

## APCs in the Wild – White Paper

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Outreach and Open Research

ADVANCING  
**DISCOVERY**



# THE GOAL: Accelerating the transition to open access

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OA 2020's goal: to accelerate the transition of scholarly communication to universal open access by transforming today's scholarly journals, currently locked behind paywalls, to open publication models.

“The goal is to preserve the established service levels provided by publishers that are still requested by researchers, while redefining and reorganizing the necessary payment streams. By disrupting the underlying business model, the viability of journal publishing can be preserved and put on a solid footing for the scholarly developments of the future”

<http://dx.doi.org/10.17617/1.3>

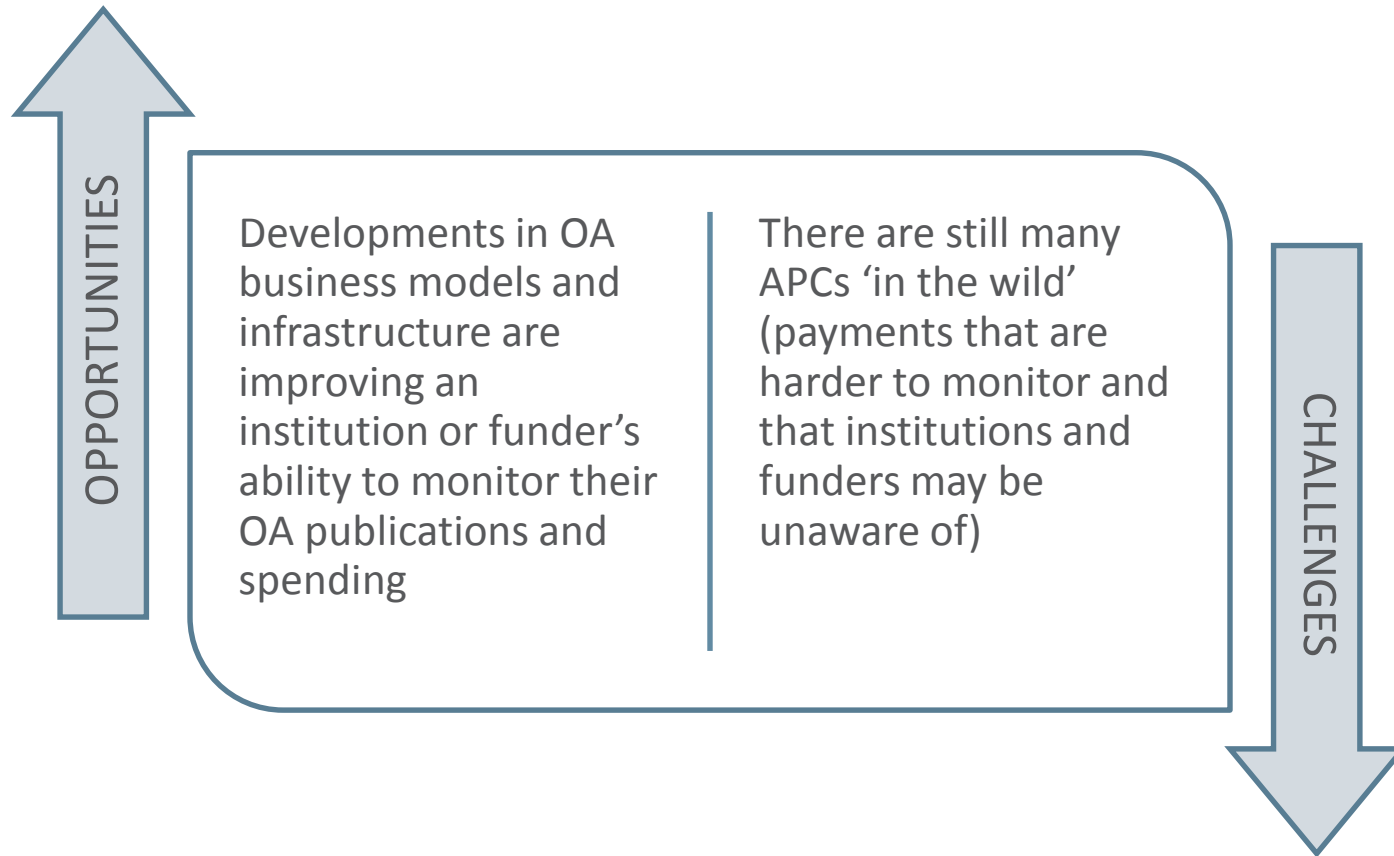
# THE NEED: redistribution of funding

“In order to respond adequately to the Open Access transformation in-house and to actively shape it, reliable estimates of financial relief or burdens with regard to the expected total institutional APC expenditure of the individual institutions after a comprehensive transformation of journals into Open Access are indispensable”

<https://doi.org/10.4119/unibi/2937971>



# THE CHALLENGE: complex and fragmented funding landscape

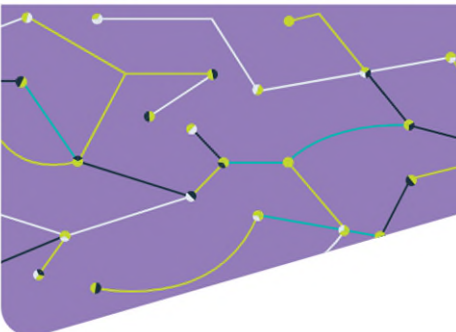


The scale of the problem

# SPRINGER NATURE SUPPORTS THE OA TRANSITION

We are working with the research community to examine challenges that could block progress to OA

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Open Research  
**DIVERSIFYING READERSHIP THROUGH OPEN ACCESS: A USAGE ANALYSIS FOR OA BOOKS**  
 White paper

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Open Research Journals, books, data and tools from:

**BMC** **Springer** **nature**research **palgrave macmillan**

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Open Research  
**ASSESSING THE OPEN ACCESS EFFECT FOR HYBRID JOURNALS**  
 White paper

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Open Research  
**GOLD OPEN ACCESS IN THE UK: SPRINGER NATURE'S TRANSITION**  
 Case study

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Open Research  
**THE OA EFFECT: HOW DOES OPEN ACCESS AFFECT THE USAGE OF SCHOLARLY BOOKS?**  
 White paper

ADVANCING DISCOVERY

Open Research Journals, books, data and tools from:

**BMC** **Springer Open** **nature**research **palgrave macmillan**

# 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
- **NEW for Munin Conference:** results of survey with ~200 institutions

The image shows the cover of a whitepaper from Springer Nature. At the top left is the Springer Nature logo, and at the top right is the website address 'springernature.com'. The central graphic is a blue and purple abstract design with white dots and lines, resembling a network or data visualization. Below the graphic, the text reads: 'Open Research', ''APCS IN THE WILD': EXPLORING FUNDING STREAMS FOR AN ACCELERATED TRANSITION TO OPEN ACCESS', and 'Whitepaper'. On the right side, there is a small blue box with the text 'ADVANCING DISCOVERY' and a small icon of a hexagon. Below that, there is a small icon of a hexagon with the text 'Open Research Journals Books Data Tools'. At the bottom left, there is a small icon of a document with a checkmark.

