

ANU E PRESS

Editorial Arrangements

The ANU E Press was launched by the Vice-Chancellor on 18 May 2004. The launch marked the end of the initial project phase in which the E Press team worked on trialling available technologies and developing appropriate business processes, largely with previously published titles but also with one original manuscript, a history of the first 30 years of the Humanities Research Centre at the ANU. As the ANU E Press was established to disseminate high-quality scholarship produced by the ANU research community, a critical and continuing concern has been that of determining the means by which titles should be assessed in terms of quality and texts edited and readied for publication.

It became quickly apparent during the project phase, and particularly in the case of the HRC monograph, that centralising such validation processes was unsustainable, given the range and number of titles the ANU E Press sought to publish on an annual basis and the limited staff resources available within the Press itself. An alternative approach was subsequently developed under which the responsibility for evaluating and editing manuscripts would be exercised within various communities of interest and the role of the E Press would become more that of a 'production house' concerned with larger issues of quality control and managing and enabling publication. This distributed model, which resembles the manner in which the contribution of content within the larger ANU digital repository environment (DSpace) will be managed, was discussed by the Steering Committee and approved at its meeting on 26 February 2004.

Implementation

Consideration has been given as to how this model might operate within three areas, the Humanities, the Environment, and Asia and the Pacific. The choice of these areas was influenced by the thought that National Institutes might form an appropriate context or focus for the editorial process. It was also suggested that the new divisional structure might have a role in hosting or at least overseeing the operation of these processes. Whatever the final understanding on this matter of context, it is clear that the editorial bodies should be accountable to an authority within their own community of interest, however that community is defined, rather than to the Steering Committee itself. The Steering Committee will retain an overarching quality assurance role but will not concern itself with validating individual decisions made elsewhere.

Detailed proposals and terms of reference for editorial structures are being finalised and implemented at present within two communities, the Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies and the Faculty of Arts. It is not envisaged that one single prescribed model or structure will apply to all communities of interest. The model developed will be appropriate to the particular community it serves. However, in each case the community itself will take responsibility for the structure adopted and ensure the effectiveness of its operation.

It will be required, however, that each community appoint an editorial coordinator who will act as the essential link between the local editorial structure and the central E Press team. As has been indicated, the editorial role exercised within the various communities of interest will extend from the commissioning and consideration of proposals and the management of the peer review process through to the editing of the text itself and its presentation in the appropriate file format. A style guide is available for copy editing purposes and a Word template is at present being trialled by the Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research (CAEPR). The role of the ANU E Press coordinators will encompass responsibility for ensuring these processes have been completed as well that of

communication or linkage, primarily with the E Press but also with editorial coordinators in other communities. A detailed role statement is under preparation.

It should be noted that the adoption of this distributed model not only implies the delegation of the responsibility for evaluation and text preparation but also assumes that all costs incurred before the file is submitted to the E Press in the approved format is borne by the community of interest from which the manuscript derives.

Role of ANU E Press

As has been suggested, the range of services provided by the central ANU E Press team will be more limited than those performed during the initial project phase. These services will comprise:

- the high-level management of the relationship between authors, via their community of interest, and publisher through the publication process
- the provision of standardised publishing processes via a generic set of workflows
- the provision of appropriate abstracting and content indexing services
- the provision of access to published titles through the ANU E Press website
- the negotiation of access to print-on-demand (PoD) services
- the marketing of the ANU E Press list
- the provision of system administration tools, supporting security and access control, workflow creation and management, and other administrative functions.

Such services will be provided within a web services framework and located within the ANU's broader repository program.

Higher Education Research Data Collection (HERDC)

The welcome news that the ANU E Press has been included on DEST's Register of Acceptable Commercial Publishers should encourage ANU authors to publish with the Press secure in the knowledge that their work may attract DEST points under the HERDC scheme. Such registration does not of itself guarantee the award of points since the submission of titles under the scheme remains subject to an audit process. The single guarantee of success will be the rigorous observance of the evaluation and quality assurance measures and procedures established by the ANU E Press and by the communities it serves.

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