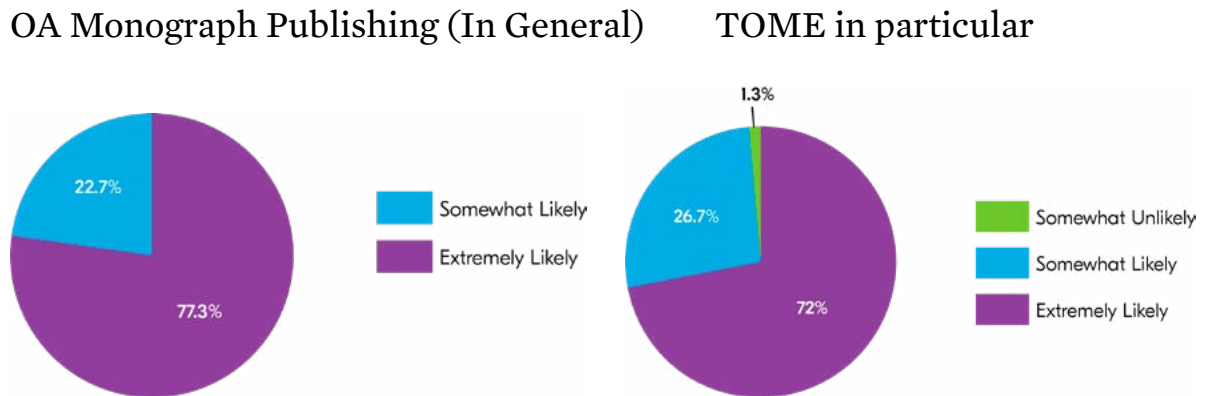
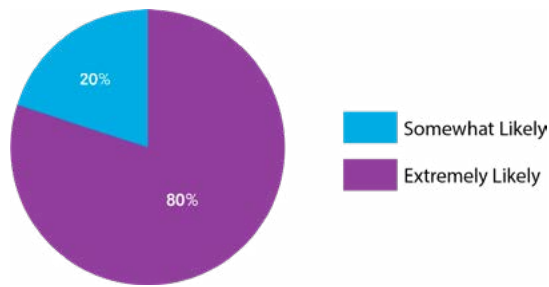


Figure 6. Author Support for OA Publishing

OA Monograph Publishing (In General)



TOME in particular

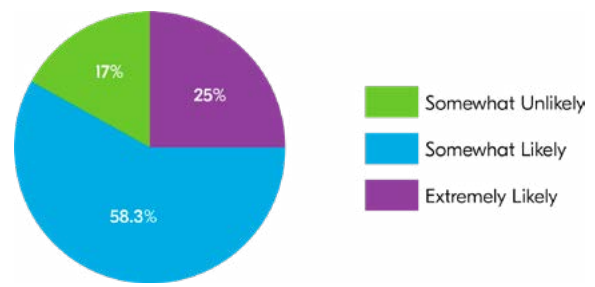


Figure 7. Institutional Support for OA Publishing

Several reasons were offered for this hesitation. Most emphasized the practical challenges of implementing the program, specifically given some uncertainty about where funding would come from to support it. But some comments highlighted important issues about the underlying premises of the pilot, and about the perceived limitations of the model. Some excerpted responses are grouped thematically below:

Funding

- “Funding streams need to be expanded and diversified. Most of our TOME titles were paid for with funding from the Mellon Foundation, but this has now shifted entirely to the dean’s office.”
- “Potential obstacles include unforeseen budget variations and a potential lack of support among OA among campus administrators. We believe we need to continue to educate faculty and administrators as to why TOME is important.”
- “Securing funding from the Provost will be difficult. There was a transition in leadership.
- “Sustainability of funding.”
- “Funding would be the greatest barrier. Also, not having strong data to determine the cost of an OA monograph in order to budget and request funds accurately. ...To get funding for continued participation, we need strong data to reinforce the importance

of making monographs OA in order to continue supporting this program. Hoping that this survey will help with that!

- “Money”

Scalability

- “Projects like these are not currently scalable. We need to find permanent, sustainable solutions to make OA the default for all academy-produced long-form scholarship.”
- “Since TOME was well-known and publishers did a lot of the outreach to authors (e.g., pitching the OA option to the authors whose books they thought would be good candidates), the end of the pilot might reduce that avenue to applications.”
- “The biggest obstacle is the model itself, which key stakeholders in the Division of Libraries see as inequitable, because it leaves out authors at smaller institutions and outside of the US.”

Eligibility

- “Faculty may not bring us projects that fit TOME’s guidelines”¹⁵
- “If the program limits its eligibility to certain publishers (e.g., university presses) then other publishers like scholar-led or small commercial entities important to individual disciplines (e.g., Berghahn books) will not be supported and biblio-diversity will suffer.”

Efficiency

- “I don’t think this is a major obstacle now but, for example, we support MIT Direct2Open and are also supporting an MIT Press TOME book. This is not bad, but it is a growing question for me. If we support a press’s overall OA program that pools funding with other libraries (which seems more beneficial for our budget and our time investment), does it make sense to not permit TOME

¹⁵ This comment may refer to the fact that TOME’s “baseline” grant of \$15,000 was meant to support the publication of monographs of “90,000 words or fewer, with additional funding for works of greater length or complexity.” While this stipulation did not rule out larger grants for longer or more complex projects, some projects were likely considered not a good “fit” for TOME if their length or complexity meant that a larger grant was needed.

agreements with those presses? This is a changing landscape, of course, but I anticipate questions like this from internal library committees.”

- “TOME was difficult because it was a press-by-press process. It wasn’t a holistic approach. Each situation needed to be handled as if it was a one-off.”

These perceptions will need to be addressed for an institutionally funded model to succeed. The pilot sought to unearth and explore such concerns, and has succeeded in doing so.

Concluding Thoughts

Unlike earlier efforts and models that offer tactics for opening up scholarly content, the TOME pilot focused on changing the cultures and practices of two complex types of organizations: universities and university presses. Not surprisingly, this has been—and continues to be—a gradual process, which at times can feel more like turning an oil tanker than flipping a switch. The pilot also endeavored to create a network of institutionally based funding, rather than concentrating on a single press publisher.

Beyond its main goal of opening the conversation, the pilot produced tangible benefits: Over 150 authors published over 130 monographs in OA editions, with more still to come. Twenty institutions participated, involving dozens of staff in libraries and throughout the highest levels of university administration.

Among the other successes of the TOME pilot are:

- **Getting authors on board the OA train.** The process of convincing authors to publish their work via an OA model was not difficult. In fact, from what we heard from institutional representatives, promoting the program aggressively on campus will likely generate demand that will quickly surpass current budgets for the program.
- **Familiarizing publishers with OA publishing** and giving them the opportunity to develop workflows unique to publishing OA editions. Publishers acknowledged the learning curve this pilot required, which involved modifying work practices and incorporating new ones to produce better digital editions—not just books that were open access.
- **Laying the groundwork to make the case for OA on campuses** and to show institutions how they can administer OA book grant programs that understand and account for the cost of high-quality publication as part of the cost of research.
- **Beginning to examine the implications of OA monographs on publisher revenues**, offering some fascinating early findings,

including publishers' continuing need to generate revenue from monograph sales alongside OA editions.

And yet, for future versions of TOME to gain the traction needed to become a widely adopted model for monograph publishing, some key issues will still need to be addressed: the challenges of scale, eligibility and equity, and more precisely defining the overarching aims of an author-side funding model.

Can the TOME model scale?

This is the question of the day, but the pilot itself did not provide answers. Rather, some institutional partners shied away from fully promoting the program, out of concern that the institution would not be able to meet potential demand. Some, but not all, were aware of what the total potential “market size” for the program might be¹⁶—in some cases, several dozen faculty members on a single campus. Can institutions afford that? Are institutional leaders supportive enough to prioritize spending to support it? Some institutional partners thought so, at least at the larger universities, but it will require deep support not just from libraries, but from deans and provosts as well. And what does this mean for smaller colleges and less well-funded universities, not to mention unaffiliated scholars? Beyond scaling the number of grants and applications within existing institutions, a crucial question is whether, in the changed landscape of higher education that now exists, TOME can also attract more institutional investors—especially investors beyond the circa 100 that already support university presses.

Who is permitted (or able) to participate?

