The price of gold
The KU Leuven Fund for Fair OA
Demmy Verbeke - Laura Mesotten
OA support at KU Leuven before 2018

why Fair OA?

KU Leuven Fund for Fair OA
OA support at KU Leuven before 2018
OA at KU Leuven before 2018

- in line with funder requirements and research policy in Belgium
- focus on Green OA (investment in both infrastructure and staff)
- obligation to deposit, no obligation to publish in OA
- focus on AAMs of journal articles
- institutional repository is used to realize Green OA, but only if authors and publishers allow this
- accommodating for publishers
- no real measures to fundamentally change scholarly communication
OA at KU Leuven before 2018

beyond Green OA:

- Gold OA journals and monographs of Leuven University Press

- moderate support under the radar for Gold no-APC/BPC OA: e.g. *Open Library of Humanities, Language Science Press*

- (officially) no support for for-profit Gold OA (commercial APCs/BPCs, whether or not Hybrid)
OA at KU Leuven before 2018

in reality:

yearly spend on for-profit Gold OA for journal articles (APCs or other author fees paid outside of the library) at the very least 380.000€

N.B. on top of collection budget spent by KU Leuven Libraries – almost €9.000.000/year
N.B. on top of other costs for academic publishing (e.g. monograph fees) – cost unknown
Why Fair OA?
Why care about OA?

1. **ethical reasons**

- ✓ results of scholarly research available to general public regardless of whether the parties interested are affiliated with an university or not

- ✓ results of scholarly research available to scholars all over the world regardless of whether these scholars are affiliated with an institution which can afford to buy a lot of academic publications or not
2. **academic reasons**

- better for scholarship, better for the scholar
  
- proven increase in impact
  
  e.g. research picked up easier by journalists, companies & policy-makers

- OA mandates from funders/governments – e.g. Plan S
Why care about OA?

3. financial reasons

cost of academic publishing

focus mostly on subscription cost ("serials crisis")
  1927 (Association of American Universities): remarkable growth in periodical literature, resulting in vastly increased demands on library funds

rise in cost of monographs considered less problematic (but of course: if subscription cost rises, there is no budget for monographs)
(1) for-profit OA

hybrid or full gold OA

APCs/BPCs: author or institution for whom author works or funder pays (sometimes in combination with payment by reader)
price of APC/BPC is determined by profit margin
For-profit publishing

commercial publishers
  - focus on maximizing profit (if need be at the expense of scholarship)
  - non-OA: profit margins on subscriptions and book sales
  - OA: profit margins on APCs/BPCs (full gold OA) or profit thanks to combination of APC and subscriptions (hybrid gold OA)
  - KU Leuven: min. 380.000 € / year on APCs + ca. 9.000.000 € / year on acquisitions (mostly commercial)

fake publishers
  - pretend to provide a professional service but do not, with the intention to defraud scholars (and their institutions/funders)
  - non-OA: vanity publishing
  - OA: APCs for fake journals
  - KU Leuven: c. 30.000 € / year
For-profit OA

ethical reasons for OA
- for-profit OA provides solution for access (at great cost for research intensive institutions), but introduces a new barrier on the side of the authors

academic reasons for OA
- for-profit OA provides short-term solution (at great cost for research intensive institutions), but it will become unsustainable

financial reasons for OA
- for-profit OA does not provide a solution (quite the opposite)

“the goals of increasing access and achieving a sustainable and competitive OA market are distinct and not necessarily synergistic”

“it may well be that the current commercial publishing model cannot be adapted to full OA publishing”

For-profit OA

do not expect a for-profit market for academic publishing funded by APCs/BPCs to be better than a for-profit market funded by subscriptions and book sales

Bo-Christer Björk – David Salomon (2014), *Developing an Effective Market for Open Access Article Processing Charges*
Toby Green (2018), ‘We’re still failing to deliver open access and solve the serials crisis’
photo: The Waving Cat
(2) non-profit OA

green OA
    self-archiving, typically delayed OA of less attractive version (AAM)

black (a.k.a. illegal, rogue) OA
    distribution of scholarly research regardless of copyright law

fair (gold) OA
    non-commercial academic publishers: mission-driven rather than profit-driven
    OA through cost-effective APCs/BPCs or through subsidy model (a.k.a. diamond/platinum OA)
Green OA

