Researcher attitudes to offset agreements for open access publishing

Helena Francke
University of Borås
helena.francke@hb.se

Acknowledging the other participants in the evaluation group: Henrik Aldberg, Swedish Research Council; Ulf Kronman, National Library of Sweden; Camilla Lindelöw, National Library of Sweden; Lisa Olsson, Stockholm University (coordinator) and Niklas Willén, Uppsala University. Thomas Neidenmark for the survey.

Munin 2018,
Tromsø, 28-29 November 2018
BACKGROUND

Targets

- The Swedish government’s “target is that all scholarly publications which are the result of publicly funded research should become open access at the time of publishing.”
  (Bill 2016/17:50; my transl.)

Current state in Sweden

- Around 30-40% of journal and conference articles made OA, c. 10-20% through 100% OA or hybrid OA
- OA is included in the Swedish negotiations with publishers around new agreements


European Commission (2018). Trends for open access to publications. [Based on Scopus data, 2016 via Open Science Monitor]

THE SWEDISH SPRINGER COMPACT AGREEMENT (2016-2018)

Read & Publish agreement between the Bibsam consortium (on behalf of 42 institutions) and Springer Nature

The organizations pays a publishing cost for affiliated authors’ work to become OA and a reading cost to get access to subscription material

Pilot during July 2016 to December 2018

Co-funded by Bibsam consortium members, National Library of Sweden & Swedish Research Council
THE EVALUATION OF THE SC AGREEMENT

Evaluation of the agreement on behalf of the Bibsam consortium

- Costs
- Administration
- Author attitudes and practices
- Dissemination/attention

→ Survey

Feb 20, 2017 to June 28, 2018
375 responses (c. 17% of possible responses)
Only authors from half of the institutions
Data primarily coded free-text answers

The evaluation group:
Henrik Aldberg, Swedish Research Council
Helena Francke, University of Borås
Ulf Kronman, National Library of Sweden
Camilla Lindelöw, National Library of Sweden
Lisa Olsson, Stockholm University (coordinator)
Niklas Willén, Uppsala University
AUTHORS’ MOTIVATIONS FOR OA PUBLISHING

Visibility 21 %
Accessibility 17 %
Accessible to the public 8 %
Tax-payers’ money 7 %
Not all can afford subscriptions 5 %
(Other) ideological reasons 6 %

No answer 39 %

Percent of all respondents who provided this answer. Some respondents provided answers that have been coded as belonging to more than one category.


Did the authors know about SC before submission?

27 % Yes  
73 % No
## Authors’ Reactions to OA Publishing Through SC (I)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Per cent of respondents (n=375)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good; good opportunity; I appreciate it</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very good</td>
<td>Really good; really useful; much appreciated</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Splendid; brilliant; extremely important</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive that the individual does not have to cover the costs</td>
<td>Obviously, it’s a nice feature to have given that I don’t have to think about funding fees.</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Helena Francke 2018-11-29
# AUTHORS’ REACTIONS TO OA PUBLISHING THROUGH SC (II)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Per cent of respondents (n=375)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Depends on the cost of the agreement</td>
<td>Good but it also depends on the costs, if it impacts on other things</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Companies make profit off research</td>
<td>Something is obviously wrong when we need to pay fees to private companies for making publicly funded work available to the public</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Would the authors like to see more, similar agreements?

87 % Yes    2 % No    12 % Perhaps

"If only a few journals are covered by these kinds of deals it creates a dangerous skewness in where knowledge will be disseminated."

More journals with OA to choose from without cost 7 %
Good that author doesn’t have to arrange for APCs 4 %
Enhances visibility 4 %
Enhances accessibility 7 %
Depends on the cost 5 %
No answer 57 %
OPEN ACCESS – YES PLEASE!

If OA publishing is **made easy** for the authors, it is generally highly appreciated.

- most of the authors want OA if it is easy and predictable
- some are cost aware and would prefer non-profit alternatives

However, subject match and journal impact more important

CHANGING PRACTICES – OH NO!

Open access is attractive given that not much else changes, that there is low risk. E.g.

- predictable and easy to get funding for potential publishing charges
- offset agreements that cover all the journals authors are used to publishing in
NEXUS OF PRACTICES

Practices: aligning practical understandings

Changing practices requires addressing the nexus of practices involved in publishing decisions and rewards, e.g.

- **publishing traditions** – prestige, habit, trust in people (publisher, editors, reviewers), visibility to peers, etc.
- **disciplinary practices** – how research is communicated, proving the research makes a valuable contribution in the field, audience, etc.
- **economical/business practices** – business models, securing APC funding, employment, shareholder expectations, etc.

PUBLICATIONS FROM THE EVALUATION GROUP


Utvärdering av offsetavtal – delrapport 2: Springer Compact och Institute of Physics (2017)

Utvärdering av Springer Compact – halvårsrapport 1 (2017)
THANKS FOR LISTENING!

University of Borås

Helena Francke
helena.francke@hb.se

2018-12-03