

CAMPUS-BASED OPEN-ACCESS PUBLISHING FUNDS: A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

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Income Models for Supporting Open Access

Developing a sound business model is a critical concern of publishers considering open-access distribution. This guide provides an overview of income models currently being used to support the open-access distribution of peer-reviewed scholarly and scientific journals. It will be a useful tool both for publishers exploring new potential sources of income and for libraries weighing where to direct meager library funds.

Campus-based publishing partnerships: A guide to critical issues

Campus-based publishing partnerships offer the academy greater control over the intellectual products that it helps create. To fully realize this potential, such partnerships will need to evolve from informal working alliances to long-term, programmatic collaborations. SPARC's *Campus-based Publishing Partnerships: A Guide to Critical Issues* addresses issues relevant to building sound and balanced partnerships, including: Establishing governance and administrative structures; Identifying funding models that accommodate the objectives of both libraries and presses; Defining a partnership's objectives to align the missions of the library and the press; Determining what services to provide; and Demonstrating the value of the collaboration.

OPEN DOORS AND OPEN MINDS: What faculty authors can do to ensure open access to their work through their institution - A SPARC/Science Commons white paper

Inspired by the example set by the Harvard faculty, this White Paper is addressed to the faculty and administrators of academic institutions who support equitable access to scholarly research and knowledge, and who believe that the institution can play an important role as steward of the scholarly literature produced by its faculty. This paper discusses both the motivation and the process for establishing a binding institutional policy that automatically grants a copyright license from each faculty member to permit deposit of his or her peer-reviewed scholarly articles in institutional repositories, from which the works become available for others to read and cite.

Publishing Cooperatives: An Alternative for Society Publishers - A SPARC Discussion Paper

This SPARC discussion paper proposes a federation of discipline-specific publishing cooperatives as an alternative operating model for society publishers. Publishing cooperatives would be owned, capitalized, and controlled by nonprofit publishers as users, with publishers sharing risks and benefits proportional to their use of the cooperative. Such publishing cooperatives can provide a scaleable publishing model that aligns well with the values of the academy while providing a practical financial framework capable of sustaining society publishing programs and supporting their transition to non-subscription funding models.

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INTRODUCTION

The decision to launch an Open-access Fund is a complex one for many reasons. Establishing a clear understanding of your Fund's goals, the policies that will govern it, how it will be administered, and what tools can be used to evaluate the Fund's results all involve careful deliberation and discussion. The relative novelty of the category, combined with demographic, philosophical, and political differences among the institutions that have established Open-access Funds to date combine to create an environment in which there are not yet transferable templates for the simple and straightforward creation of Funds. As a result, it may be challenging for those contemplating the launch of an Open-access Fund to move ahead with absolute confidence and clarity. And yet, despite this uncertainty, more than a dozen institutions (as of this writing) have launched Open-access Funds. This is a concept that clearly intrigues some within the scholarly communication community. As such, it bears further consideration and analysis.

This guide is not an advocacy document promoting the launch of Open-access Funds. Rather, it is predicated on an awareness that institutions are curious about these Funds. They are seeking to better understand why Funds are being launched, what decisions go into their creation, and how they are being managed. They would like to know what lessons have been learned by those institutions that have already created Open-access Funds. SPARC believes that this guide can help educate those eager to learn more about Open-access Funds so that, should they choose to proceed, they can do so with their best foot forward.

The guide will also inform the creation and management of Open-access Funds by those who intend to do so, using the input of universities who have already set down this path. The recommendations that follow are drawn from interviews with Fund organizers and administrators from multiple universities across North America. Any prescriptive elements are the result of consensus feedback from these key personnel, rather than formal SPARC recommendations.

This document should be viewed within the context of a broader suite of SPARC materials on Open-access Funds. The SPARC Open-access Funds resource page <http://www.arl.org/sparc/openaccess/funds/> contains a wealth of background information, practical resources, policy guidelines, and hard data documenting Open-access Fund results to date. It contains information useful to authors, administrators, librarians, and publishers. Shortly, SPARC will also produce a white paper that analyzes the role of Open-access Funds, provides objective benchmarks of their efficacy within and across institutions, and contemplates their ability to impact scholarly communication.

