OASPA Equity in OA Workshops: a briefing paper for invitees

Background

Open Access Scholarly Publishing Association (OASPA) represents a diverse community of organisations engaged in open scholarship and encourages and enables open access as the predominant model for scholarly outputs. OASPA wishes to ensure that open access is equitable and inclusive and is keen to explore with its publisher members and library stakeholders ways to increase equity in open access publishing.

Why

The issue of equity in open access is very important, and OASPA and its Equity in OA working group consider the inclusion of all researchers, including authors from developing and transition countries, and indeed from all backgrounds and life stages, essential for advancing human knowledge and also for a successful transition to open access.

Without the development of new and more equitable approaches to open access, we will not benefit from its full potential.

This includes:

- Equity in pricing models for all forms of business models otherwise authors will continue to face financial barriers to participation.
- Being a stakeholder with influence. Without the development of new and more equitable engagement models for all forms of publishing, authors will continue to face barriers to participation.

Increasing equity is a shared challenge and no single stakeholder, group, country, or region can deliver this alone. Everyone has a part to play and changes to make, so OASPA would be delighted to have your participation in the workshops.

Equity workshops

OASPA will host three workshops that will

(1) bring the publishing and librarian communities together to develop pragmatic ideas to fix some of the current issues and

(2) build on existing knowledge and experience to develop thinking on, and stronger leadership towards, equitable routes to OA.

One overarching aim of the workshop series is to provide a forum for thought leadership and to provide greater understanding and broader perspectives to OASPA members as they take steps to increase equity in OA. This provides an opportunity to consider equity issues across the full spectrum of open access approaches including those not based on the pay-to-publish model, and also more equitable approaches for APCs which are likely to continue as one model.

Workshop 1 will explore:

· different stakeholder views on why equity is important and what types of equity there are
· examples of good practice in increasing equity
· many approaches to increasing equity as there is no silver bullet or single business model or approach
· challenges that open access publishers of all kinds face in increasing pricing equity, engagement equity, publishing option equity, and other forms of equity
· challenges libraries face in supporting less privileged authors of all kinds and in all places to publish open access in journals.

Workshop 2: This will focus on new approaches that can increase equity. We will provide scenarios for workshop participants to discuss and explore, including for example changes to increase equity for APC waivers and alternatives to these. During the workshops participants will seek to understand any barriers to implementing particular approaches to increasing equity, and the practical support that may be required to overcome these challenges. We will also identify which approaches, if adopted, would go furthest to creating a more equitable publishing system.

Workshop 3: The focus of this workshop will be agreed later to ensure we cover the full range of equitable issues that surfaced in the first workshops. The aim of this workshop is to conclude by agreeing on pragmatic, concrete actions OASPA and its membership can take to increase equity in scholarly publishing.

Background reading

There is a growing literature about equity in open access publishing, the issues and challenges. Our bibliography below provides some recent articles, blogs and reports. *We really encourage you to look at these materials ahead of the workshop.*

Practical matters and privacy

The workshops will be held via Zoom, and there will be a maximum of 30 participants per workshop, in addition to the facilitators.

Participants are not required to make presentations, but are expected to join in the discussion and debate. However, *at no point should you share any commercially*

sensitive information. Please be ready to join in the discussion about equity in OA, and represent the needs of the people in your region.

It will help to read some of the articles in the bibliography before attending.

To ensure that all voices are heard, breakout rooms will be opened, so that participants can discuss topics in smaller groups. Workshops will be in English, and each will run for two hours, with a short health break halfway through. The workshops will be recorded to aid in note-taking only. OASPA will not make the recordings public. If you have any concerns or objections to this, please let us know in advance of the workshop.

After the workshop we will provide each participant with a report on the discussions and key issues. Please let us know if you spot any errors that require correction. The report will list the participants that took part in each workshop (unless participants request otherwise). Within the text, the report will neither attribute the identity nor the affiliation of the participants in terms of their input but may mention their region, if relevant to the point being made.

Participants are asked to agree that they will not attribute the identity, nor the affiliation, of the participants when reporting verbally or in writing about the workshops.

After the workshops

Participants will be invited to complete a short follow-up survey, providing the opportunity to add any comments or suggestions that time did not allow during the workshops, and/or to add further thoughts when they have discussed ideas with their colleagues

OASPA will communicate the themes, key issues, and the proposed practical steps that emerge from the workshop to its [members](#) and to the wider open access publishing community. OASPA will ensure that participants are informed of any written communications in the form of blogs, reports, and articles.

