

# Models for Open Access Transition

A Presentation to:  
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Association for  
Computing Machinery

*Advancing Computing as a Science & Profession*



- Introduction

ACM – Established in 1947. The leading computing science association. The ACM Digital Library averages over 4 million unique users from 195 countries every month. On average, users generate 4.4 million page views and 1.75 million downloads each month. Publishes over 50 Journals plus conference proceedings from ~170 conferences held each year. All content is in the [ACM Digital Library](#). Publishing arm is not-for-profit

- Why Open Access? Traditional vs Open Access Journal publishing options
- Imperatives and benefits for Publishing OA
- Case Study: ACM Open - a scaled bundle Read and Publish model



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# So why are Scholarly Publishers and Researchers moving to Open Access?

## Key Points:

- The proportion of articles published Open Access has increased significantly, from around 40% in 2019 to over 80% in 2022
- OA: a set of practices and principles that make research outputs available **online** without access fees or other barriers.
- This allows *anyone* to read and use research publications, including digital books & online articles
- It *may* also allow the content to be shared and quoted – or even adapted - without restrictions or payment. Consequences are greater readership and citations
- Note - “Open Access” is **not** the same as “Free Access”

# “Traditional” route to Journal Publication



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**Problem:** Taxpayers (via the state) fund research, then have to pay again to get the results of that research back to their researchers. University libraries may not be able to fund journal subscriptions. Researchers may not be able to access the research they need. Publishers may make a lot of money!



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# Key Open Access Mandates

[UKRI OA](#) (UK Research and Innovation) policy requires that all peer-reviewed research and review articles (including conference proceedings) submitted after 1 April 2022 (that acknowledge funding from UKRI or one of its constituent councils) be published OA immediately, without embargo, under a CC-BY licence.

[Horizon Europe](#) - EU's key funding programme for research and innovation  
All peer-reviewed scientific publications arising from Horizon Europe funding **have to be made available** in Open Access. This implies that publications are to be made freely available online, immediately upon publication and with no restrictions on use, by depositing them on a repository. See also [PlanS](#)

## [Office of Science and Technology Policy USA](#)

Aug.25 2022: the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) updated U.S. policy guidance to make the results of taxpayer-supported research immediately available to the American public at no cost.



# Benefits of Open Access publication

All data analysis from ACM Digital Library bibliometrics

Open Access publication results in significantly greater readership (usage) than paywalled

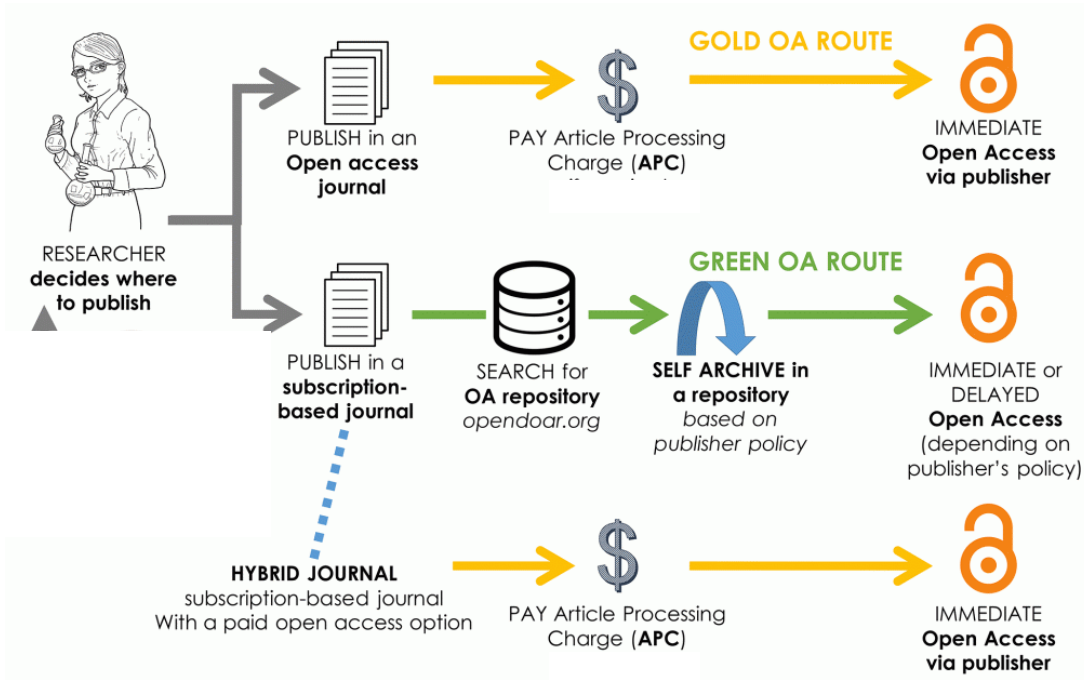
Publication Type	Usage Multiple
Journal	2.78x
Conference	3.7x
Magazine	2.35x

Open Access publication results in 69% more citations than paywalled \*

Access Type	Total Publications	Total Citations	Average Citations per Article
Closed	432,067	6,577,158	15.22
OA	147,428	3,806,341	25.82

\* Based on data from 2019 to 2022 analysed by [Dimensions AI](#)

# Open Access routes to Journal Publication



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**Problem:** APCs (Article Processing Charges) can easily cost up to \$5000 per accepted submission. Researchers may not be able to fund Open Access publication. APCs are messy and administratively burdensome.

An option is [Diamond OA publishing](#): a scholarly publication model in which journals and platforms do not charge fees to either authors or readers. Diamond Open Access journals are community-driven, academic-led, and academic-owned publishing initiatives. Nice idea.

