



## CANADIAN UNIVERSITY PUBLISHING in a DIGITAL AGE Discussion Guide

**Background:** These are transformative times for Canadian scholarly publishing. Technology innovation is driving dynamic shifts in legacy models of production and distribution. Traditional revenue and funding approaches are becoming outdated. And, as the knowledge-based economy develops, universities are under increased obligation to transfer and disseminate knowledge and to publicly demonstrate the outcomes of their activities.

Within this changing context, key drivers include:

- *Technologies for creating and disseminating scholarship* are rapidly evolving. These technologies are accessible, relatively low cost, highly scalable, and easy to use. This contrasts with the traditional model involving specialized, capital-intensive print publication infrastructure, owned and operated outside the academy. While print remains the standard in many fields, e-books and e-journals, digital repositories, networked scholarship and media in all forms are predominating. These offer unprecedented potential to reach audiences in new ways, on a global scale. Yet many of our institutions lack a contemporary policy and decision-making framework to support these developments.
- The *economic models* that support scholarly publishing are becoming unsustainable. Traditional revenue bases for university presses are declining, while libraries' collections budgets are under continued pressure. New approaches are needed for ongoing viability.
- *Specialized labour costs* involved in selection, assessment, editing and presentation of high quality publications form the majority of costs for specialist works with small markets. These intellectual labour costs are not directly addressed by technology solutions and continue to rise.
- *Open access mandates for publicly funded research* have begun to emerge. But most universities have not yet fully incorporated this into faculty promotion and tenure systems or intellectual property policies.
- The *'flight to scale' and aggregation* which favors large commercial publishers means that heightened co-operation within, and among, universities will be needed to help them reassert control over how their intellectual capital is managed and used.
- The *size and scope of these challenges is greater than any individual institution can address*. Collective action 'above the campus' is needed to leverage our efforts and maximize the value we receive from our investments.

Our morning speaker panel will explore these issues and some of the innovative ways in which universities across Canada and the US are responding.


In the afternoon, we will break into groups to determine how Canada's universities can work collectively to develop a national publishing strategy, building upon and creating new working models and addressing related challenges.

**Group Working Session:** Through facilitated group discussion, we will assess the future state of Canadian scholarly publishing by considering these questions:

- what principles should guide us in developing local and national publishing approaches?
- what are our desired outcomes, and what are some possible strategies or projects - new or existing - to achieve them?
- what challenges and resource issues exist?

Moving from discussion to action, we will identify next steps including:

- what 3-4 priority strategies or projects would achieve our outcomes?
- what task forces will be formed to implement them, or to address specific issues or impediments?
- how will we fund these initiatives?
- who else needs to be engaged?

 ***We ask that you consider these questions and consult the background readings (below) prior to the symposium. And we invite you to identify how your organization might take part in establishing these new directions for the future of Canadian university publishing.***

**Selected background readings are available on the symposium website:**

<http://blogs.ubc.ca/universitypublishing/resources/>.