

# 5 TIPS

## FOR PUBLISHERS TO STAND OUT IN THE ACADEMIC MARKET

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Copyright Clearance Center recently engaged Rob Johnson to develop a whitepaper on how publishers can do to differentiate themselves in the academic market by aiding authors, librarians and researchers. As authors and their institutions become increasingly astute in their decisions regarding where to publish in OA form, we've identified 5 tips to help publishers to navigate and succeed in the academic market.

1

### DEVELOP A CLEAR PRICING STRATEGY

While we are still a long way from realizing a truly mature market for OA publishing, there is a growing focus on the cost and management of Article Processing Charges (APCs). Attempts are already underway to map APC costs to article influence, as exemplified by the OA cost effectiveness tool at [www.eigenfactor.org/openaccess](http://www.eigenfactor.org/openaccess); such formulations are likely to become increasingly sophisticated over time. Meanwhile, authors, academic institutions and research funders are increasingly likely to seek evidence that the APCs they pay represent fair value for the money.

Publishers therefore need to have a clear pricing strategy and must effectively articulate the correlation between their APCs and their business model or models. In addition to setting their APC list price, many publishers are actively considering the potential role of differential pricing based on existing subscription relationships, memberships, geographical regions, and the license used for the OA content. Publishers must be able to clearly communicate what reuse rights are available to authors and users. For example, a customer should be able to easily identify whether an article is covered by a Creative Commons CC BY, CC BY-NC or CC BY-ND license.

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## 2

## ADAPT SYSTEMS AND REPORTING TO MEET THE NEEDS OF AUTHORS AND INSTITUTIONS

Many institutions have limited funds available to cover APCs and so expect to increase access to their research through a mixture of APC payments ('Gold Open Access') and deposit in repositories ('Green Open Access'). To allow them to manage this effectively, they would like to be able to pre-approve APC expenditure by their authors. Authors themselves would prefer to confirm that funds are available from their institution or research funder before accepting liability for payment of an APC. Institutions also have additional needs to: track their expenditure on APCs; deposit publications to institutional and subject repositories; collect article metadata to demonstrate compliance to funders; forecast their future commitments; and monitor deposit and prepayment account balances.

These emerging requirements force changes to established systems and workflow patterns and require the capture and transfer of additional data as part of the publication process. Publishers who can find standardized ways to recognize and accommodate these needs will be well placed for success in the academic market. Meanwhile, publishers should consider another dimension of customer service: authors and institutions are not likely to want to learn and accommodate dozens, if not potentially hundreds, of different APC policies and systems that can slow their processes and create new complications for all parties. Thus, publishers should consider whether it is really necessary to develop or implement their own unique APC processing solutions, absent truly special circumstances.

## 3

## STREAMLINE OPEN ACCESS PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS

As transaction volumes rise, the administration costs of Open Access can increase substantially, both for publishers and academic institutions.

Several payment models can simplify transaction flows and facilitate payment of APCs. Implementing one of the models below can be a smart way to cement the relationship between a publisher and an academic institution, making it easier for the institution's authors to arrange payment of an APC.

### Selected Open Access Payment Models

**Membership schemes:** Many publishers offer membership schemes, under which payment of an annual fee entitles member institutions to preferential APC pricing. Membership schemes can also be linked to existing subscription arrangements, with the level of discount varying according to the subscription package held.

**Article credits:** Publishers may choose to offer a limited number of 'article credits' to subscribing institutions, for use by the institution's authors to publish articles in Open Access form at no extra charge. This can be an effective way to encourage initial uptake of Gold Open Access in disciplinary areas where there is scepticism about its value or where funds are limited.

**Deposit/prepayment schemes:** Institutions make an upfront payment to the publisher, and APCs are charged against this balance as they're incurred. This simplifies the transaction flows for the publisher and institution, while eliminating the risk of bad debt and improving cash flow for the publisher. However, implementation requires a formal agreement with the institution, separate accounting for client funds, and the ability to report to institutions on their account balances and activity.

**Fixed price agreement:** Publishers contract with funding agencies (or individual institutions in receipt of agency funds) to publish all articles arising from the funder's research for a stipulated fee. Additional parameters may be agreed upon; one example is limiting the arrangement to articles for which the funding agency is the primary research funder or has funded the lead author. This model can be attractive to funders and institutions as it gives them control over compliance, but requires careful financial modelling by the publisher to determine an appropriate price.

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## 4

## MONITOR CHANGES IN FUNDERS' POLICIES

As the requirements of research funders continue to change rapidly, publishers need to regularly reflect on the implications of these changes for their business models. In the U.S., the White House has already asked federal agencies with research and development budgets over \$100 million to 'dramatically increase' access to the results of their research. In the UK, the Research Councils UK policy on Open Access has been in effect since April 1, 2013, and the Councils have explicitly expressed a preference for the Gold Open Access route and the CC BY licence. Meanwhile, it seems inevitable that the UK's Research Excellence Framework (REF) will include an Open Access mandate for the period 2014-2020, though without prescribing the route (Green or Gold) or licence. In Europe, member states have clearly indicated their support for broader and more rapid access to scientific publications. Further, expanding Open Access in scientific publications will be a general aim of the future Horizon 2020 research framework program.

## 5

## GET THE AUTHOR EXPERIENCE RIGHT

Ultimately, the decision about where to publish and whether to pay an APC rests primarily with the submitting author. Publishers who can offer a seamless process—the more simple, the better—are likely to see a far more favourable reception than those for whom Open Access represents an afterthought in the process. A successful user experience will follow an author step-by-step, from submission through peer review, and once approval for publication is received, will easily allow the author to arrange payment of an APC and/or deposit the article to a repository.

## CONCLUSION: OPEN ACCESS IS CHANGING

Open Access is dramatically changing the business of scholarly publishing. Publishers, authors, universities, librarians, funders and customers everywhere are feeling the impact. While this environment of change may seem overwhelming, no single organization or author stands alone. Open Access is a global challenge, and we are all in this together.

Indeed, in its report entitled "The Potential Role for Intermediaries in Managing the Payment of Open Access Article Processing Charges (APCs)," the Research Information Network urged stakeholders to "work together to ensure that progress... is as smooth as possible toward creating the systems and processes that enable the payment of Open Access article processing charges, while meeting the costs of publication."

Publishers can stay on the right track to do just that by keeping these five tips in view.