The question of eligibility concerns publishers, authors, and institutions alike. The pilot was limited to nonprofit publishers. If this were to remain the case, it would not help authors whose manuscripts are acquired by commercial presses and would exclude the possibility

¹⁶ This would depend not just on how many faculty publish monographs each year but, of those, how many are publishing with houses that are considered “eligible” publishers.

of other emerging models of monograph publishing, such as scholar-led initiatives. It may be too narrow a definition; and one whose intent—to support high-quality, mission-based publishing—should be prioritized over the legal definition of how the business is incorporated. This issue impacts not just those publishers, but the authors who depend upon them to publish their work. Not all authors are at well-funded institutions, and not all authors will have works accepted for publication by university presses. While concerns about major commercial publishers taking advantage of university publication subsidies are legitimate and should be addressed, it is also important to acknowledge the on-the-ground reality for authors, particularly those just starting to build careers.

What, exactly, are we paying for... and who should be paying?

The originality of the TOME pilot is in shifting the financial obligation from readers (or other purchasers) of the monograph to the institutions that support the authors of the book. In the relative absence of support from other parts of the academic enterprise, university libraries have played a major role in bringing this pilot to life: As the representative of the institutional partner, library leaders and library staff have taken on the role of publicizing the program to faculty and educating them about open access. They have often helped define or negotiate publisher agreements or liaised with senior administrators to do this. They have been at the forefront of raising vital concerns about maximizing awareness of and access to the OA materials. They have often been chief campus supporters and often the source of funds for the program.

And yet, when it comes to paying for the model, the centrality of the library as the funder in this model can also pose problems. Some library staff who served as liaisons to the TOME pilot noted that when the library evaluates the value of investing in a full collection—like the models described by Knowledge Unlatched, for example, or investment into newer programs like MIT's Direct to Open, the comparisons can be harmful. A collection development librarian is in the business of making purchasing decisions that maximize the value of ... the

collections. By this measure—looking at “cost per book”—a grant of \$15,000 per book will seem like a difficult argument to make.

But this logic is flawed. Perhaps it is time to redefine the notion of just what the grant is paying for.

To be fair, the \$15,000 figure was derived in part from research that sought to capture the full costs of publishing a digital, high-quality, peer-reviewed scholarly monograph.¹⁷ The agreement between the institutional partner and the publisher is to underwrite the cost to publish that one book. And yet, there is a fundamentally different way to consider the function of and reason for that investment; namely, by shifting the focus to one of the pilot’s original motivations and understand it as an investment in the scholar, rather than an investment in a book.

Publication of a monograph is a major milestone in an academic career, particularly for scholars in the humanities and social sciences. Publication of a monograph is a capstone to years of research and writing, developing ideas with colleagues and through courses, presentations, workshops. And refining and packaging that writing to reach a broader audience, through work with a skilled publisher.

Perhaps the success of a model for OA publication of scholarly monographs depends on recasting publication as a feature of professional development for faculty, an investment a college or university makes in its faculty to support them in their journey as scholars and to effectively share their work widely. Seen this way, a “book grant” could take the form of start-up funding, in the way scientists may get funding for labs, or a book fund that a scholar can apply to every three to five years. “I would love,” said one publishing

17 For a fuller discussion of the origin of the \$15,000 grant level, see Maron and Schmelzinger, *The Cost to Publish TOME Monographs*, 2. The original study of monograph publication costs, based on a study of 382 monographs from 20 university presses, showed that even the average “basic” cost came to \$28,747 (and including overheads took this much higher). The least costly book studied came in just over \$15,000. See also Nancy L. Maron, Christine Mulhern, Daniel Rossman, and Kimberly Schmelzinger, *The Costs of Publishing Monographs: Toward a Transparent Methodology* (New York: Ithaca S+R, 2016), <https://doi.org/10.18665/sr.276785>.

director we spoke with, “to see the universities themselves take responsibility for open distribution of research that occurs in their faculty. That alone ought to be enough reason.”

Defining TOME’s Priorities

TOME’s major opportunity going forward, if the program continues, is to leverage institutional money from outside the library acquisitions budget to support the success of authors. Finding consensus among the key stakeholders in this project—publishers, university administrators, and authors—on those priorities will make it much easier to answer those questions. For instance, if a priority of TOME stakeholders is to support university presses in particular (publishers that meet the standards of the Association of University Presses), then the question of which presses are eligible for the grants is easily solved. If, however, it is more important that TOME support the publication of monographs by faculty in the humanities and social sciences, and those faculty are regularly choosing to publish with presses that are not AUPresses members, the tent must become a bit larger to accommodate them.

Similarly, if university provosts and deans see value in supporting the work of faculty in the humanities and social sciences but can’t afford to meet the demand of all eligible faculty, they may be forced to make difficult choices about how to ration support—for example, only first books by assistant professors; only books with the greatest potential impact; only books in priority disciplines for the campus; and so forth. Some institutional partners did describe having discussed selection criteria, but most were glad to not have had to implement them.

In a related vein, if provosts and deans ultimately decide that the \$15,000 baseline figure for subventions is too high, it might be necessary to engage publishers in a conversation about ways to offer a more streamlined, pared-down approach to the publication of OA books— and the inherent tradeoffs in taking such an approach. Successive studies, including the contributing TOME study by AUPresses, have made it clear that the costs of high-quality

publications nurtured by professional staff who support authors through every stage of the publication process are real. There are other models of publication that do not involve professionalized acquisitions staff but these omit a key aspect of the university press value proposition.

Some Practical Next Steps

While many open questions remain, it seems clear that there is general support, and growing support, for a vision of openly available, high-quality, digital scholarly monographs. There are some immediate, practical steps that each stakeholder group—institutional partners, publishers, and authors—can undertake in the near term, in order to resolve some of the challenges highlighted in this report.

Higher Education Institutions

Identify and convene a meeting with representatives of units on campus that need to engage in this conversation, to raise awareness and discuss key issues. Participants could include library leadership, publishers, office of scholarly communications, dean's and provost's offices, and faculty from a range of departments in the humanities and social sciences.

Among the topics to address would be

- Evidence of faculty demand for this model on campus (and number of monographs published each year)
- How to set priorities about how much, who, and what to fund
- Which units on campus should fund this activity, and how TOME funding fits with other types of research support for individual faculty
- Which unit(s) on campus and which individuals are best placed to manage this activity
- What successful outcomes would be, including benefits not just to authors, but to the mission of the institution, and its ability to share knowledge widely

Publishers, Including University Presses

University presses could lead the discussion, first among publishers, about the value of this OA model to the future as a starting point, and what would be needed to make the processes easier and more impactful going forward. Topics to discuss might include:

- The definition of “scholarly publisher” to be included in future versions of TOME, reflecting the reality of the choices authors have today concerning where they publish scholarly work
- The relationship between good digital design and open access (For example, agreement on what a baseline requirement for distribution should be, and what it will cost.)
- Discussions and development of ways of talking about how best to describe the “costs” of publication, to facilitate understanding among university partners who will be supporting those costs

Authors and Their Scholarly Societies

The scholars we heard from in this assessment were identified through their authorship and engagement in the TOME project, but there is a role going forward for scholarly societies to pursue on behalf of their membership.

- This might include convening sessions to discuss strategy for raising awareness—at the departmental level and at the campus level—about the benefits of supporting open publication for monographs in the humanities and social sciences (in particular).
- In particular, the more faculty raise this issue, as a critical aspect of their growth and productivity as scholars; inquire about it when considering recruitment at a new institution; and continue to educate and engage deans and provosts about this program, the more likely it is to be fundable.

The initial goal of the five-year pilot was to kickstart the conversation about new sources of financial support for open access monograph publishing. The TOME pilot has succeeded in forcing some of the above questions to the fore. Unlike other models, TOME, in its most

revolutionary form, is attempting nothing less than rethinking why scholars publish and reinventing the logic behind which entities ought to be investing in that work. As TOME moves into future phases, these are all important questions to take on, together, for all those so deeply invested in designing a richly populated and more equitable ecosystem for scholarly content.

Appendices

Appendix A: Founding Document of the TOME Project



AAU/ARL/AAUP

Subvention-Funded Digital Monograph Publishing Initiative

The primary objective of the subvention-funded digital monograph publishing initiative is to advance the wide digital dissemination of scholarship by humanities and humanistic social sciences faculty members, creating opportunities to share their research and scholarship more broadly within the Academy as well as with audiences beyond.