# 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





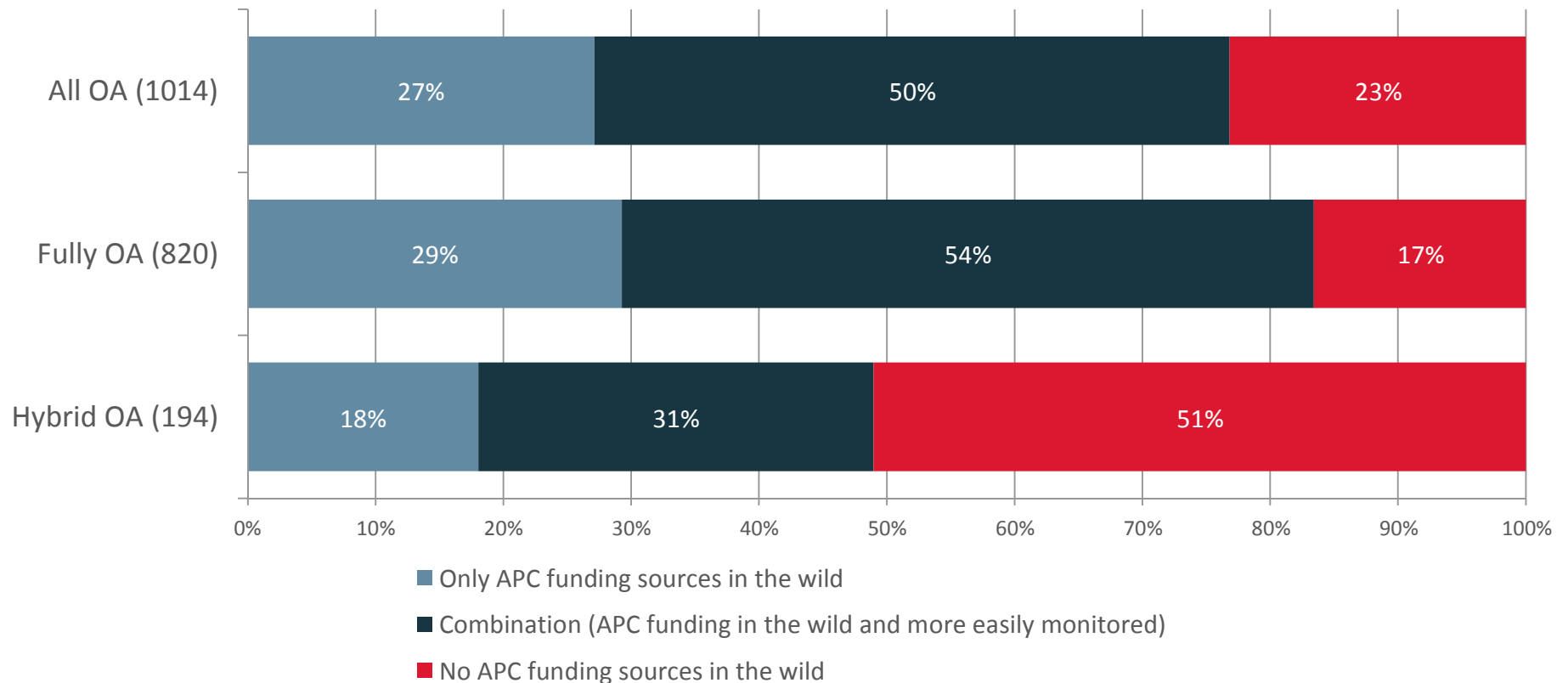
# SPRINGER NATURE AUTHOR SURVEY

# 1

## 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

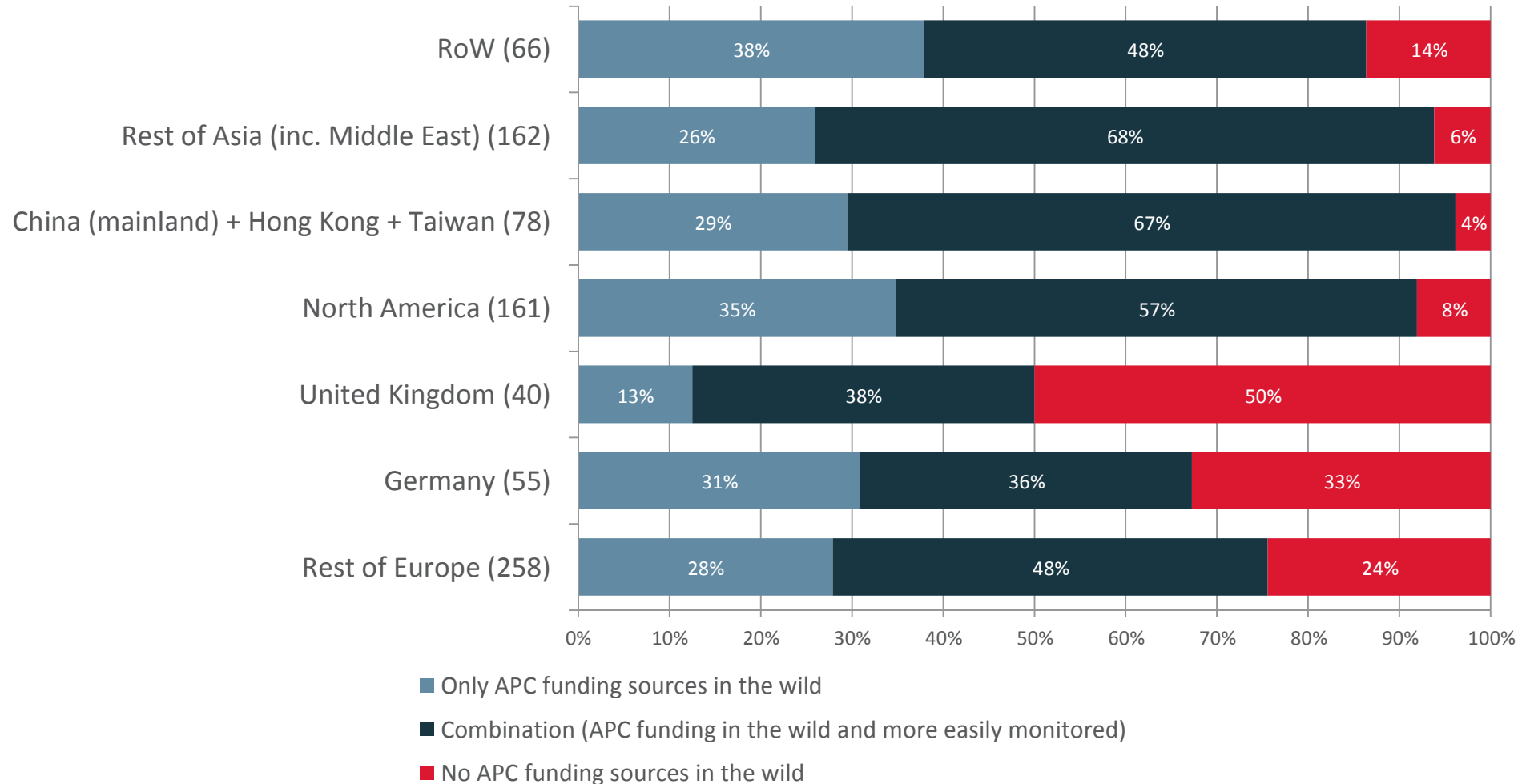
Levels of APC funding 'wildness'