**But** publishing is an expensive and complex business. No money = no publishing.



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# Open Access Publishing must be Sustainable



Expenses	
<b>Journals</b>	
Submissions	190,567
Production	1,233,073
Printing & Distribution	170,668
Direct and Support Staff	1,002,078
Overhead Staff and Expenses	1,370,427
<b>Journals Total</b>	<b>3,966,813</b>
<b>Magazines</b>	
Production	1,279,533
Printing & Distribution	1,404,663
Direct and Support Staff	1,292,344
Overhead Staff and Expenses	1,543,437
<b>Magazines Total</b>	<b>5,519,977</b>
<b>ACM Proceedings</b>	
Production	4,775,040
Direct and Support Staff	295,890
Overhead Staff and Expenses	470,326
<b>ACM Proceedings Total</b>	<b>5,541,257</b>
<b>Hosted Content</b>	
Production	54,691
Direct and Support Staff	61,222
Overhead Staff and Expenses	99,622
<b>Hosted Content Total</b>	<b>215,535</b>
<b>Digital Library</b>	
Infrastructure	2,646,617
Value Added Services	520,240
Content Preservation	18,181
Direct and Support Staff	898,833
Overhead Staff and Expenses	1,014,797
<b>Digital Library Total</b>	<b>5,098,668</b>
<b>Cost of Sales/Agents</b>	<b>2,747,357</b>
<b>Publications Board/Volunteers</b>	<b>211,615</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>23,301,223</b>

2020:

ACM total income \$23,993,000

ACM Total publishing costs \$23,301,000

Surplus of ~3%

2022

ACM Total Income \$26,404,456

ACM Total publishing costs \$26,693,184

(Loss of ~1%)

See: [Communications of the ACM](#),  
January 2024

So...

How to transition to an open access model without...

- Reducing services
- Cutting staff
- Impacting on Readership and our Members



# Another Option: Transformative Agreements (TA)

- A **Read-and-Publish** (RAP) agreement is an agreement in which the publisher receives payment for reading the Publisher's journals and payment for publishing scholarly papers bundled into one single contract
- A **Publish-and-Read** (PAR) agreement is an agreement in which the publisher receives payment only for publishing and reading is included for no additional cost.

The ideal – not often achieved – is for the agreement to be **cost-neutral**. So the cost of the agreement is equal to the cost of the traditional read-only subscription and the combined cost of APCs

In practice, some libraries/institutions are unable or unwilling to fund RAP or PAR fees. They prefer authors to pay APCs. Some TAs cap the amount the university patrons can read, or the amount in any year the university's researchers can publish.

Case Study: ACM Open – a model that analyst [Tasha Mellins-Cohen](#) refers to as a “scaled bundle”



# 2020 – ACM’s Decision to move the Digital Library to Open Access

## Internal & External Drivers:

- ACM member-led petition & ACM Executive Council decree
- Government mandates (Plan S, and other national mandates)
- Beneficial to authors and the computer science research community

## Key Benefits:

- Innovation: OA creates greater readership and citation of research, thus furthering the field of computer science:
- Impact & Discoverability: increased access means increased discovery / usage, which in turn leads to increased citations / sharing of knowledge
- Greater Global Dissemination of research and innovation
- **Model Solution: ACM Open**



# ACM Open: a scaled bundle Read and Publish model

- Variation on “Read + Publish” (RAP) model
- Key difference is that ACM’s model is “unlimited read + unlimited publish” compared to capped models from other publishers and societies
- 10-level pricing determined by average # of corresponding authored articles published over preceding 3 years.
- Pricing “rebalances” revenues (\$24.9m) to better align with actual costs of publishing (\$24.3m) – see [ACM Publications Finances](#)
- ~30% of institutions currently subscribed to the ACM Digital Library will pay more than a traditional read-only subscription, because they publish more with us – and so cost us more. ~70% will pay less, because they publish relatively little
- Basic terms are:
  - Institution enters 3+ year Agreement
  - Fixed pricing for length of Agreement
  - Pricing levels based on publication history
  - No fees for authors, who retain full copyright
  - All ACM APC-eligible publications (\*not books) included
  - Compliant with all funder mandates
  - Creative Commons for Article Sharing (CC-BY) is the [default license](#)
  - Price level re-assessed at end of Agreement for next agreement period



# Feedback

“We are thrilled to offer the sector this agreement. ACM’s openness around costs and pricing was appreciated by the negotiating team and smoothed the path to securing an agreement that is good value for our members and sustainable. This has resulted in more than 100 UK institutions signing up for the deal, surpassing our expectations”

**Sarah Roughley-Barake, licensing portfolio specialist at Jisc UK**

“In the first couple of agreements, which were with Elsevier and with ACM, we had a lot of press coverage. With Elsevier, we had global news coverage because we were the first individual university to secure an agreement with that publisher and our media relations team here ensured that everyone knew about it. ACM followed quickly behind that initial agreement. ACM is, on many data points, our biggest publisher as an institution. Therefore the agreement with ACM was one that many asked about when we announced the Elsevier agreement. So with ACM - a lot of awareness, a lot of appreciation, and no criticism - which on a university campus is a rare and beautiful thing!”

**Keith Webster, Dean of University Libraries at Carnegie Mellon University**

“TU/e library is excited about ACM’s transformative model for Open Access publication. ACM made a clear commitment to transition to a fully sustainable and Plan S compliant OA scholarly publisher and we support that. This deal therefore is an important step in supporting our researchers in the transition towards Open Access publishing for all peer reviewed scholarly articles and proceedings”

**Merle Rodenburg, Director Data Management and Library, TU/e (Eindhoven University of Technology).**



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# Questions?

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