Under the initiative, peer-reviewed and professionally edited monographs published by a nonprofit publisher that adheres to AAUP best practices for peer review will be funded by university subventions and other revenue sources and published as open-access digital editions, available at no cost to the public. Universities participating in this initiative are asked to meet the following three requirements:

- 1. Provide a baseline university subvention of \$15,000 to support the publication of an open-access digital monograph of up to 90,000 words**, with additional subvention funding for delivering works of greater length and/or added complexity such as inclusion of multimedia components or a substantial number of illustrations determined through negotiations by the author and his or her

university with the publisher, with guidance from tools as the AAUP Digital Monograph Costing Tool and the Ithaka S & R cost study,¹⁸ on which the AAUP tool is based. Data from the Ithaka study and the experience of other publishers conducting similar open access monograph programs make clear that the majority of titles will exceed the \$15,000 baseline cost. (For example, UC Press's experience in the first 12 months of Luminos was that more than 80% of titles had higher costs, primarily due to longer manuscripts.) Accordingly, presses will retain the rights to commercialize print and/or value-added digital versions.

- 2. Support the publication of a minimum of three monographs per year.** The potential of this initiative to make a positive impact on the current publishing system will increase with the number of open-access monographs published, and institutions are encouraged to provide as many subvention grants as feasible; we believe, however, that three monographs per year is a reasonable minimum target.
- 3. Participate for five years.** We believe that subvention-funded open-access digital monograph publishing will become an enduring new business model for scholarly publishing and will facilitate the development of new forms of digital scholarship. Nonetheless, we recognize the need for participating institutions to have clear boundaries to the commitments they are being asked to make. A five-year commitment will allow institutions and presses to track the impact of the open-access monographs published through this initiative. To aid in that evaluation, an Impact Assessment Working Group is developing project-specific indicators of the dissemination and use of the open-access monographs published through the initiative.

This initiative will provide significant benefits:

- Open-access digital monographs will increase the presence of

18 Maron, N. L., Mulhern, C., Rossman, D., & Schmelzinger, K. (2016). The Costs of Publishing Monographs: Toward a Transparent Methodology, p.19, Ithaka S+R. Retrieved from <http://sr.ithaka.org?p=276785>

humanities and social science scholarship on the web, opening it up to more readers and putting monographic content into the venue where so many scholars already are working and using other resources. Providing publishing costs at the front end through subventions and other revenue sources enables such open-access dissemination and use.

- Subvention funding will send a strong signal to humanities and social sciences faculties that universities value and wish to promote their scholarship.
- The expanded dissemination of scholarship within and beyond the Academy implements a core mission of universities to create and disseminate new knowledge for public benefit.
- This subvention-based funding model can strengthen the financial stability of university press monograph publishing and allow presses to publish important, high-quality scholarship independent of market constraints.
- The initiative will enable the incorporation into digital monographs of new capacities such as the integration of multimedia with text and the application of annotation and commenting tools, and will encourage the development of innovative, new forms of digital scholarship.

Digital monographs published under this initiative will share the following properties:

- Peer-reviewed and accepted based on AAUP best practices for peer review, and published by an AAUP press or press that adopts AAUP best practices,
- Published as open-access texts with a Creative Commons license,
- Funded by a \$15,000 subvention for a basic monograph of 90,000 words or less, with presses retaining rights to generate additional revenue to meet costs not covered by the subvention; for monographs exceeding the length or complexity of a basic monograph, the amount of the subvention will be determined through author/university–press negotiations, with guidance from tools such as the AAUP Digital Monograph Costing Tool and

the Ithaca S & R cost study,

- Digital format that is accessible but platform-agnostic (a related NEH/Andrew J. Mellon “Humanities Open Book Program”¹⁹ calls for “EPUB version 3.0.1 (or later) format, to ensure that the text is fully searchable and reflowable and that fonts are resizable on any e-reading device.”),
- Provide a print counterpart where possible and desirable; print versions of digital monographs with audio and video files could include a DOI or other permalink to those online files.

Higher education institutions participating in this project should allocate subvention funds in ways that align best with their institutional policies and academic cultures. Policies for allocating subventions could include one or more of the following:

- Offered through a competition among faculty at all ranks,
- Targeted at those departments that are most committed to opening up their scholarship to a larger audience,
- Focused on those disciplines or sub-disciplines in which publishing scholarly monographs has become particularly difficult,
- Offered to new faculty members and funded as part of their start-up packages.

Digital monograph publishers will conduct marketing with the same goals as those for print monographs, adjusted to emphasize the importance of discovery of new and evolving digital formats and clearly conveying the benefits noted above. Universities and colleges as the funding institutions will assume the responsibility for working with the publisher to assure preservation, using deposit with repositories such as Portico, CLOCKSS, HathiTrust, or institutional preservation repositories.

19

<http://www.neh.gov/grants/odh/humanities-open-book-program>

The AAU/ARL/AARUP Task Force²⁰ will collaborate closely with the representatives of participating institutions²¹ in further developing and conducting this initiative. As noted above, the project's Impact Assessment Working Group is developing indicators of engagement that will track dissemination, use, and costs to provide ongoing assessments of the project's open-access digital monograph publishing. The results of these assessments will be shared widely within the higher education community to inform institutions and scholars of this initiative, which holds great promise to substantially expand the dissemination and use of scholarship in the humanities and qualitative social sciences and to stimulate the development of innovative new forms of digital scholarship.

January 13, 2017

20 Current task force membership list attached

21 A list of the 12 participating universities and their representatives is attached

Karen Hanson

Executive Vice President and Provost
University of Minnesota

Mark Kamlet

University Professor of Economics & Public Policy (Former Provost and Executive Vice President)
Carnegie Mellon University

Richard McCarty

Professor of Psychology (Former Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs)
Vanderbilt University

Scott Waugh

Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost
University of California, Los Angeles

Paul Courant

Harold T. Shapiro Collegiate Professor of Public Policy (Former University of Michigan Librarian and Dean of Libraries)
University of Michigan

Barbara Dewey

Dean, University Libraries and Scholarly Communications
The Pennsylvania State University

Lorraine Harricombe

Vice Provost and Director of Libraries
University of Texas

Tom Leonard

Professor & University Librarian Emeritus
University of California, Berkeley

Carol Mandel

Dean of the Division of Libraries
New York University

Winston Tabb

Sheridan Dean of University Libraries and Museums
John Hopkins University

Patrick Alexander

Director
Penn State University Press

Greg Britton

Editorial Director
Johns Hopkins University Press

Alison Mudditt

Director
University of California Press

Barbara Kline Pope

Director
National Academies Press

Darrin Pratt

Director
University Press of Colorado

Mark Saunders

Director
University Press of Virginia

Charles Watkinson

Associate University Librarian for Publishing and Director of the University of Michigan Press
University of Michigan

Task Force Staff

John Vaughn

Senior Fellow

Association of American Universities

Elliott Shore

Executive Director

Association of Research Libraries

Peter Berkery

Executive Director

Association of American University Presses

Jessica Sebeok

Associate Vice President for Policy

Association of American Universities

Brenna McLaughlin

Director, Marketing & Communications

Association of American University Presses

APLU Liaison

R. Michael Tanner

*Chief Academic Counsel (Former Chief Academic Officer and Vice President
Academic Affairs)*

Association of Public and Land-grant Universities

University

Institutional Representative

Brown University

Harriette Hemmasi, University Librarian

Emory University

Michael Elliott, Winship Distinguished Research Professor in English and American Studies, former Senior Associate Dean of Faculty