# LEVELS OF APC 'WILDNESS' VARY REGIONALLY

OA policies and funding mechanisms have created different landscapes

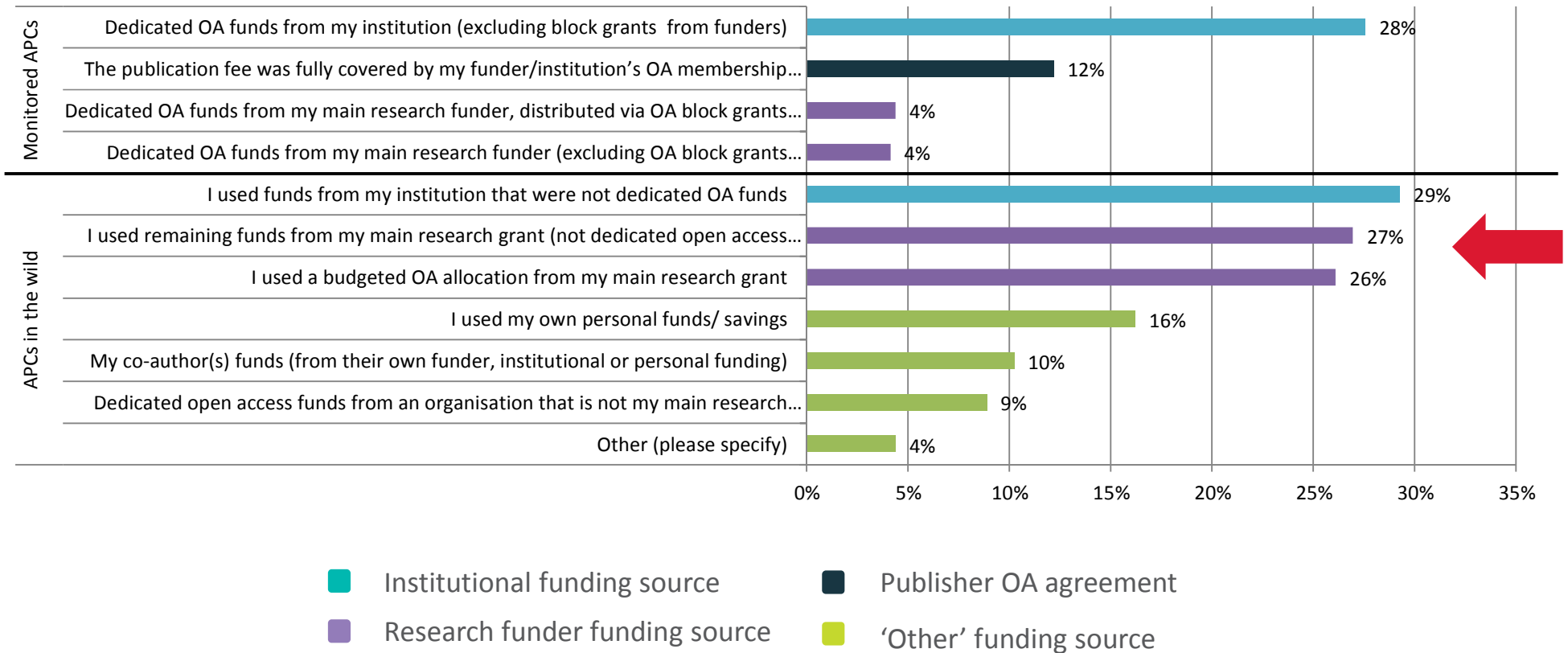
## Levels of APC funding 'wildness' - fully OA by region



# 'WILD' APC FUNDING HAS THE POTENTIAL TO BE HARNESSSED

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

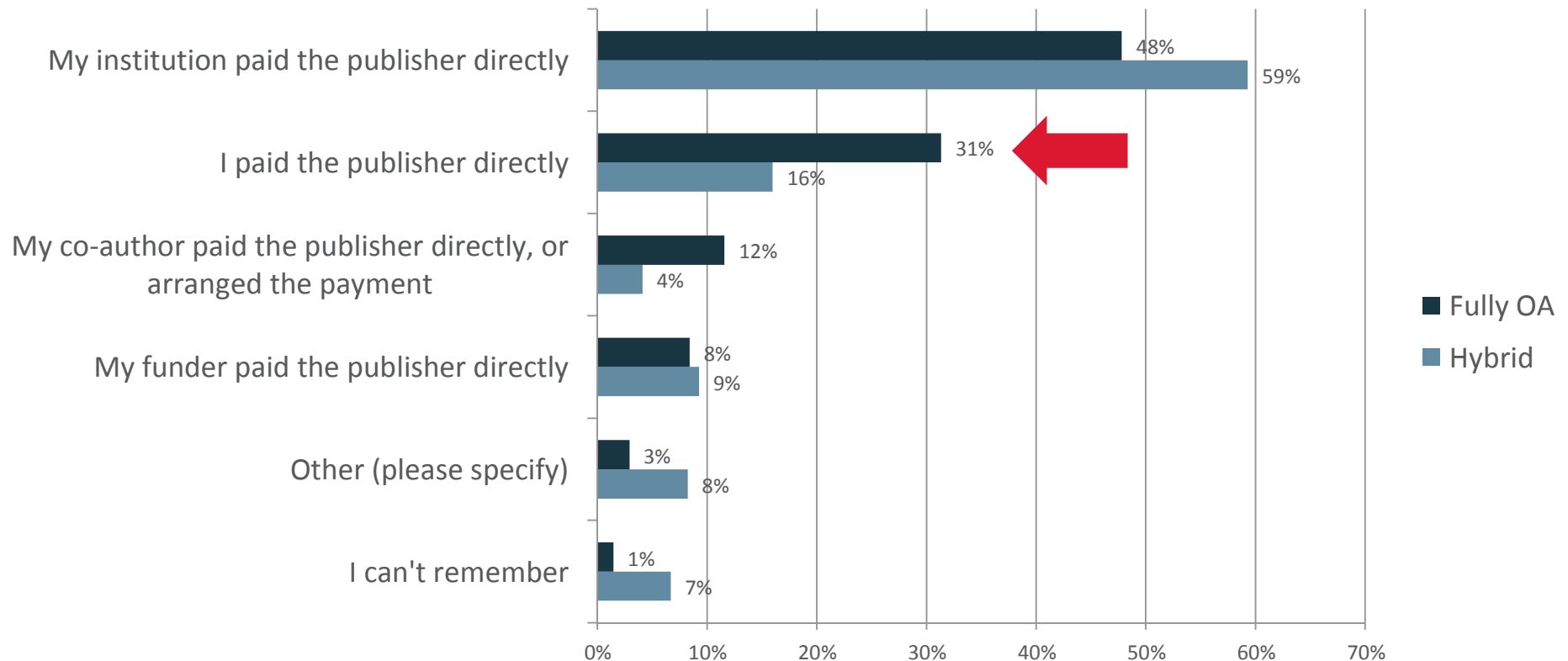
## APC funding sources: Fully OA authors (n=820, multiple selection possible)



