University of Toronto Press External Review 2020-2021
Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference provide the framework of the review report. Reviewers are asked to comment explicitly upon the following with regard to the UT Press except where otherwise stated:

1. The consistency of UTP’s current business model with its mission to publish exemplary works of scholarship, and to disseminate knowledge widely for the benefit of society

   Questions to consider: Is the University of Toronto Press a leader in North America and internationally among university presses? Are its book and journal publishing programs of the highest quality, distinction and impact commensurate with being a top tier university press? If not, how can they be improved? Are there opportunities to expand both book and journal publishing internationally that UTP should consider? Is the UTP able to attract sufficient top international scholars as authors?

2. The effectiveness of the UTP’s business model and its sustainability

   Questions to consider: Are there alternative models being used successfully at other university presses? Is the business model UTP has developed to publish electronic books and electronic journals as compared to other top tier university presses appropriate, sustainable and expandable? Are there alternative models being used at other university presses both for electronic publishing and traditional publishing that UTP should consider? Is the UTP sufficiently informed and nimble to respond to the rapidly changing electronic publishing environment.

3. Is UTP strategically positioned to adapt to the open access movement from funders and scholars including funder requirements and copyright law changes? Does the UTP staff have a sufficiently deep understanding of the issues and market forces around open access to respond to the changing scholarly communication environment in a sustainable way?

4. The appropriateness of its editorial staff and editorial review processes to ensure high quality publishing in both its journal and book publishing

5. Unlike some university presses, the University of Toronto does not subsidize UTP directly. UTP does, however, have an exclusive contract to operate a large retail business to sell merchandise and textbooks on the University of Toronto campuses which indirectly subsidizes publishing. Is this model appropriate and sustainable?

6. What are the current and future challenges facing university presses, and is UTP strategically positioned to respond?

7. The effectiveness of the UTP’s internal organizational and financial structure including the appropriateness of decision-making and resource allocation with respect to budget, staff complement, and infrastructure to serve its community.

8. Does the UTP manage its inventory appropriately?

9. The scope and nature of the UTP’s partnerships and leadership, locally, nationally, and internationally to support its mission and vision.

10. Overall assessment of the UTP relative to the best in Canada and internationally, including areas of strengths and weaknesses.