Indiana University
University Libraries

Carolyn Walters, Ruth Lilly Dean of

Michigan State University
and Letters

Christopher P. Long, Dean of College of Arts

The Ohio State University
of University Libraries

Damon E. Jaggars, Vice Provost and Director

The Pennsylvania State University
University Press

Patrick Alexander, Director of the Penn State

University of California, Davis

MacKenzie Smith, University Librarian

University of California, Los Angeles

Virginia Steel, University Librarian

University of Cincinnati
University Librarian

Xuemao Wang, Dean and

University of Michigan
and Professor

James Hilton, Dean of University Libraries

University of Minnesota

Wendy Lougee, University Librarian

Virginia Tech
and Professor

Tyler Walters, Dean, University Libraries

Appendix B: Survey Results: Institutional Partners

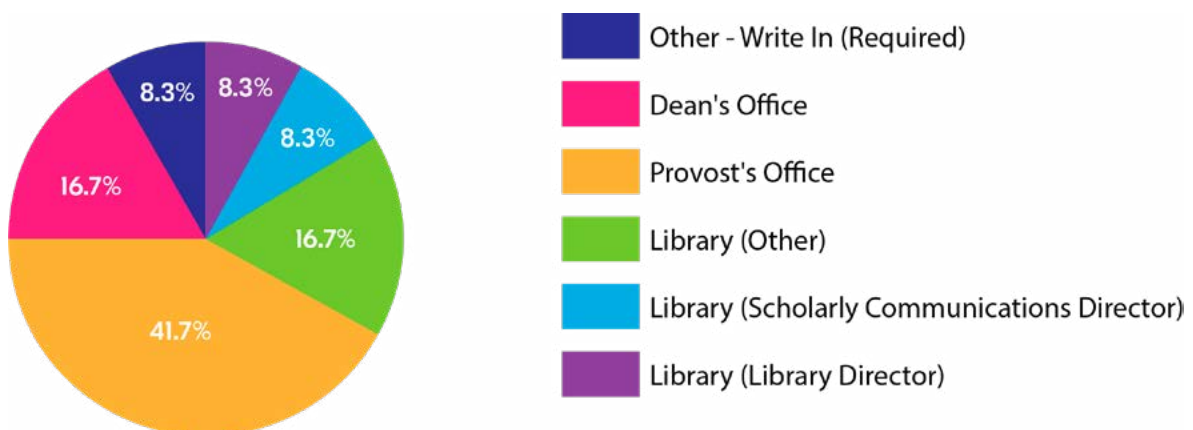
Report for TOME Assessment - Institutional Partners

TOME Assessment - Institutional Partners

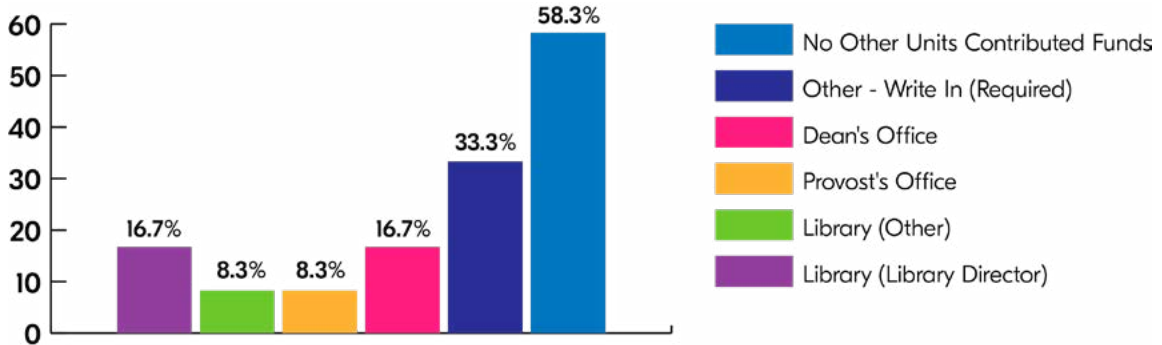
The following institutional partners responded to the survey:

Duke University
Emory University
Johns Hopkins University
New York University
The Ohio State University Libraries
Penn State University
Rice University
University at Buffalo
University of Michigan
University of Minnesota
University of Tennessee

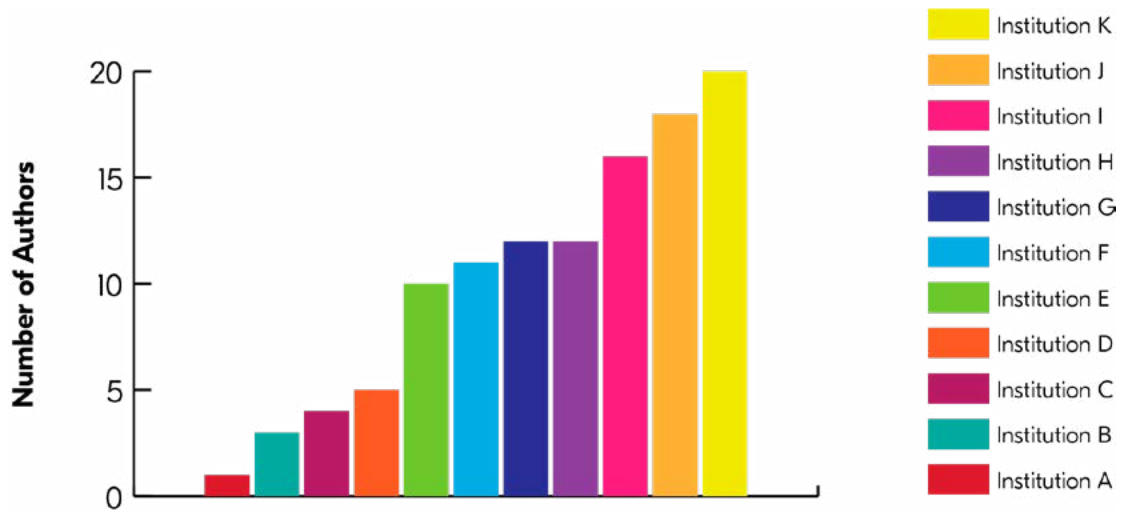
What department or unit was the primary source of funds disbursed for TOME-related monographs?



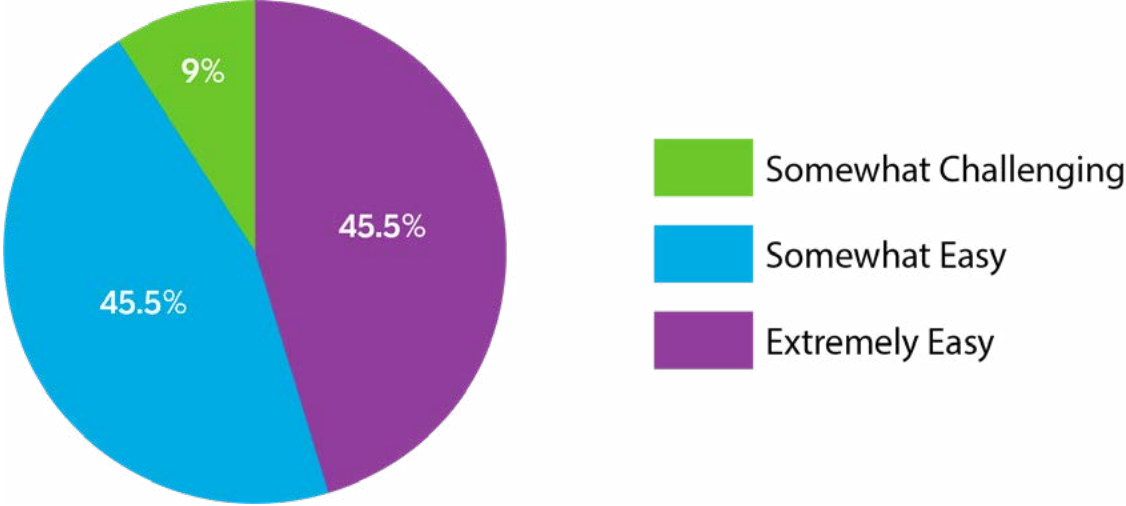
**If other units on campus contributed funds, which were they?
(Check all that apply.)**



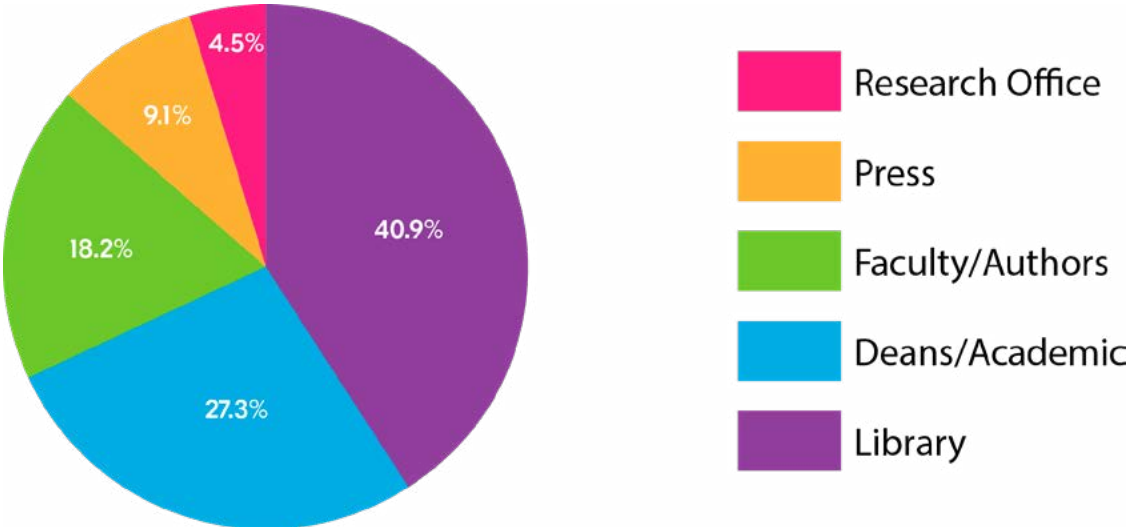
How many authors did your institution fund during the pilot?