## 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?



# INSTITUTIONAL MONITORING AND TRACKING

## Results from our interviews and follow up survey

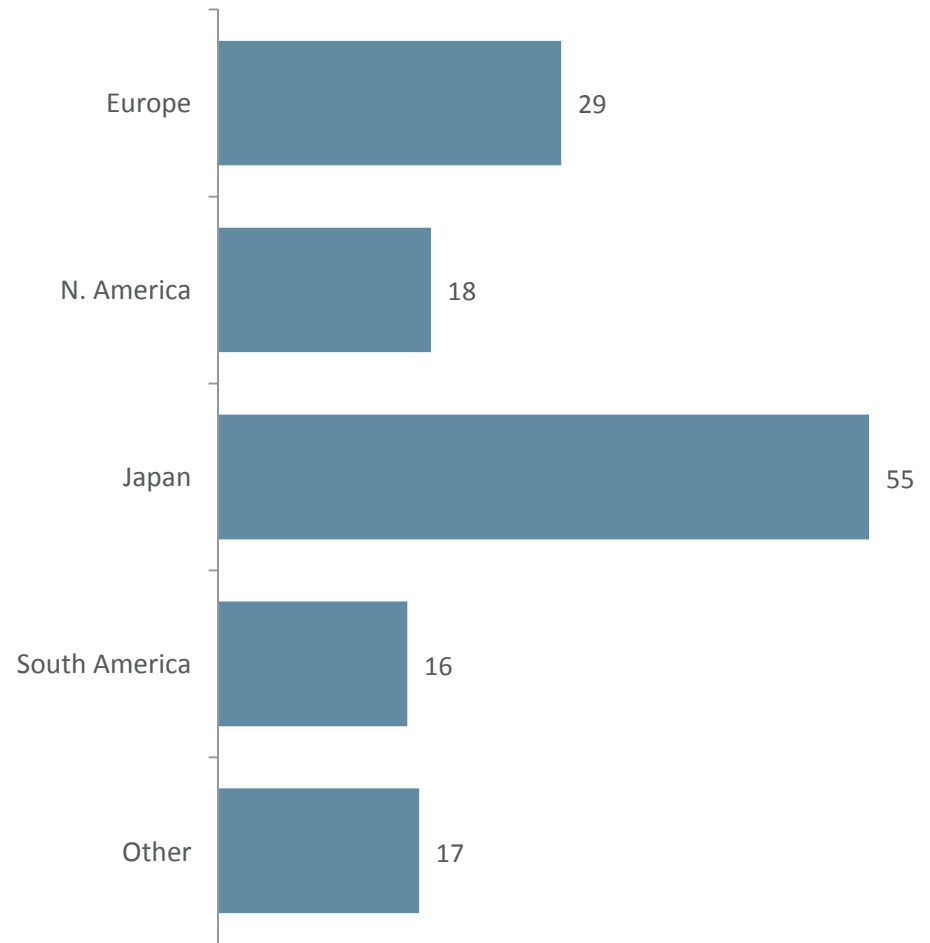
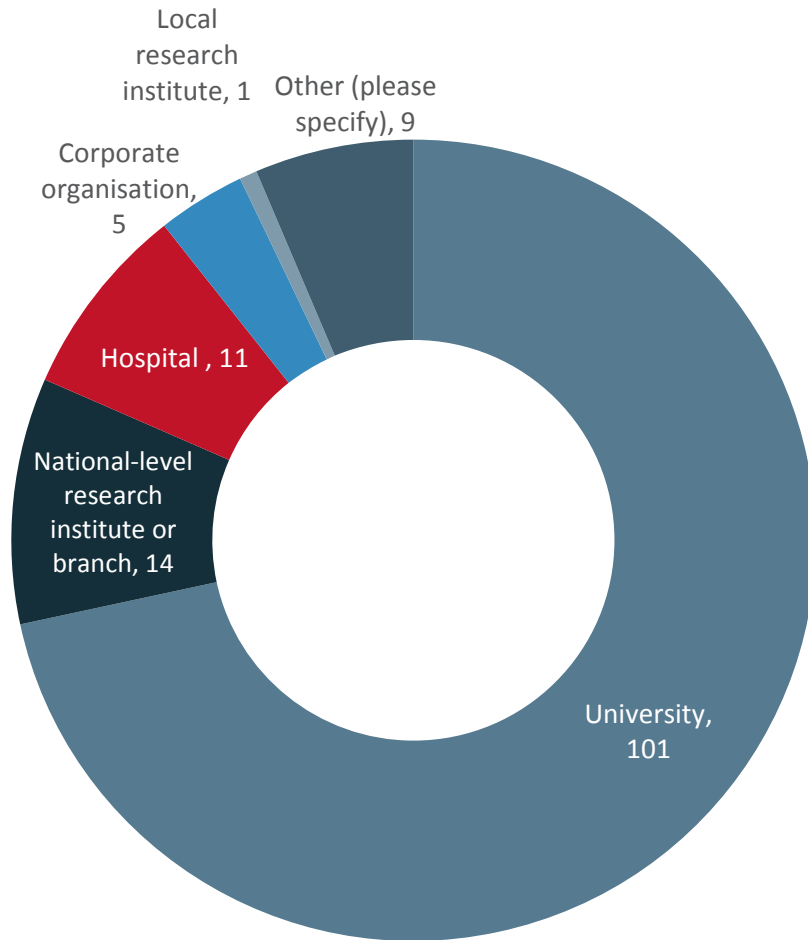
# 2

# WE GATHERED INSIGHTS FROM 16 INSTITUTIONS

Institutional interviewees provided us with insights into their motivations, challenges, and approaches to APC monitoring

Country	Institution
Australia	University of Queensland
Australia	University of Wollongong
Austria	University of Vienna
China	Fudan University
Netherlands	Erasmus University Rotterdam
Netherlands	Delft University of Technology
Norway	University of Bergen
Sweden	Stockholm University
UK	University of Glasgow
UK	Imperial College London
UK	University of York
USA	Iowa State University
USA	IUPUI - Indiana University - Purdue University Indianapolis
USA	University of California
USA	University of Florida
Qatar	Qatar National Library

# THEN A FURTHER ~200 INSTITUTIONS responded to a survey





# 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

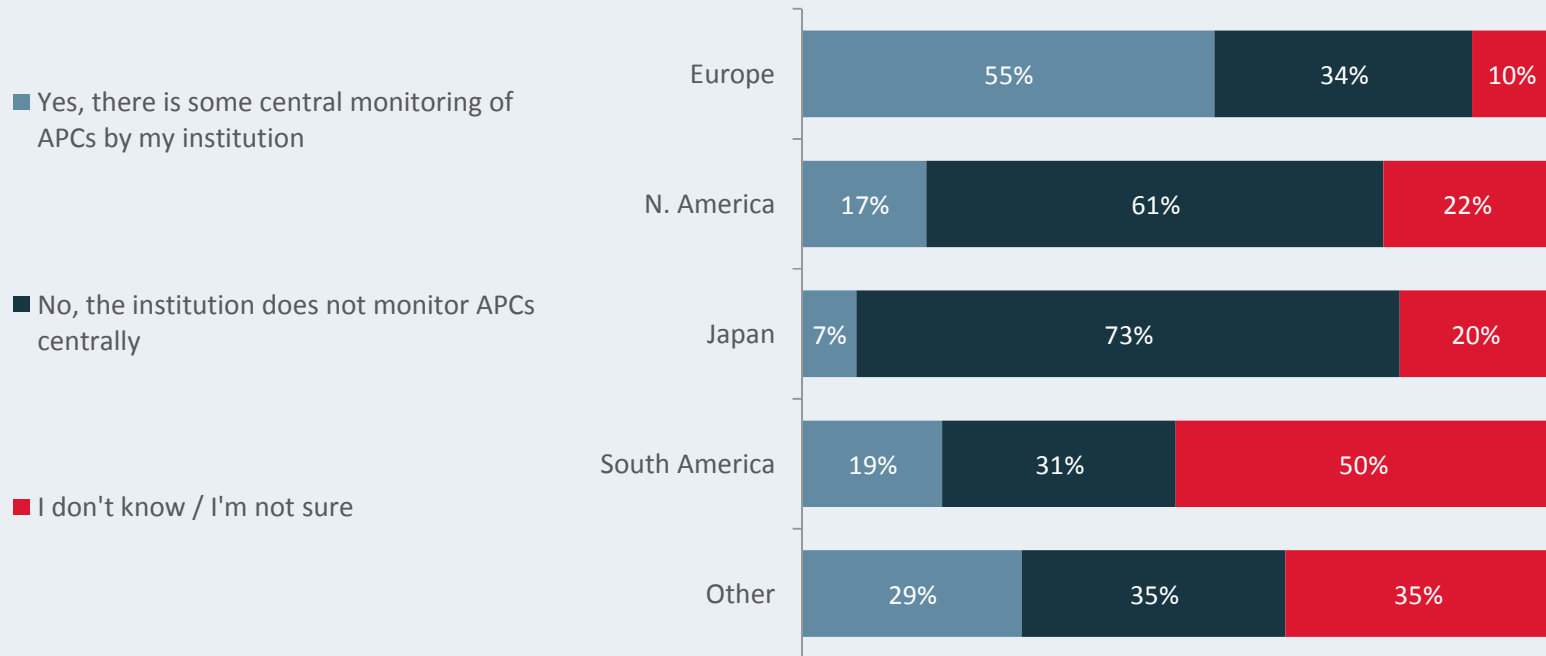


Through interviews we identified four broad models under which institutions approach APC management and monitoring – more details in the report

