APCs in the Wild – White Paper
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5th May 2020
AGENDA

APCs in the Wild: A Springer Nature whitepaper

1. Introduction
2. Author survey findings
3. Institutional interviews
4. Next steps
5. Q&A
APCS IN THE WILD: INTRODUCTION
Open research at Springer Nature

We see the rise of open research in all its manifestations as one of the major forces reshaping the way that researchers communicate and collaborate to advance the pace and quality of discovery.

We offer researchers, institutions and their funders open access options for journals, books and sharing research data.
A transition to open access

As the world’s largest OA publisher, we are committed to accelerating the adoption of Open Science techniques and OA publishing world-wide.

Open approaches benefit the whole scientific and research community

- Facilitates collaboration
- Fosters economic growth
- Increases the public’s appreciation of research
- Aids the application of research to solve real-world problems

We believe gold open access publication offers the simplest, the most open, and the most sustainable route to open access.
SPRINGER NATURE SUPPORTS THE OA TRANSITION

We are working with the research community to examine challenges that could block progress to OA, including complexity of APC funding streams.

‘APCs in the Wild’ explores the role that increased monitoring of OA funds - and harnessing of complex funding sources - might play in speeding up the transition to OA.

The whitepaper includes findings from:

• A **survey** with over 1,000 Springer Nature authors who paid an APC from June to August 2019

• 16 **interviews** with institutional contacts responsible for OA management
A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF APC FUNDING SOURCES IS KEY
We wanted to better understand the current APC funding landscape and identify opportunities to support the OA transition

• Which types of APC funding sources are used by Springer Nature authors?

• Does this vary by journal type and author location?

• How much visibility do institutions have on this?

• What methods are institutions using to monitor APCs?

• Could improved monitoring help support the transition to OA?
THE APC FUNDING LANDSCAPE IS COMPLEX

Where APC funding sources are still ‘in the wild’ it may be harder for institutions and funders to track, and therefore to consolidate funds.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding source</th>
<th>OA funding management</th>
<th>OA articles in hybrid journals</th>
<th>OA articles in fully OA journals</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Library collection budget</td>
<td>Centrally managed by institution</td>
<td>Transformative agreements e.g. “Read and Publish”</td>
<td>Individual APCs supported by dedicated OA funding sources</td>
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<td>Institutional OA fund</td>
<td>Centrally managed by funders</td>
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<td>Fully OA publisher agreements</td>
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<td>OA block grants from research funder, via inst.</td>
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<td>Dedicated OA fund from research funder (rare)</td>
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<td>Research grant funds used for APCs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inst. funds not dedicated to OA, e.g. research (departmental) budget</td>
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<td>Funds from co-author/other org</td>
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<td>Personal funds</td>
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APCs **more easily monitored**

APCs **less easily monitored**

**APCs “in the wild”**
MANY APCS ARE STILL ‘IN THE WILD’

Over a quarter of Springer Nature authors surveyed only used ‘wild’ funding sources for their APC, and a further 50% used wild sources in combination with more easily monitored sources.

Levels of APC funding ‘wildness’

- All OA (1014)
  - Only APC funding sources in the wild: 27%
  - Combination (APC funding in the wild and more easily monitored): 50%
  - No APC funding sources in the wild: 23%

- Fully OA (820)
  - Only APC funding sources in the wild: 29%
  - Combination: 54%
  - No APC funding sources in the wild: 17%

- Hybrid OA (194)
  - Only APC funding sources in the wild: 18%
  - Combination: 31%
  - No APC funding sources in the wild: 51%
LEVELS OF APC ‘WILDERNESS’ VARY REGIONALLY
OA policies and funding mechanisms have created different landscapes.

Levels of APC funding 'wildness' - fully OA by region

- RoW (66): 38% Only APC funding sources in the wild, 48% Combination (APC funding in the wild and more easily monitored), 14% No APC funding sources in the wild
- Rest of Asia (inc. Middle East) (162): 26% Only APC funding sources in the wild, 68% Combination (APC funding in the wild and more easily monitored), 6% No APC funding sources in the wild
- China (mainland) + Hong Kong + Taiwan (78): 29% Only APC funding sources in the wild, 67% Combination (APC funding in the wild and more easily monitored), 4% No APC funding sources in the wild
- North America (161): 35% Only APC funding sources in the wild, 57% Combination (APC funding in the wild and more easily monitored), 8% No APC funding sources in the wild
- United Kingdom (40): 13% Only APC funding sources in the wild, 38% Combination (APC funding in the wild and more easily monitored), 50% No APC funding sources in the wild
- Germany (55): 31% Only APC funding sources in the wild, 36% Combination (APC funding in the wild and more easily monitored), 33% No APC funding sources in the wild
- Rest of Europe (258): 28% Only APC funding sources in the wild, 48% Combination (APC funding in the wild and more easily monitored), 24% No APC funding sources in the wild
‘WILD’ APC FUNDING HAS THE POTENTIAL TO BE HARNESSED

Nearly one in three fully OA authors is using institutional funding from non-dedicated sources, and it is also common to draw on research funds.