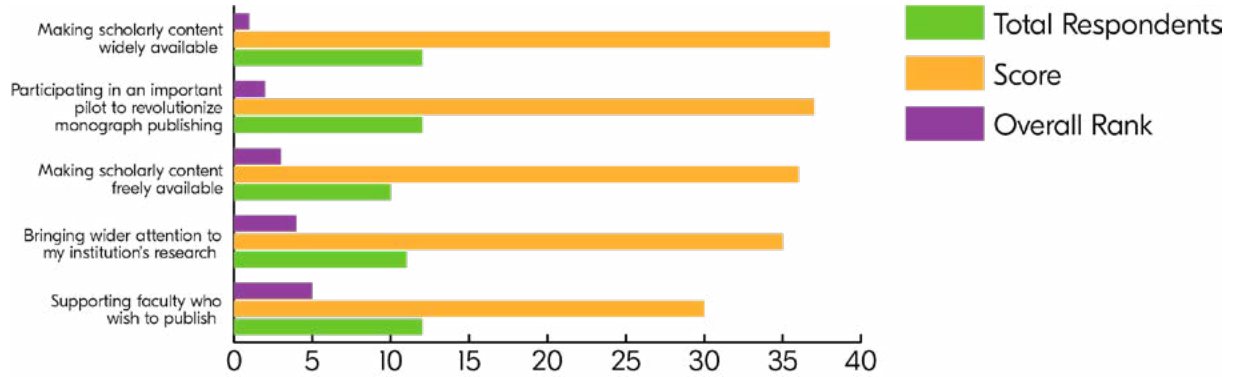
Would you describe the process of gaining initial approval for participation in the TOME pilot as



Who do you see as the strongest champions for TOME-related support on your campus?



Please RANK the following benefits, in terms of their importance to your institution, with 1 being the most important and 5 being the least.



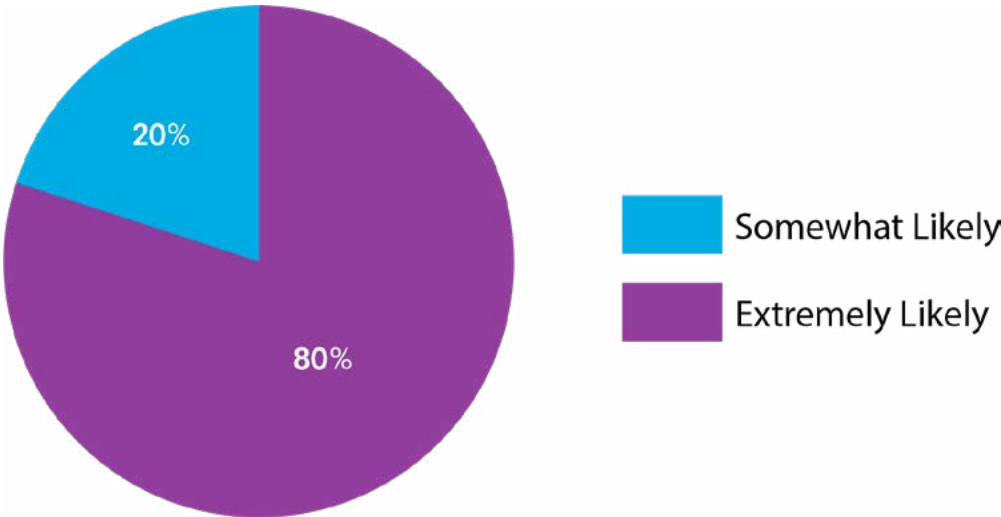
Are there other benefits to your organization in participating in TOME? If so, please describe them here.

See pages 31-32.

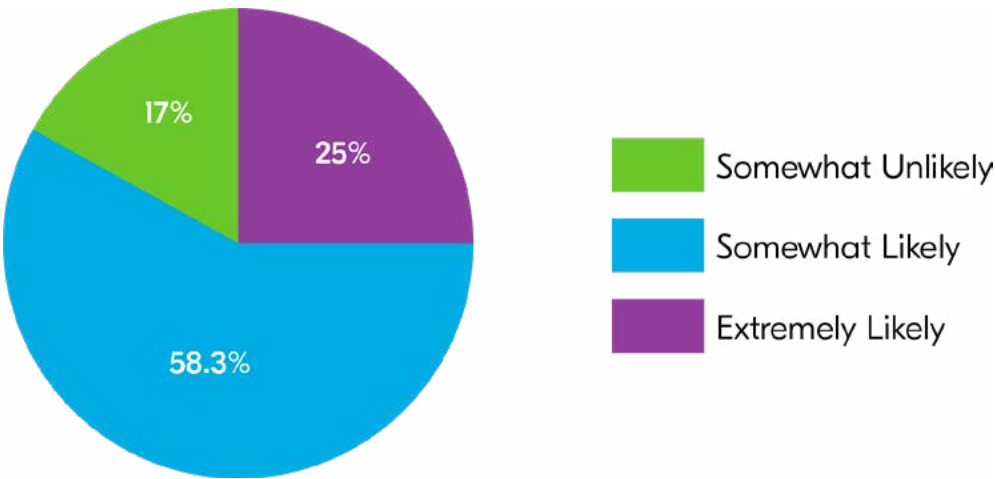
In practice, did any unexpected issues arise when implementing the TOME pilot? If so, please describe them.

See pages 31-32.

What is the likelihood that your institution will support funding OA monograph publishing programs in the future (such as Fund to Mission, Direct to Open, or TOME)?



What is the likelihood that your institution will continue to support TOME (in particular) in the future?



What do you see as potential obstacles to participating in TOME (or a TOME-like program) in the future?

See pages 32-35.

If TOME (or a TOME-like program) were to continue after the pilot, what changes or improvements would make your institution's participation more likely?

See pages 32-35.