# MOST INSTITUTIONS ARE NOT MONITORING APCS

Less than a quarter of respondents were monitoring APC payments centrally

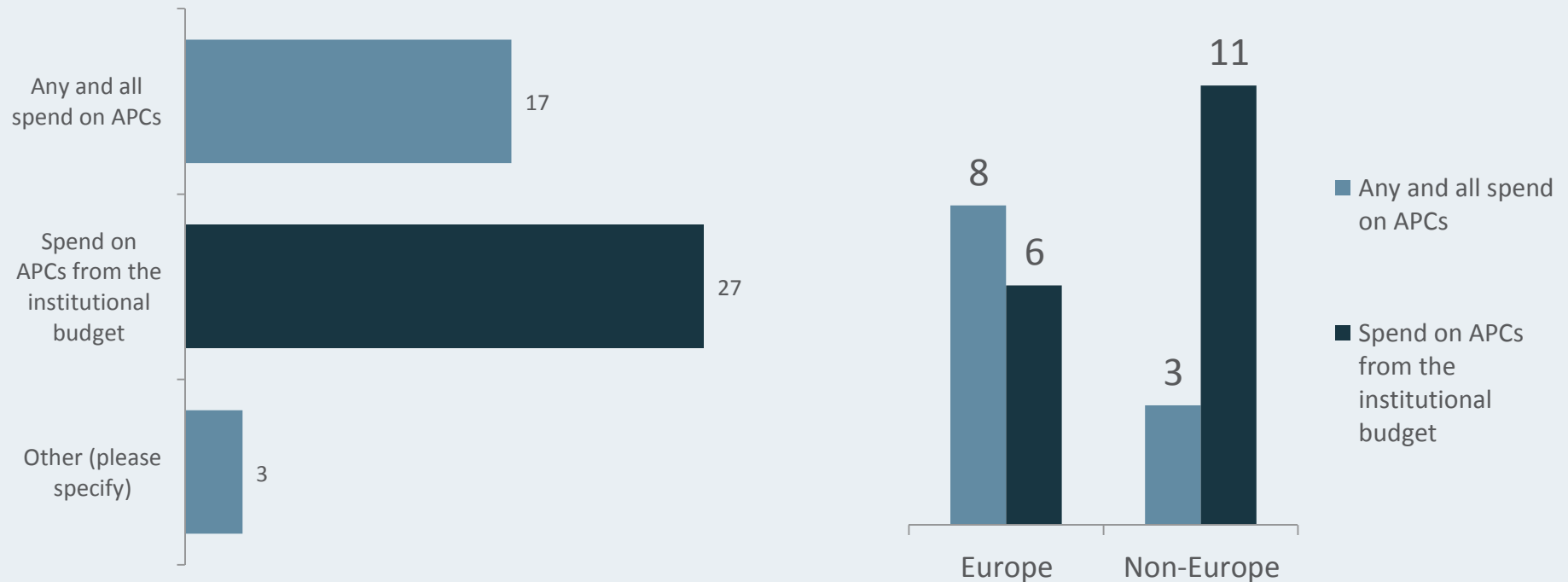
Does your institution undertake any monitoring of APCs paid for articles affiliated with your institution? n=135



# THERE ARE FEW MODEL D INSTITUTIONS

## APC spend from the institution is more likely to be monitored

You said that your institution carries out some central monitoring of APCs paid by authors. What is the institution aiming to monitor?

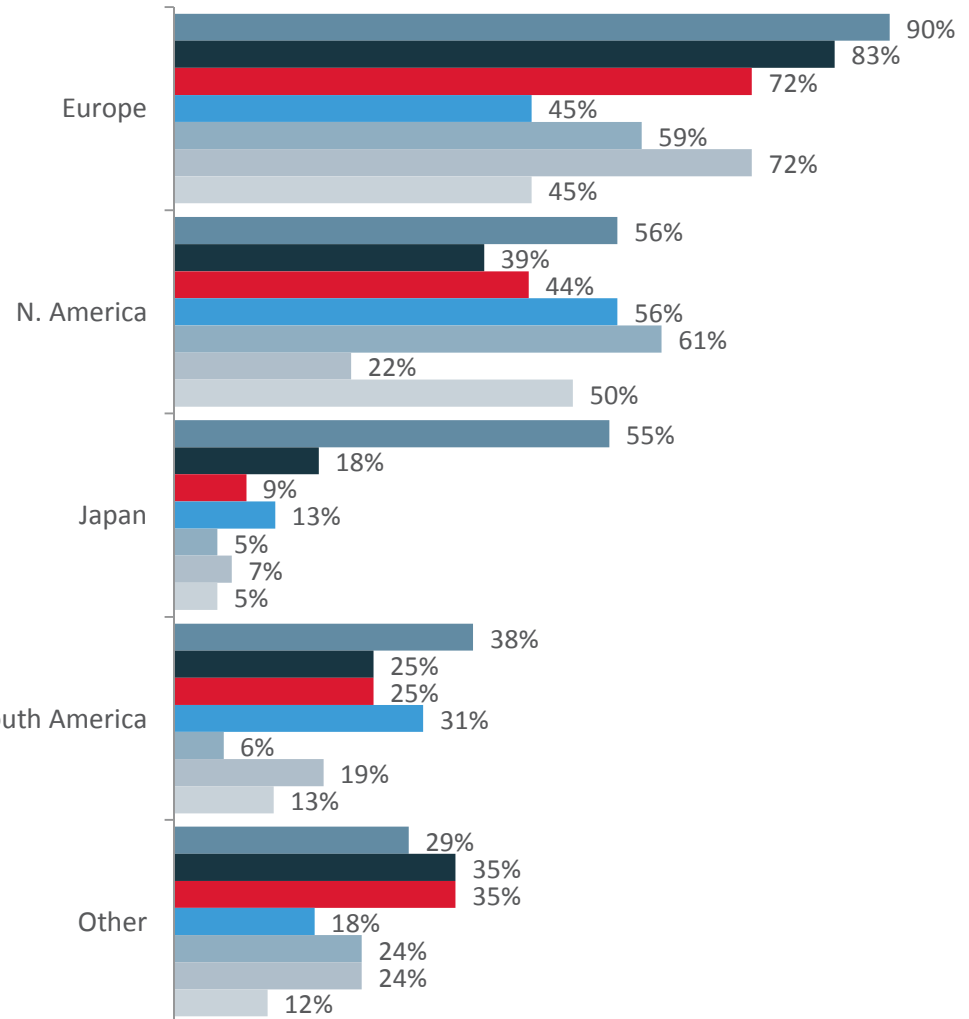


# MODEL D INSTITUTIONS ARE LEAST PREVALENT

## Distribution of OA funds was the least common activity

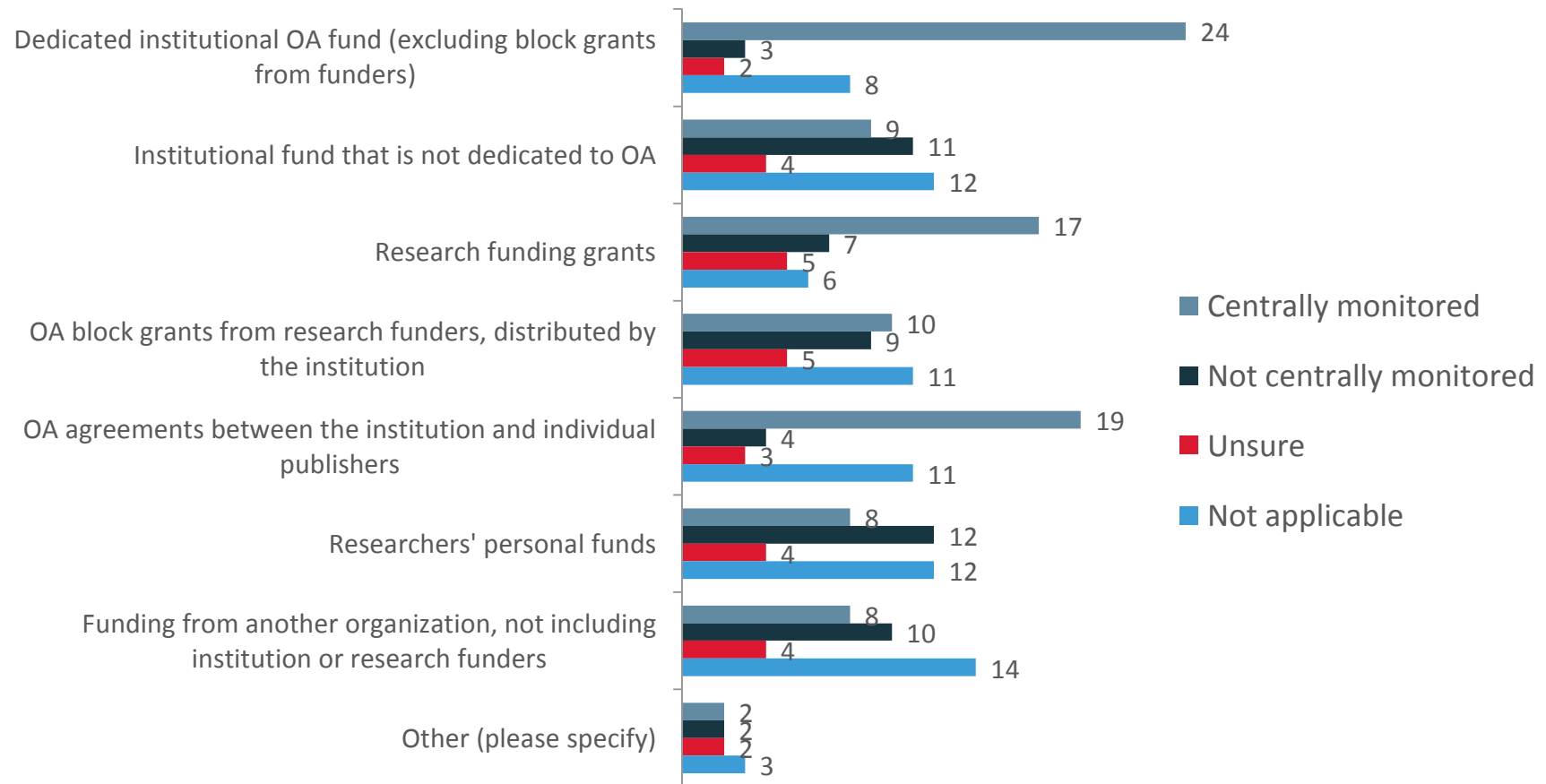
- Support authors in depositing manuscripts into institutional or funder repositories
- Monitor the number of OA publications by the institution's authors
- Advise authors on compliance with their funders' OA policies
- Help authors to make APC payments to journals/publishers
- Provide authors with advice on funding sources for OA article processing charges (APCs)
- Negotiate agreements with publishers to cover authors' APCs
- Distribute funds for APCs via an institutional OA fund