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS IN EVALUATING THE LAUNCH OF AN OPEN-ACCESS FUND

Institutions approaching the creation of an Open-access Fund must consider a number of important issues from the outset. First and foremost, what are your goals for the Fund? Are you trying to change faculty publishing behavior? Are you seeking to provide modest encouragement to new forms of scholarly communication? Do you want to maximize the access to materials created by members of your institution? Is the Fund part of a broader campus strategy to promote new publishing alternatives?

Knowing why you aim to launch a Fund sounds simple, but it will inform many of the important decisions that will shape the program, including budget, policies, and eligibility. For example, if the primary goal of your Open-access Fund is to heighten the visibility and accessibility of your faculty's scholarship, then your institution should seriously contemplate paying all author charges from all types of publishers – including commercial publishers who offer a hybrid “open-choice” option – in order to optimize access. However, the goal of your Fund may be to change the economics of publishing by providing a mechanism that, if broadly replicated, would reduce the risk for journals transitioning to full Open Access. In this instance, the Fund should perhaps support only fully OA journals and not hybrids. As the “Key Policy Decisions” section of this report enumerates, there are myriad operational possibilities in the creation of a Fund. Understanding your ultimate goal will help create a clear path through this potential thicket.

A second important consideration in the creation of an Open-access Fund is the funding itself. From where is the money going to come? Will the library support the project out of its general fund? Can dedicated gifts be raised? Will other campus units (e.g., the Office of Research, individual departments) contribute, and, if so, what are their interests and expectations? How viable are these sources in terms of long-term funding? Is the Fund an experiment? Is there a cap on the amount that can be spent, or the duration of the project? Is there a plan to make the Open-access Fund sustainable? Knowing who is contributing what and for how long will help you frame the project. This will inform staffing decisions, the marketing message, and a host of other issues.

A third important consideration concerns communication. In creating an Open-access Fund, it is necessary to understand the level of engagement your community has on Open Access issues. To what extent do faculty members understand Open Access? Do they recognize why it matters? Have certain departments begun developing an OA publishing culture? Do others view new publication models skeptically? Will an educational outreach campaign need to accompany the Fund's rollout, or will authors be lining up to apply for funding? Understanding existing campus perspectives regarding Open Access will help you plan the Fund's launch (and the resources necessary to accomplish that launch) accordingly.

KEY POLICY DECISIONS SHAPING YOUR OPEN-ACCESS FUND

Many institutions that have functioning Open-access Funds have indicated that the toughest decision they made concerned hybrid journal eligibility. Hybrid journals are publications under subscription control for which authors of individual articles can pay an “open choice” fee to make their papers freely available to any reader. Hybrid journals still charge subscription fees for their content and only a handful reduce these fees commensurate with the take-up rate of open choice fees. Some scholarly communication experts believe that hybrid journals offer subscription-based publishers a transition to full Open Access. Others believe the hybrid model allows these publishers to “double dip” by charging both authors and readers for content, without pinning down a genuine long-term commitment to Open Access. SPARC joins the Wellcome Trust and other funding agencies in calling for publishers to make data related to their hybrid publishing programs fully transparent. This will allow the financial ramifications of the hybrid model to be accurately analyzed.

As alluded to in the “Important Considerations” section of this document, the goals of your institution in creating an Open-access Fund will likely shape your perspective on the issue of hybrid journal eligibility. Hybrid journals do indeed make articles more accessible by offering them to any reader free of charge. Therefore, for institutions that place accessibility front and center for their Fund’s goals, hybrid publications further that mission. In contrast, institutions keen on affecting change within scholarly publishing may feel that some hybrid journals are little more than a shell game designed to perpetuate the status quo. These institutions often conclude that it is counterproductive to fund hybrid journals.

There are also practical considerations that weigh heavily on an institution’s decision to support hybrid journals. There are thousands of journals that offer some form of open-choice plan. This has the potential to eat up a sizable chunk of your institution’s Fund. Some institutions, of course, have taken a middle ground by including hybrid journals in their Open-access Funds, albeit at a lower level of support than full, OA publications. Their rationale often revolves around a desire to encourage authors to experiment with Open Access in all its forms. An author’s experience with a hybrid journal may deepen his/her interest in alternative publishing models and deepen his/her understanding of OA’s nuances. In addition, there are a number of disciplines in which full Open Access has a minimal footprint. In these areas, hybrid journals may provide the only viable Open Access option to avoid a Fund that is effectively closed off to a segment of your faculty.