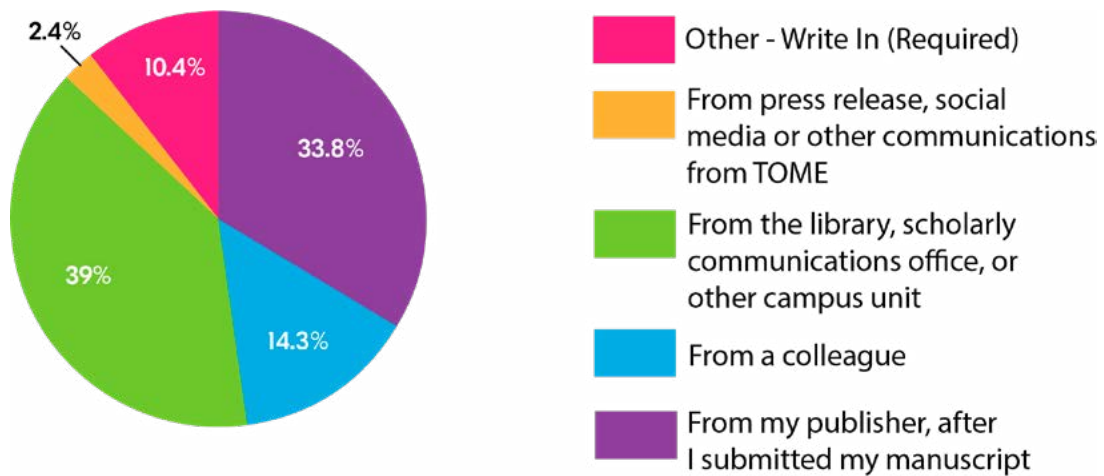
Appendix C: Survey Results: Authors

Report for TOME Assessment - Authors

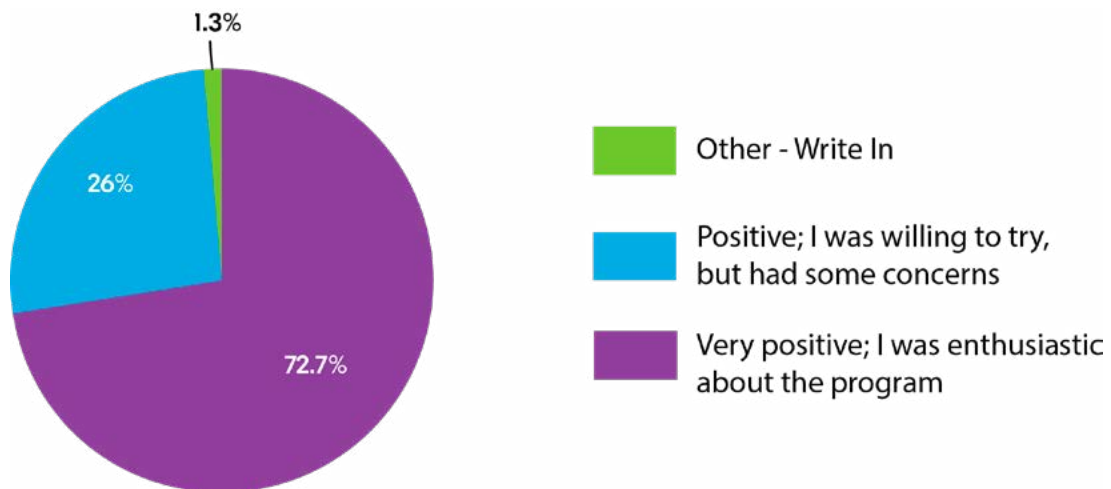
TOME Assessment - Authors

Of the 153 TOME authors, 77 responded to the survey.

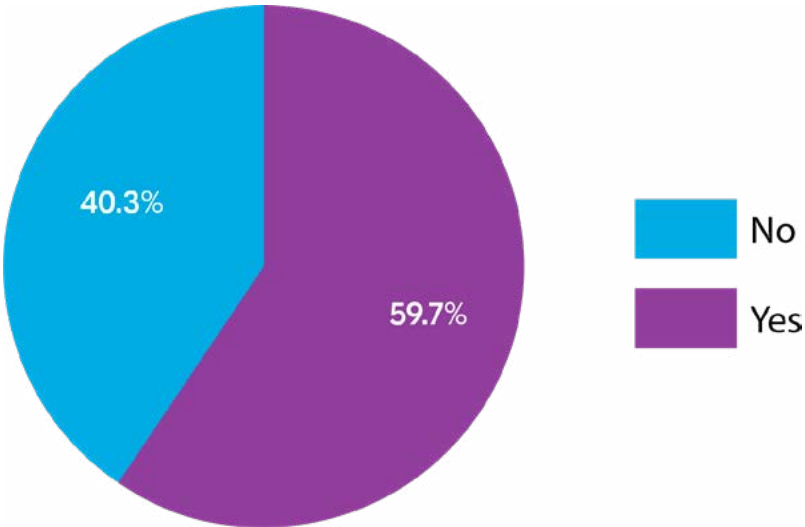
How did you first learn about TOME?



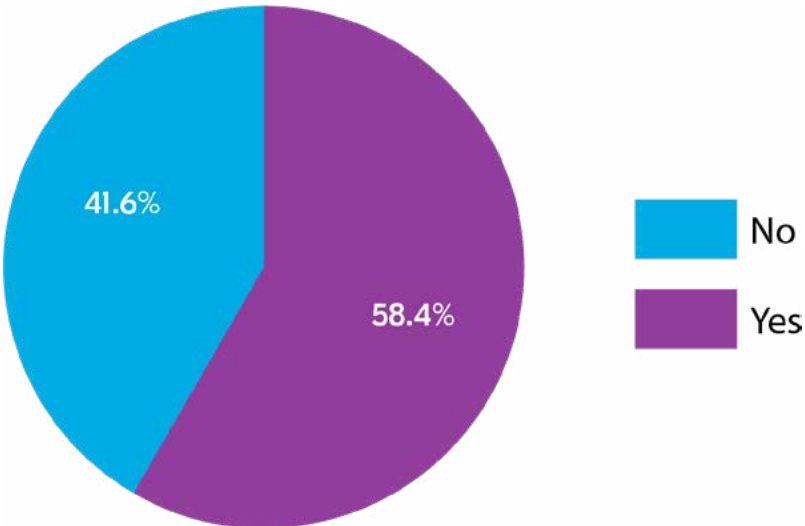
When hearing that your monograph could be published Open Access through TOME, was your response:



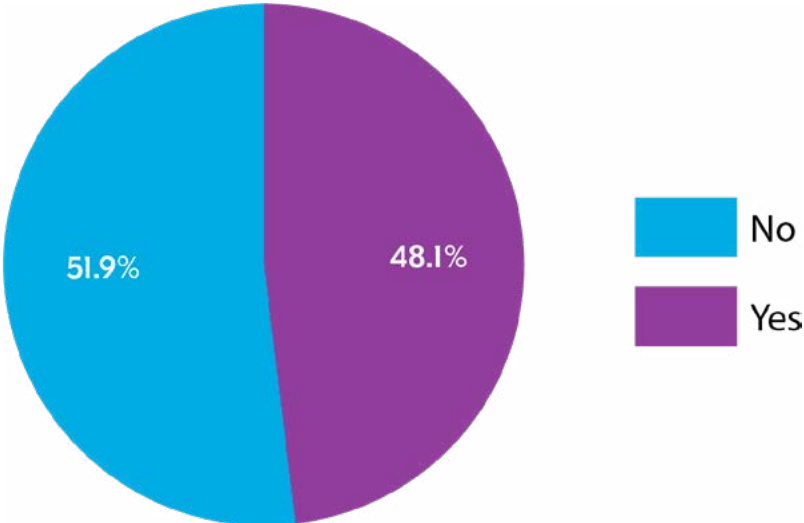
Did you have tenure at the time you published via TOME?



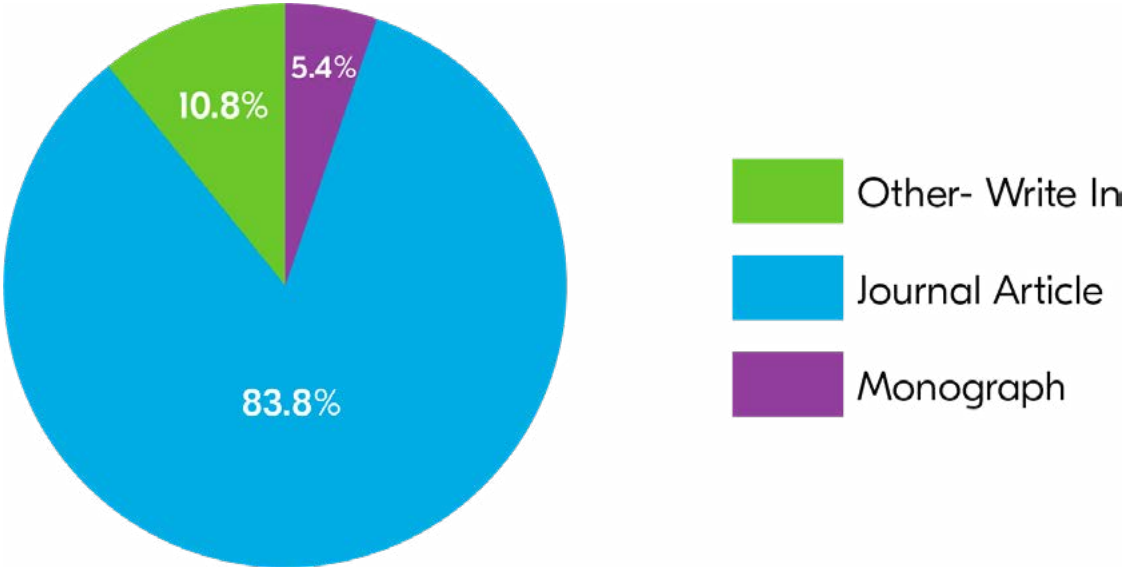
Had you published a monograph prior to your TOME monograph?