These workshops may also inform the focus for future workshops or other work in this area.

Bibliography

OASPA has already undertaken foundational work to inform the discussion, and we recommend reading:

- [The 'OA market' – what is healthy? Part 1, January 2023](#)

- [The 'OA market' – what is healthy? Part 2](#), January 2023

Recommended articles published in the last four years about the issues and challenges around equity in open access publishing

- Osman, F and Rooryck J (2022). *A fair pricing model for open access.* Research Professional News.

3

https://www.researchprofessionalnews.com/rr-news-europe-views-of-europe-2022-9-a-fair-pricing-model-for-open-access/

- Rouhi S, Beard R, Brundy C (2022). *Left in the cold: the failure of APC waiver programs to provide author equity*. Sci Ed.;45:5-13.
https://doi.org/10.36591/SE-D-4501-5

- Pooley, J (2020). *Read-and-Publish Open Access deals are heightening global inequalities in access to publication.*
https://www.researchprofessionalnews.com/rr-news-europe-views-of-europe-2022-9-a-fair-pricing-model-for-open-access/

- Pooley, J (2019) *The Library Solution: How Academic Libraries Could End the APC Scourge.* Items: insights from the social sciences.
https://items.ssrc.org/parameters/the-library-solution-how-academic-libraries-could-end-the-apc-scourge/.

- ESAC Market Watch (2023) https://esac-initiative.org/market-watch/#TAs

- Beard, R (2021) *EIFL agreements result in increased OA publishing*
https://eifl.net/blogs/eifl-agreements-result-increased-oa-publishing

- Ross-Hellauer T, Reichmann S, Fessl A, Klebel T, Pontika N (2022). *Dynamics of cumulative advantage and threats to equity in open science: a scoping review*
https://doi.org/10.1098/rsos.211032

    o A related article by Tony Ross-Hellauer in Nature March 2022 *Open science, done wrong, will compound inequities*.
    https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-022-00724-0

- Smith A C, Merz L, Borden J B, Gulick C K, Kshirsagar, A R, Bruna E M (2022). *Assessing the effect of article processing charges on the geographic diversity of authors using Elsevier's "Mirror Journal" system*. Quantitative Science Studies 2022; 2 (4): 1123–1143. https://doi.org/10.1162/qss_a_00157

- Segado-Boj F, Prieto-Gutiérrez J-J and Martín-Quevedo J (2022). *Attitudes, willingness, and resources to cover article publishing charges: The influence of age, position, income level country, discipline and open access habits*. Learned Publishing, 35: 489-498. https://doi.org/10.1002/leap.1455

- Fontúrbel F E, and Vizentin-Bugoni J (2021). *A Paywall Coming Down, Another Being Erected: Open Access Article Processing Charges (APC) may Prevent Some Researchers from Publishing in Leading Journals*. Bull Ecol Soc Am 102(1):e01791. https://doi.org/10.1002/bes2.1791

- Butler L, Matthias L, Simard M, Mongeon P, & Haustein S (2022). *The Oligopoly's Shift to Open Access. How For-Profit Publishers Benefit from Article Processing Charges* (Version v2). Zenodo. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7158818

- OASPA (2021) OA Market-Issue-Brief
https://oaspa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/OASPA-OA-Market-Issue-Brief.pdf

- OASPA (2021), Workshop Report
https://oaspa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/OASPA-Workshop-Summary-Report_Final-21-09-21.pdf

- Olejniczak A J, Wilson M J (2020). *Who's writing open access (OA) articles? Characteristics of OA authors at Ph.D.-granting institutions in the United States*. Quantitative Science Studies*;* 1 (4): 1429–1450. https://doi.org/10.1162/qss_a_00091

- Pourret O et al. (2020) "Open Access Publishing practice in geochemistry: Overview of current state and look to the future," Heliyon, 6(3). https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2020.e03551.

- Nobes A and Harris S (2019). *Open Access in low- and middle-income countries: attitudes and experiences of researchers* [version 1; peer review: 2 approved with reservations]. *Emerald Open Res* 2019, 1:17. https://doi.org/10.35241/emeraldopenres.13325.1

OASPA's Equity working group

The workshops are sponsored by Malavika Legge (OASPA Program Manager) and steered by members of OASPA's Equity working group:

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