

# Key issues

Among all the pressing demands associated with getting a new publisher going, a fully developed launch strategy may sometimes not be a top priority. However, if time allows, a fully thought through approach to getting up and running and presenting the work of the press to relevant audiences can help provide some key early momentum.

As we document in our case studies, the impetus for a press' launch is often deeply entangled with a particular set of questions or contexts – perhaps intellectual curiosity, an unmet need, or a funding opportunity, for example. Further thought and planning may, however, be required in order to feed these sometimes idiosyncratic questions or contexts into a more fully formed idea for what a press wants to do and how this can be achieved, in a way that is relevant to the audiences the publisher wants to engage.

A key goal for a new press will be launch of the website that eventually will either directly host, or link to, its Open Access titles. However, even before the launch of a press' website, a new publisher may want to complete a range of preparatory areas of work. A useful timeline is provided in the [Cookbook](#) (p. 41), which includes a checklist of activities that need to be performed two years before the official press launch. This timescale provides an indication of the amount of work that can go into a successful launch.

A different perspective is provided by Eileen Joy, from [punctum books](#). For Joy, a crucial first step is a vision: what the new press will want to achieve, how it will communicate this vision to the academic community and who in that community will be prepared to endorse it, coupled with a well designed digital presence:

I always tell people, the first thing you need is a mission statement. A 'vision statement' is a better way of putting it. 'What is the niche you want to address, and how do you want to address it? What kinds of authors would you like to attract?' Write that up. Step number two, put together a fabulous website. It can't be cheap looking. It can't be WordPress out of the box. It can be WordPress but it needs to be modified by a real web developer. Step number three, get an advisory board put together, of people whose names are well recognised and who support your vision. Number four, before you even announce the press, get between three to five authors and book projects lined up. Get them lined up in advance ([Jisc Interviews](#), Eileen Joy).

The [NUP Toolkit](#) lists some helpful resources for new university presses, many of which have wider relevance. This includes advice on how to persuade a university that the new press is a good investment, how to set goals for the press, and write a mission statement that will outline how the

press' business model will be sustained and evaluated ([University of Westminster Press](#)'s mission statement is given as an example of good practice). It also presents resource and budget requirements and lists costs and overheads that need to be considered in advance, such as staffing, and costs related to platforms and publishing services, both commercial and open source, to disseminate publications. It touches upon the importance of designing good governance structure ([UCL Press](#) is provided as an example; we explore governance questions in more detail [later in the toolkit](#)). And it discusses setting up workflows, outsourcing and some provisional solutions like using repositories for dissemination.

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