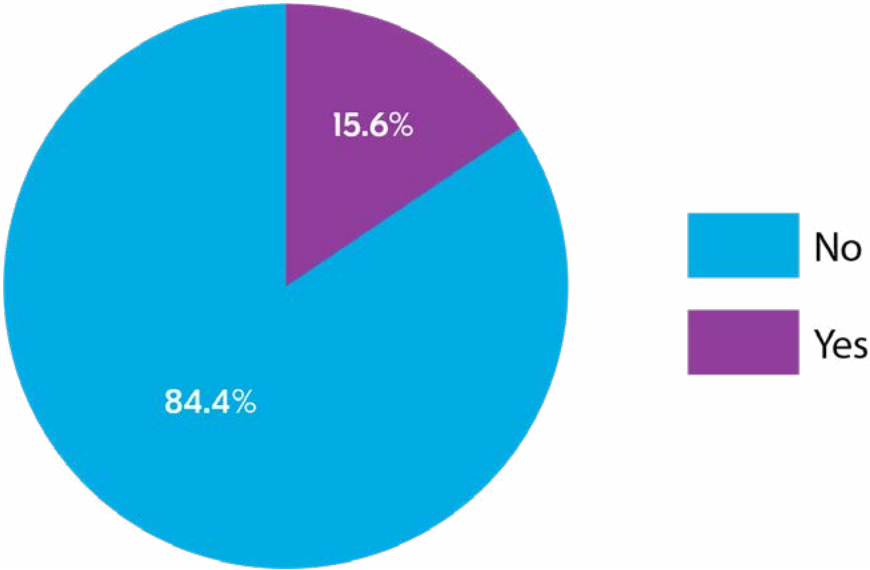
Had you published any scholarly work OA prior to TOME?



If so, what type of publication was it?



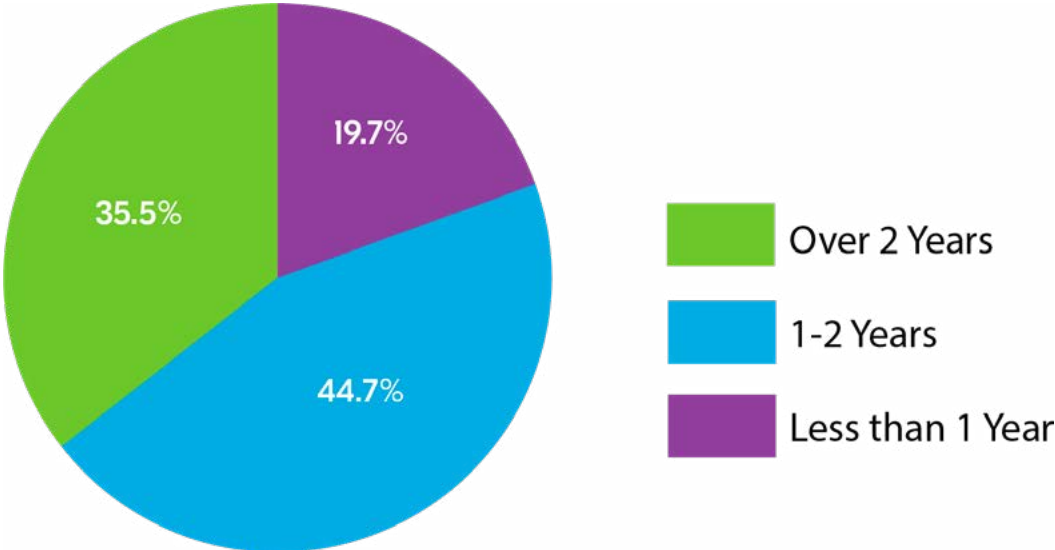
If you published a non-OA monograph prior to TOME, did you find that the publishing process with TOME was any different?



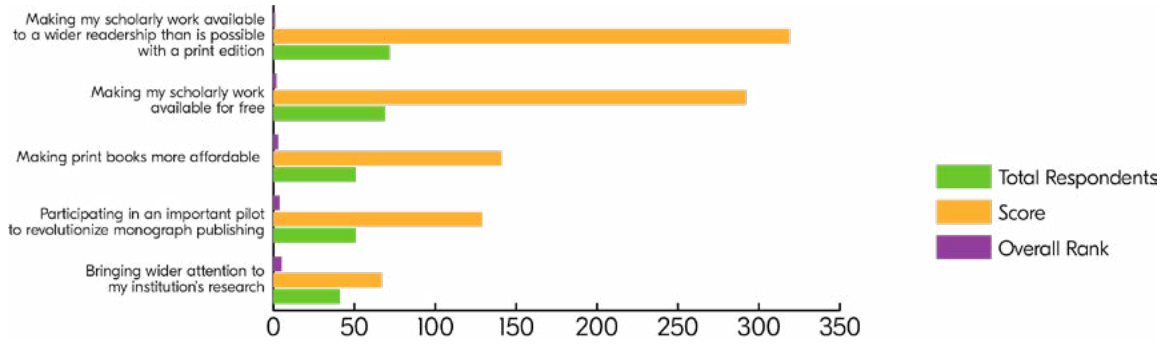
Please describe any differences you noticed.

See pages 21-22.

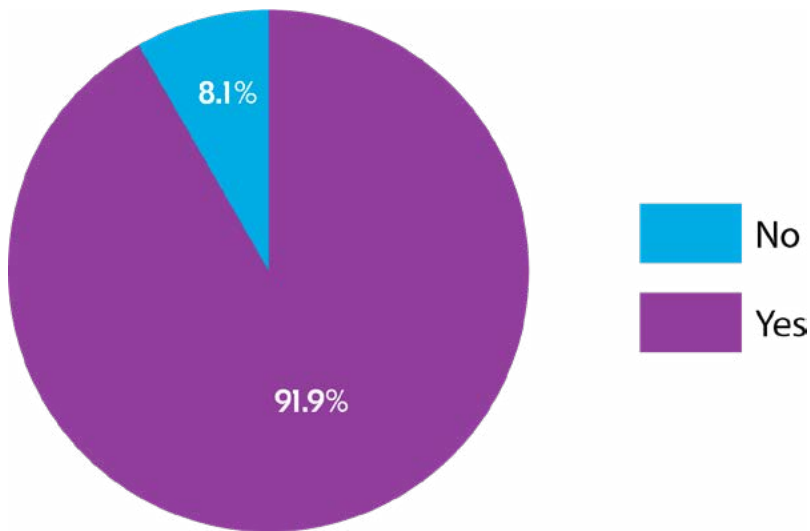
How long has it been since publication of your TOME-funded monograph?



Which of the benefits below is most important to you as an author?



Do you think your TOME monograph has had a greater (or different) impact than it would have if it were not OA?



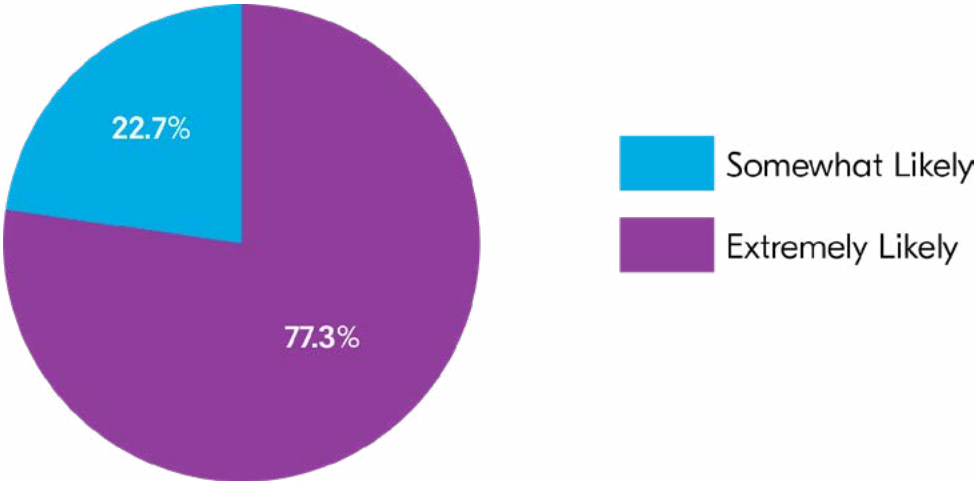
Please describe how publishing OA increased (or changed) the impact of your monograph.

