WHY DOES THE UNIVERSITY NEED THE PRESS?

A UNIVERSITY PRESS IS AN EXTENSION OF ITS PARENT INSTITUTION, AND A KEY PLAYER IN A DIVERSE AND WIDE-REACHING NETWORK—INCLUDING LEARNED SOCIETIES, SCHOLARLY ASSOCIATIONS, AND RESEARCH LIBRARIES—THAT MAKES SCHOLARLY ENDEAVORS POSSIBLE. LIKE ALL NODES IN THIS NETWORK, UNIVERSITY PRESSES ARE CHARGED WITH SERVING THE PUBLIC GOOD BY GENERATING AND DISSEMINATING KNOWLEDGE.

IMPACT. With almost 300,000 books sold each year and a further 200,000 pieces of print and digital content sold and licensed, SUP publications place Stanford’s name in the hands of readers around the world. The international impact of research published by SUP is also apparent in the breadth of SUP’s publishing program, with prestigious lists in Middle East studies, Latin American studies, and Asian studies. Concerns central to international relations are reflected across our program, in security studies, history, human rights, and law.

INNOVATION. With $1.2m of funding from the Mellon Foundation, SUP developed a first-of-its-kind program to publish Digital Humanities and Social Sciences in their native formats. Our program has established the first consistent review and editorial board approval process for digital projects. Released with the same production and marketing support and expertise as any print book, SUP digital projects are published with the same authority and rigor as traditional monographs in our print program.

COMMITMENT. SUP joined with Margot Pritzker in her 20-year program to publish the first fully annotated English translation of the Zohar, the foundational work of Jewish mysticism. Pritzker chose SUP for two reasons: she wanted a partner who would share her long-term vision to support the work for years to come; and she understood our outstanding Jewish studies program gave us the foundation to promote this work to the broadest possible audience. Margot recognized the unique position of the university press to accomplish such a significant, lasting endeavor. To date, SUP has sold 90,000 Zohar volumes.
COLLABORATION. Stanford music and computer science professor Ge Wang originally planned to write a straightforward book. But as conversation with the SUP editor evolved, he realized that he had a willing partner to experiment with both form and style. Wang became SUP’s author-in-residence, spending at least one day each week in our office developing his work with our acquisition and production teams. The result is a 488-page, full-color, graphic narrative and “MusiComic” manifesto for the technology age.

AUTHORITY. Collaboration with scholars, as series editors and authors, allows a university press to influence and shape scholarship across an entire field. In response to increased student enrollments in Middle-East–focused courses following 9/11 and Stanford’s founding of the Abbasi Program, SUP launched a new list in Middle East studies in 2003. This list has now become the preeminent Middle East studies program among university presses, earning top awards from major intellectual societies and defining a generation of scholarship. In the words of one scholar, “When I prepared my comprehensive exams reading list, I noticed one name came up more than others—Stanford University Press.”

APPLICATION. Business publishing has undergone radical transformation over the past two decades, and SUP has established a unique publishing niche to bring cutting-edge research to today’s CEOs and managers. Our internationally renowned business imprint, Stanford Business Books, brings together scholars from the top business schools—including Stanford, Harvard, Wharton, and Darden School—and publishes books instrumental to business leaders’ understanding and practice.

TRANSLATION. SUP’s long tradition of translating contemporary works of philosophy and critical theory into English has made the careers of several now-prominent scholars—including Byung-Chul Han, Roberto Esposito, and Bernard Stiegler—and has extended the reach of such luminaries as Derrida, Marion, Luhmann, and Adorno. Giorgio Agamben, the Italian philosopher, has published 22 books with SUP, including the seminal work Homo Sacer. SUP recently issued all 9 works that comprise this magnum opus in one single volume. To date, SUP has sold almost 1,500,000 copies of books by Agamben.