APC funding sources: Fully OA authors (n=820, multiple selection possible)

- **Dedicated OA funds from my institution (excluding block grants from funders)**: 28%
- **The publication fee was fully covered by my funder/institution’s OA membership**: 12%
- **Dedicated OA funds from my main research funder, distributed via OA block grants**: 4%
- **Dedicated OA funds from my main research funder (excluding OA block grants)**: 4%
- **I used funds from my institution that were not dedicated OA funds**: 29%
- **I used remaining funds from my main research grant (not dedicated open access)**: 27%
- **I used a budgeted OA allocation from my main research grant**: 26%
- **I used my own personal funds/savings**: 16%
- **My co-author(s) funds (from their own funder, institutional or personal funding)**: 10%
- **Dedicated open access funds from an organisation that is not my main research funder**: 9%
- **Other (please specify)**: 4%

APCs in the Wild https://doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.11988123.v4
BUT MANY APC PAYMENTS ARE NOT SEEN BY INSTITUTIONS

Almost one in three fully OA authors paid the publisher directly – institutions may find it challenging to monitor funding for these articles, and this is also an additional administrative burden for authors.

Who was involved in the process of paying the APC?

- My institution paid the publisher directly: 48% (Fully OA) 59% (Hybrid)
- I paid the publisher directly: 16% (Fully OA) 31% (Hybrid)
- My co-author paid the publisher directly, or arranged the payment: 4% (Fully OA) 12% (Hybrid)
- My funder paid the publisher directly: 8% (Fully OA) 9% (Hybrid)
- Other (please specify): 3% (Fully OA) 8% (Hybrid)
- I can’t remember: 1% (Fully OA) 7% (Hybrid)
INSTITUTIONAL INTERVIEWS
WE GATHERED INSIGHTS FROM 16 INSTITUTIONS
Institutional interviewees provided us with insights into their motivations, challenges, and approaches to APC monitoring

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
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<td>USA</td>
<td>Iowa State University</td>
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<td>IUPUI - Indiana University - Purdue University Indianapolis</td>
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<td>USA</td>
<td>University of California</td>
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<td>USA</td>
<td>University of Florida</td>
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<td>Qatar</td>
<td>Qatar National Library</td>
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INSTITUTIONAL INVESTMENT IN APC MONITORING VARIES

Where institutions or funders are seeking OA transition we unsurprisingly see greater focus on APC management and monitoring to facilitate this.

- **Model A**: separate financial streams for subscriptions and APCs

- **Model B**: separate financial streams, with an institutional OA fund

- **Model C**: research funder in the lead, compliance is key

- **Model D**: library in the lead, aiming to transform the library budget

Through interviews we identified four broad models under which institutions approach APC management and monitoring – more details in the report.
It is challenging for some institutions to estimate the proportion of APCs they are monitoring since those ‘in the wild’ are so difficult to track.

One interviewee - with institution-wide APC tracking over several years - has been able to track more than 95% of all APCs.

Another interviewee - from the library with an OA fund and no publisher deals - thinks the vast majority of APC payments fall outside their view.

Another interviewee - with a central OA fund - thinks they cover about 15 to 20% of the APCs, based on a search in a bibliographic database.

Institutions often find APC monitoring a “bureaucratic headache”.

APCs in the Wild  https://doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.11988123.v4
THERE IS OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN FROM SUCCESS STORIES
Some have identified mechanisms for successful APC tracking, offering greater opportunities to bring together complex APC funding sources

✓ **Policy requirements**: authors required to inform institution about OA publications

✓ **Accounting codes**: two universities reported positive results but another struggled

✓ **APC hub**: one org is planning a centralised APC payments hub for more visibility

✓ **Publisher agreements**: centralisation of APCs reduces the number of micro payments requiring tracking, and provides clarity on APC funding

Many interviewees pointed to the **success of OA agreements** - including transformative agreements - in reducing complexities around APC payment and monitoring

However, to facilitate agreements, or to consolidate a central OA fund for researchers, it is clear that **institutions and research funders** need to **understand the complex sources of funding** being utilised to pay for OA
RECAP AND NEXT STEPS
RECAP: KEY FINDINGS

APC funding is complex but with improved monitoring there is potential for institutions and funders to harness funds to support OA transition

- **APC funding is complex.** Authors use a wide range of funding sources, often in combination.
- **Monitoring is a challenge** as many APCs are still 'in the wild', particularly for fully OA journals.
- **Authors use ‘wild’ funds from outside of the library budget** (other institutional funds or from research funders), which presents an opportunity to harness funding streams to support OA.
- **Publisher OA agreements offer opportunities** to facilitate monitoring, reduce admin burden and consolidate multiple funding sources, but require an understanding of funding streams.
- **Institutions need a more comprehensive view** of APC funding sources to support the OA transition.
- **Success stories show potential** for effective monitoring, but more research is needed.
Further research is needed to identify APC monitoring blockers and enablers, with the aim of gaining a global picture of institutional activity.

Springer Nature has launched an institutional survey to verify and build on findings from institutional interviews.

Share your views with us now!

THANK YOU!
Questions?

Jessica Monaghan, PhD
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Springer Nature

Share your insights in our survey!