N=135



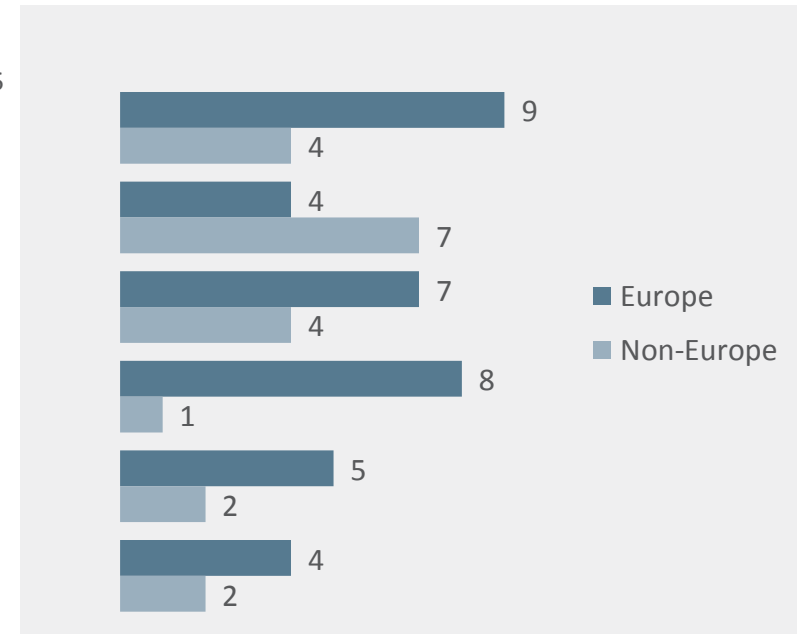
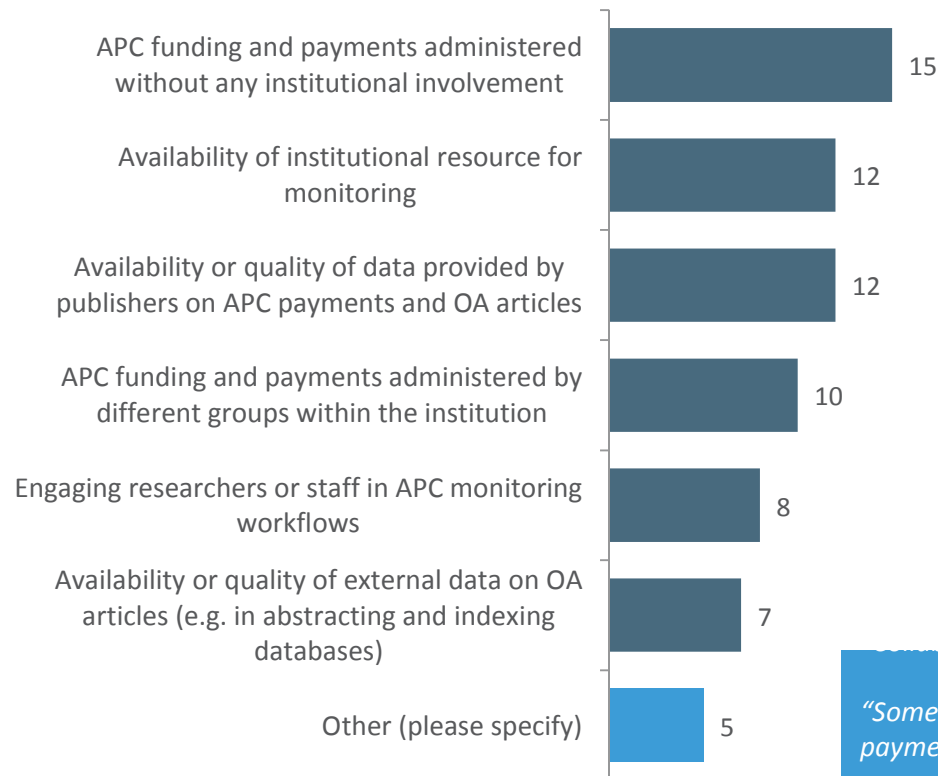
## 'APCS IN THE WILD' ARE LEAST MONITORED

Non dedicated OA funds, personal funds, or funds from outside the institution were monitored least



# 'APCS IN THE WILD' ARE A KEY BARRIER TO MONITORING

What are the barriers or challenges experienced by your institution when monitoring APCs? Please select all that apply



*"Sometimes we pay the article fee and the publisher doesn't apply the payment to clear our account and we receive automatic reminder that there is an amount pendant"*