- ethical reasons for OA
  + green OA provides solution

- academic reasons for OA
  ± green OA provides partial solution

- financial reasons for OA
  - green OA does not provide a solution
Black OA

ethical reasons for OA
+ black OA provides solution for access, but breaks the law

academic reasons for OA
+ black OA is an indication that the present system of scholarly communication is broken, but not really a long-term solution

financial reasons for OA
+ black OA provides a solution

photo: Howard Ignatius
Fair OA

ethical reasons for OA
  + fair OA provides solution

academic reasons for OA
  + fair OA provides solution

financial reasons for OA
  + fair OA provides solution
KU Leuven Fund for Fair OA
we wanted to stimulate an approach that ticks all three boxes

we wanted an approach which not only works for journal articles but also for monographs

we wanted to support a real challenge to the commercial grip on academic publishing

we agree with the conclusion of the Open AIRE 2020 report that exclusively choosing Green OA and/or supporting for-profit OA are not general or sustainable solutions, and we believe that the best results can be expected from a combination of Green OA and non-profit Gold OA
KU Leuven Fund for Fair OA

three parts:

1. monographs
   BPCs for OA monographs with Leuven University Press (i.e. publisher respecting Fair OA principles)

2. articles
   APCs for non-profit Gold OA according to Fair OA principles (regardless of publisher)

3. non-profit OA initiatives
BPCs

• BPC covers true cost of publishing
• academic value guaranteed: evaluation of possible OA support completely separated from peer review evaluation of manuscript
• in combination with a (paid) POD option
• available to everyone (not only authors from KU Leuven):
  KU Leuven-affiliation: 1/3 own means* + 2/3 support from fund
  no KU Leuven-affiliation: 1/3 support from fund + 2/3 own means
  * fee waiver possible

so far (8 months in): 13 book projects approved (9 KU Leuven authors, 4 external authors)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>FOA contribution</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M. Becker</td>
<td>The Frankenbite: Ethics and Reality in Factual Programming</td>
<td>2.650€</td>
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<tr>
<td>J. Braun (ed.)</td>
<td>#masshysteria. Hysteria, Politics, and Performance Strategies</td>
<td>3.100€</td>
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<tr>
<td>L. d’Haenens et al. (eds.)</td>
<td>Images of Immigrants and Refugees in Western Europe</td>
<td>5.600€</td>
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<tr>
<td>B. Dogramaci (ed.)</td>
<td>Arrival Cities: Migrating Artists and New Metropolitan Topographies</td>
<td>3.220€</td>
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<td>A. Gileir – A. Fefurne (eds.)</td>
<td>Strategic Imaginations, The Gender of Sovereignty in European Politics and Aesthetics</td>
<td>6.055€</td>
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<tr>
<td>S. Loosen et al. (eds.)</td>
<td>The Figure of Knowledge: Conditioning Architectural Theory, 1960s-1990s</td>
<td>6.320€</td>
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<tr>
<td>S. Pektas – J. Leman (eds.)</td>
<td>Militant Jihadism: Today and Tomorrow</td>
<td>5.700€</td>
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<tr>
<td>K. De Witte et al.</td>
<td>The Funding Formulas in Primary, Secondary and Special Needs Education in High Performing Countries</td>
<td>5.510€</td>
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<td>A. Langer – U. Ukiwo (eds.)</td>
<td>Oil Wealth and Development in Uganda and Beyond: Prospects, Opportunities and Challenges</td>
<td>6.314€</td>
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<td>M. Kohlraus</td>
<td>Brokers of Modernity. Modernist Architects in East-Central Europe, 1910-1950</td>
<td>5.000€</td>
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<td>L. Rock</td>
<td>“As German as Kafka?” On identity and singularity: responses to the imperative of identity in German-language literature around 1900 and 2000</td>
<td>9.324€</td>
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<tr>
<td>A. Kuhk et al. (eds.)</td>
<td>Participatiegolven. Reflecties op social-ruimtelijke kwesties</td>
<td>6.298€</td>
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APCs

- publication in full OA (no hybrid)
- fair character guaranteed (in theory all journals eligible, in reality many journals do not comply)
- academic quality guaranteed: DOAJ in combination with WoS or VABB-SHW
- author must retain copyright, publication preferably CC-BY
- maximum €1.000 for full APC (no partial funding)

➢ reserved for KU Leuven staff

https://bib.kuleuven.be/english/research/open-access/kuleuven-fund-for-fair-open-access
APCs

so far (8 months in):

28 applications:
- 7 tenured professors, 21 ECRs
- 16 applications approved, 12 applications rejected (reason: APC not cost-effective but for-profit)

division:
- SET: 13 – 8 approved, 5 rejected
- HSS: 12 – 8 approved, 4 rejected
- BMS: 3 – 3 rejected

average APC: 734.56 EUR (incl. VAT)
temporary conclusions

BPC part works well

APC part mostly intended to create awareness about for-profit vs. non-profit academic publishing, informing and activating academic authors
temporary conclusions

main results:

• new wind for OA at KU Leuven
• Fair OA high on the agenda of KU Leuven and part of our international branding
• KU Leuven Libraries recognized as centre of OA expertise
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https://bib.kuleuven.be/english/research/open-access/kuleuven-fund-for-fair-open-access

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