	Significantly decreased	Somewhat decreased	No Change	Somewhat increased	Significantly increased	Total # Responses
Number of readers of my monograph	3.3%	1.6%	1.6%	29.5%	63.9%	61
Diversity of readership	3.1%	0%	4.7%	28.1%	64.1%	64
Direct engagement with my readers	1.7%	0%	40%	45%	13.3%	60
Types of engagement with my readers	1.7%	0%	40%	40%	18.3%	60
(write-in) I do not know for sure of the impact	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	1
(write-in) much greater course adoption	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	1
(write-in) Book award nominations	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1
(write-in) Book reviews	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1
(write-in) Invitations for speaking about the monograph	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1
Total Responses	9	1	53	87	100	250
% of total responses	3.6%	0.4%	21.2%	34.8%	40%	100%

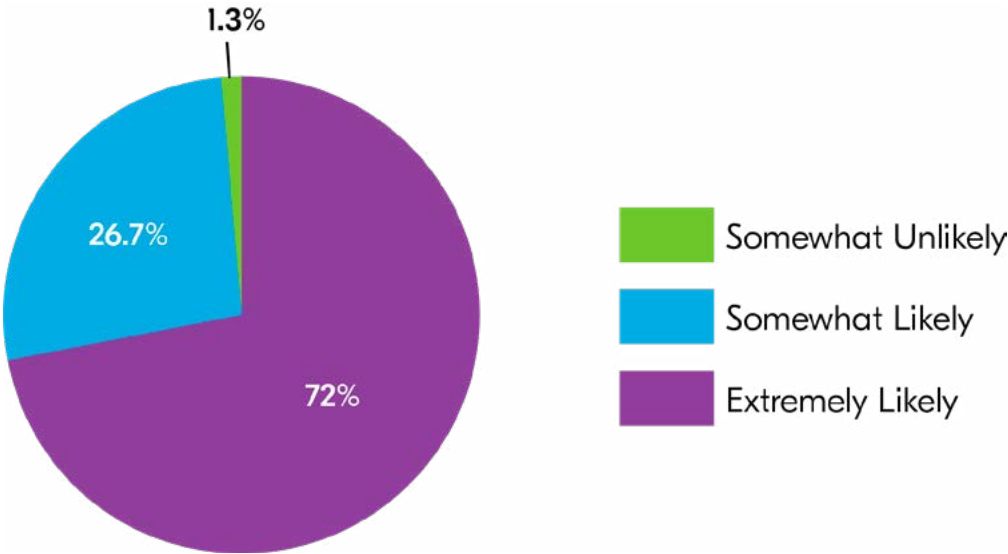
Please share any supporting data (qualitative, quantitative, anecdotal) to describe any perceived change you feel is attributable to having published this monograph OA.

See summary.

After your experience with TOME, how likely are you to publish another OA monograph—whether through TOME or another OA initiative?



What is the likelihood that you would publish through TOME (in particular) in the future?



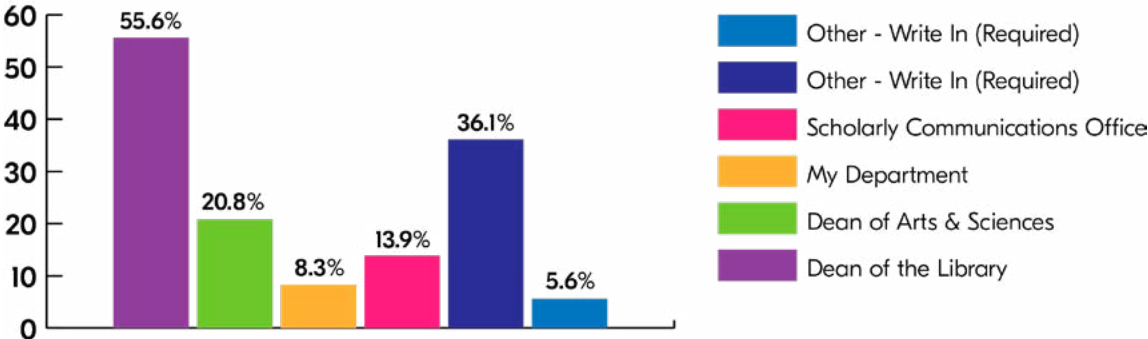
If you have any hesitation about publishing a future monograph through TOME or a TOME-like program, how concerned are you about...

	Somewhat Concerned	Extremely Concerned	Not At All Concerned	Total Responses
Availability of funds on my campus	52.1%	36.6%	11.3%	71
Finding a publisher for my monograph	24.3%	2.9%	72.9%	70
Prestige of OA publishing for Tenure and Review	4.5%	3%	92.5%	67
Complexity of the publishing process	9%	1.5%	89.6%	67
(write-in) General availability of funding	0%	100%	0%	1
(write-in) Publisher's role and responsibility plus equitable sharing of TOME award toward publication expenses (indexing etc)	0%	100%	0%	1
(write-in) Royalties	0%	100%	0%	1
(write-in) There would be no paper version	0%	100%	0%	1
(write-in) Not sure how many copies of my monograph have been downloaded (vs. purchased)	0%	100%	0%	1
(write-in) Royalty	100%	0%	0%	1
Total responses	64	36	181	281
% of total responses	22.8%	12.8%	64.4%	100%

If TOME (or a TOME-like program) were to continue after the pilot, what changes or improvements would make your or your institution's participation more likely?

See summary.

Who do you see as the strongest champions for TOME-related support on your campus?



Appendix D: Invitation Letters to Survey

September 22, 2022

Dear TOME Partners,

As we come to the close of the TOME pilot, we are eager to know more about how you—our institutional partners—experienced it, so that we can consider the best path forward for the program in the future.

To that end, we have engaged a consultant, Nancy Maron of BlueSky to BluePrint, to work with us on our assessment of TOME. Nancy will be surveying each of the stakeholder groups. With this message, we are sending you a survey designed specifically for our institutional partners. We estimate that the survey will take 5-10 minutes to complete, so we hope that all of you will fill it out, knowing that you will be providing invaluable feedback.

Findings from the survey will be shared in the aggregate with the TOME advisory board and our partners, to guide our next steps.

I should also mention that Nancy will be conducting interviews with selected stakeholders. If you are willing to be interviewed or can recommend others at your institution whose role in supporting OA monographs is significant, please indicate this at the conclusion of the survey. Nancy will reach out to people once the survey is finished.

Once again, you'll find the survey at the following URL: <https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/7022311/TOME-Assessment-Institutional-Partners>. We hope you will take a few minutes to fill it out.

We're hoping to have all responses by the end of the month—September 30.

Thanks again, and best wishes,

Peter

Peter J Potter
Publishing Director
University Libraries at Virginia Tech

November 1, 2022

Dear TOME Authors,

As we come to the close of the TOME pilot, we are eager to know more about how you—our authors—experienced it, so that we can consider the best path forward for the program in the future.

To that end, we have engaged a consultant, Nancy Maron of BlueSky to BluePrint, to work with us on our assessment of TOME. Nancy will be surveying each of the stakeholder groups. With this message, we are sending you a survey designed specifically for our authors. We estimate that the survey will take 5-6 minutes to complete, so we hope that all of you will fill it out, knowing that you will be providing invaluable feedback.

Findings from the survey will be shared in the aggregate with the TOME advisory board and our partners, to guide our next steps.

I should also mention that Nancy will be conducting interviews with selected stakeholders. If you are willing to be interviewed or can recommend others at your institution whose role in supporting OA monographs is significant, please indicate this at the conclusion of the survey. Nancy will reach out to people once the survey is finished.

Once again, you'll find the survey at the following URL: <https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/7057105/TOME-Assessment-Authors>. We hope you will take a few minutes to fill it out.

We're hoping to have all responses by the end of next week—November 11.

Thanks again, and best wishes,

Peter

Peter J Potter
Publishing Director
University Libraries at Virginia Tech