*"The complexity of the APC monitoring workflows by some publishers."*

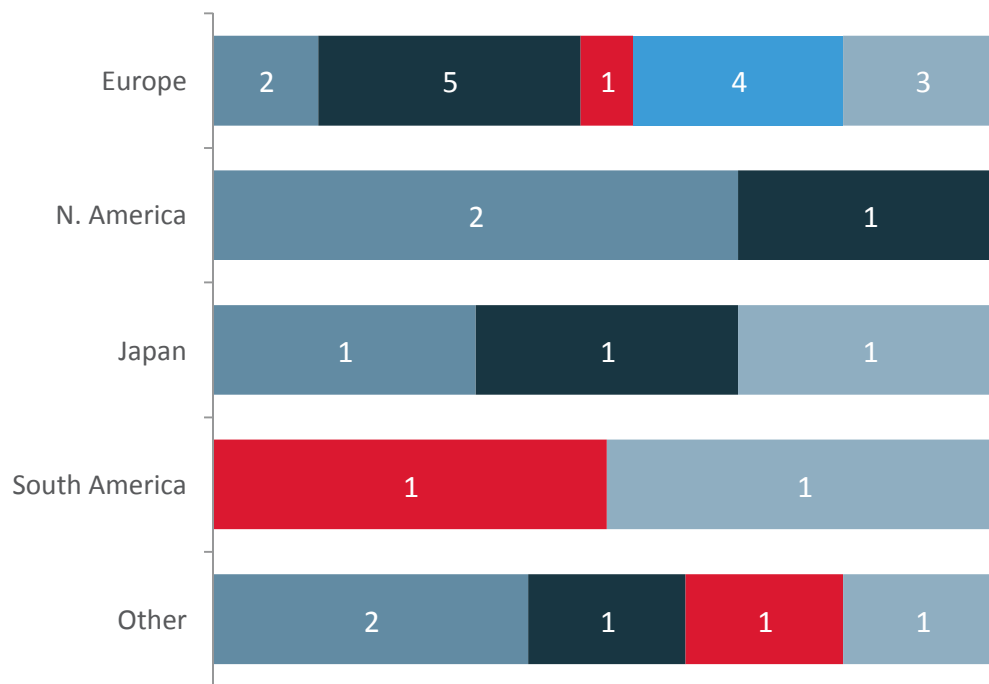
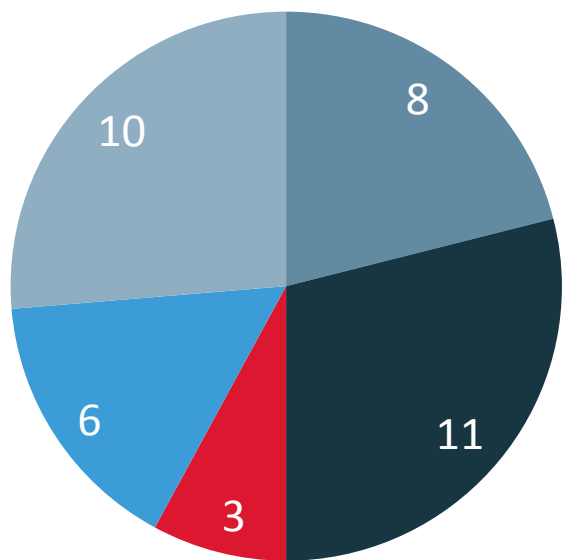
*"Linking information (discrimination of publisher name and OA type) necessary"*

# THERE IS LOW CONFIDENCE IN MONITORING ALL APCS

## Just under a fifth estimate they could monitor all APC payments

Of all APCs paid by researchers affiliated with your institution, what proportion do you estimate are monitored by the institution? (n=38)

- All of them
- More than three quarters
- Between a half and three-quarters
- Between a quarter and a half
- Less than a quarter



## INTERVIEWEES SHOWED SIMILAR VARIATION IN TRACKING

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

institutions often find APC monitoring a **“bureaucratic headache”**

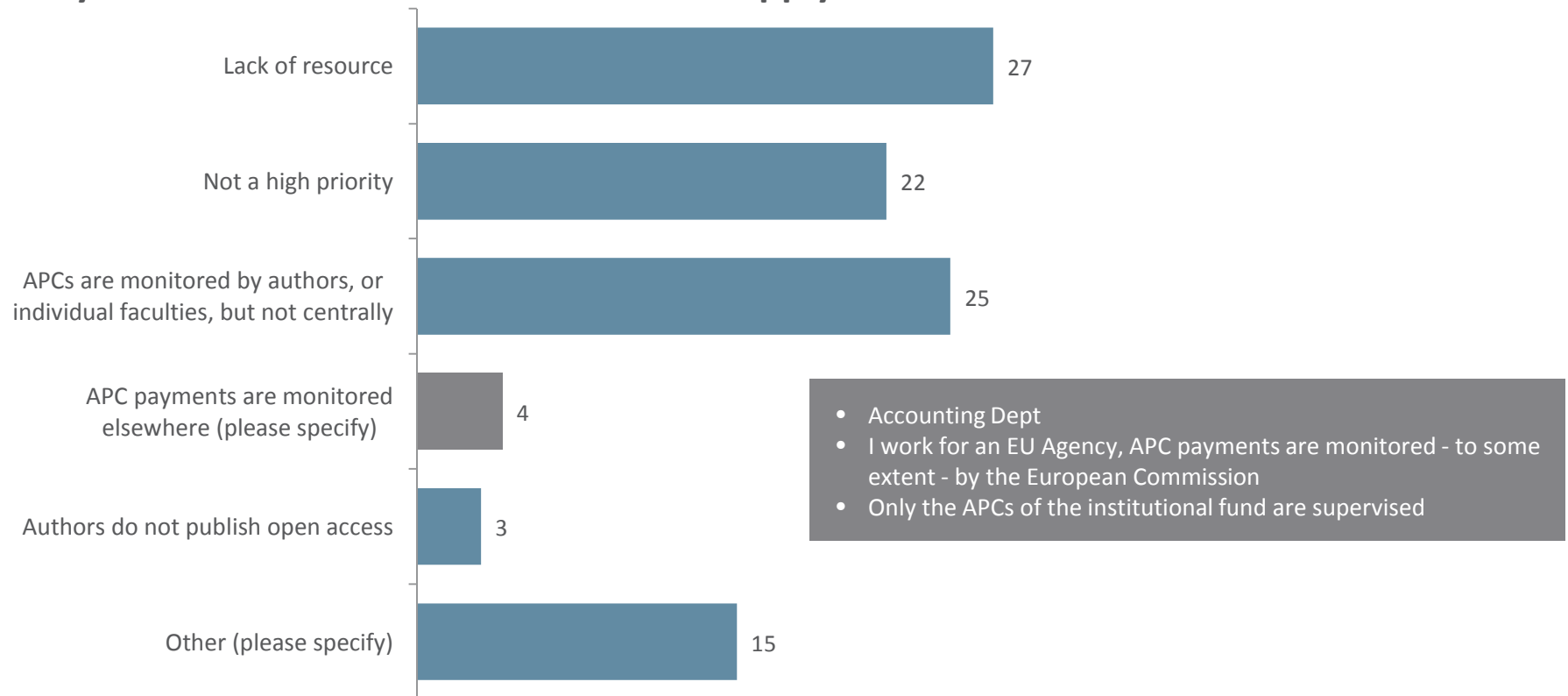
Another interviewee - with a central OA fund - thinks they cover about **15 to 20%** of the APCs, based on a search in a bibliographic database



# RESOURCE IS THE FACTOR MOST CITED FOR NOT TRACKING

## Institutions who do not monitor APCs were most likely to point to lack of resource

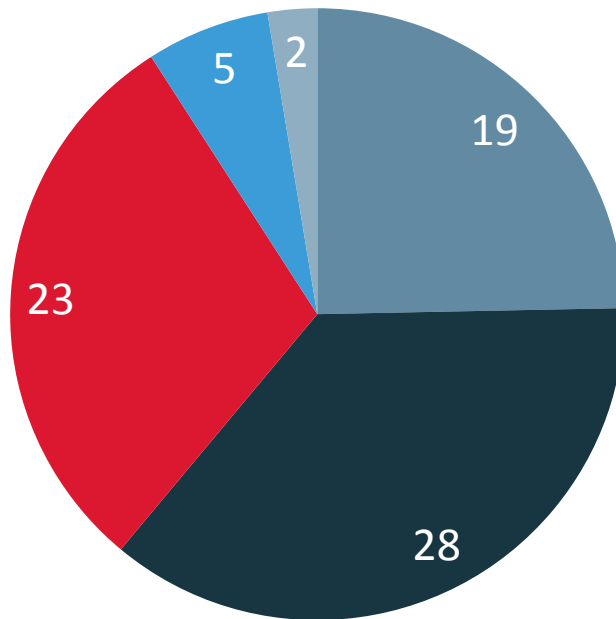
Do you know why your institution does not monitor the APCs paid for articles affiliated with your institution? Please select all that apply



# BUDGETING FOR INSTITUTIONAL OA/NEGOTIATION OF OA AGREEMENTS ARE KEY MOTIVATIONS

What's the reason that your institution monitors APCs? Please select all that apply

- To support compliance with funder OA policies
- To support budgeting for institutional OA publication funds
- To support negotiations with publishers for OA agreements
- Other (please specify)
- Unsure



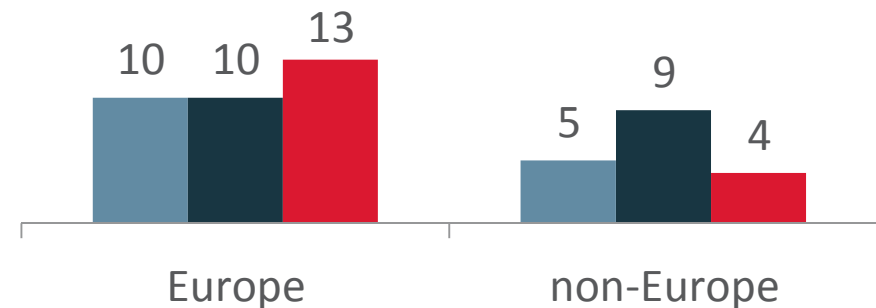
*"To grasp the total cost of paper submission and paper subscription in academic research at institutions"*

*"To balance publication fees and subscription fees"*

*"Internal cost calculation for all sort of publications"*

*"To understand the overall cost of submitting and subscribing papers for academic research at institutions"*

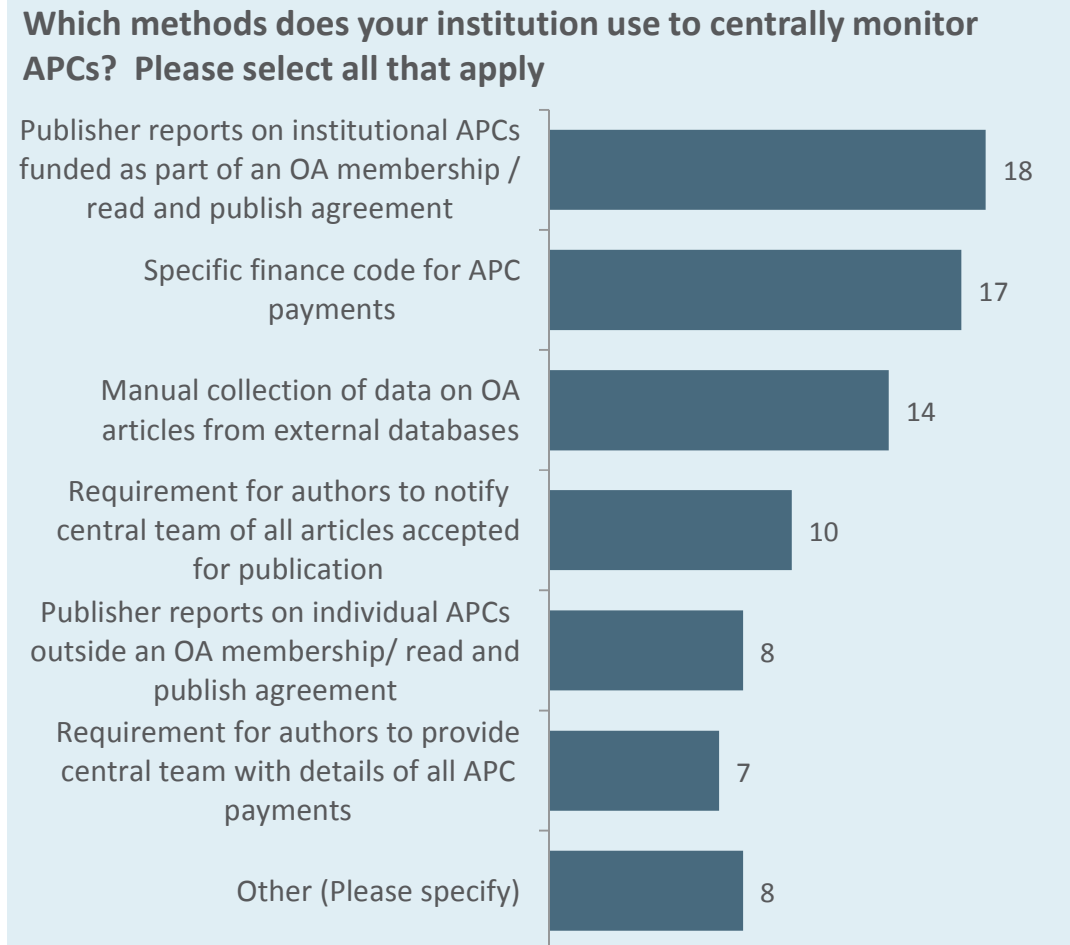
*"To ensure best value of money. To help drive the shift away from legacy publishing to open access publishing."*



# THERE IS OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN FROM SUCCESS STORIES

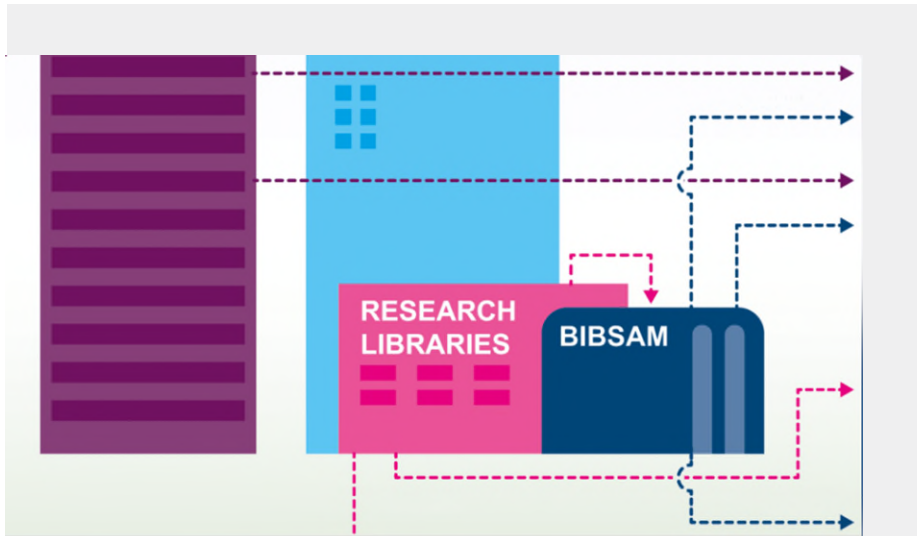
Some have identified mechanisms for successful APC tracking, offering greater opportunities to bring together complex APC funding sources

- ✓ **Publisher agreements:** centralisation of APCs reduces the number of micro payments requiring tracking, and provides clarity on APC funding
- ✓ **Accounting codes:** specific finance codes to enable tracking
- ✓ **Bibliographic data bases:** manual collection of article data from external sources
- ✓ **Policy requirements:** authors required to inform institution about OA publications



## SUCCESS STORIES

New fully OA agreements show the opportunities to bring multiple sources of funding together, e.g. Bibsam and University of California



[https://www.mynewsdesk.com/se/kungliga\\_biblioteket/pressreleases/universities-and-funders-share-cost-of-open-access-publishing-in-new-agreement-2889836](https://www.mynewsdesk.com/se/kungliga_biblioteket/pressreleases/universities-and-funders-share-cost-of-open-access-publishing-in-new-agreement-2889836)

*“[We] will continue to work with funders and publishers to find solutions for new publishing agreements”*

## University of California

<https://osc.universityofcalifornia.edu/uc-publisher-relationships/springer-nature-transformative-oa-agreement/>



- **Institution:** UC covers the first USD 1000 per article
- **Research funders:** Authors contribute to balance of the cost from research grants, where available
- UC covers remainder of APC if authors lack funds

## 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.
- **Institutions need a more comprehensive view** of APC funding sources to support the OA transition.
- **Publisher OA agreements offer opportunities** to facilitate monitoring, reduce admin burden and consolidate multiple funding sources, but require an understanding of funding streams.
- **Success stories show potential** for effective monitoring can be achieved

# THANK YOU

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The story behind the image

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### **Antarctica meltdown could double sea level rise**

Researchers at Pennsylvania State University have been considering how quickly a glacial ice melt in Antarctica would raise sea levels. By updating models with new discoveries and comparing them with past sea-level rise events they predict that a melting Antarctica could raise oceans by more than 3 feet by the end of the century if greenhouse gas emissions continued unabated, roughly doubling previous total sea-level rise estimates. Rising seas could put many of the world's coastlines underwater or at risk of flooding and storm surges.

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