There are other important decisions regarding content eligibility that you must contemplate before launching your Fund. The chart that follows provides some further detail into publication considerations that you and your colleagues should discuss:

Issue	Options
What charges should the Fund cover?	Items subject to possible eligibility include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication fees • Submission fees • Illustration fees • Color fees • Self-archiving expenses • Reprints • Page charges • Membership fees (e.g., Biomed Central)
What content types are eligible?	Content types subject to possible eligibility include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer-reviewed journal articles • Monographs • Conference proceedings • Data sets
Are any access restrictions acceptable?	Types of restrictions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hybrid journals (i.e., “open-choice” plans) • Embargoes limiting Open Access to content for specific time period after publication
What constitutes an acceptable open-access journal?	Among the tools existing Funds use to vet a publication’s open-access credentials are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directory of Open Access Journals • Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association • Adherence to Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association Code of Conduct

In addition to deciding what’s eligible, you must also determine who is eligible to receive money from your Open-access Fund:

Issue	Options
Who within your community is eligible to receive support from the Fund?	Among the institutional actors whose eligibility must be determined are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty members • Researchers • Post docs • Graduate students • Undergraduates • Visiting faculty • Adjunct faculty • Staff • Alumni
With what requirements must subsidized authors comply?	Conditions of funding may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making a copy of the paper available within the institutional repository • Citing the Fund as a source of support within the article
What considerations are given to external funding?	In the event an author has grant money, how does this impact his/her Fund eligibility? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authors with any external funding are ineligible • Authors with grant support to cover publishing fees are ineligible • Authors must use all available funds from the grant before applying • Authors with no external funding are given priority • Authors and Fund split fees according to a set percentage
How are intermural collaborations handled?	When an article is co-authored by scholars from different institutions, how are they supported by the Fund? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full payment of publishing fees • Prorated portion of publishing fees
Are there restrictions on repeat usage?	Possible restrictions on repeat applications for funding support include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One paper per author per semester • One paper per author per year • Certain dollar value limit per author per semester • Certain dollar value limit per author per year

The chart found here <http://www.arl.org/sparc/bm-doc/fundsinaction.pdf> provides examples of how certain institutions have approached these issues. Further, it explains their reimbursement levels in detail. Certain institutions have set lower ceilings on per-article reimbursements so that more authors will be able to experiment with the Fund. Others have set a higher limit, feeling that this would encourage authors who would otherwise not be able to make up the difference to gain valuable exposure to Open Access.

One related issue is disbursement timing. Some institutions choose to reimburse their authors, while others pay the publication fees directly. The argument for the former is that it allows the author to move forward with publication without

fear that institutional bureaucracy might slow publication. The argument for the latter is that some authors may lack the means to pay publication fees out-of-pocket, even those that will later be reimbursed by his/her institution. Additionally, some institutions may be ill-equipped to handle budgeting wrinkles, such as a Fund application that is approved in one fiscal year but not actually paid out until the next.

It should be stressed that, in the opinion of the interviewed administrators and librarians, there are no right and wrong answers to the questions broached in this section. Different institutions are experimenting with different implementations based on a variety of issues (motivation behind the Fund, amount of money available, faculty understanding of OA issues, etc.). You will no doubt draw upon your own experiences and goals in the drafting of your Fund's policies.

WORKING WITH ADMINISTRATION AND FACULTY

In seeking to bring an Open-access Fund to fruition, those interviewed indicated it is both useful and necessary to work with your administration and faculty. While the library may be providing the money to operate the Fund, other campus units can help inform your policies, generate outreach plans, and increase the Fund's chances of making a high impact.

Many institutions that have established Open-access Funds did so in consultation with their Research Office/Provost and their faculty advisory committee. There are a variety of explanations for this. The participation of these bodies provides a degree of political cover in the event that critics question such a use of library funds. Their involvement widens the project from a library experiment to a campus initiative. It also helps to validate Open Access at an institutional level.

Beyond organizational strategy, bringing the administration and the faculty into the discussion at an early stage will provide vital background information into the scope and shape of the issues to be addressed by the Fund. What does the institution want out of such a project? How much do they understand about scholarly communication and the opportunities for advancing research through more open sharing? How does this fit into established campus publishing and information initiatives? Are certain departments or organizational units already committed to the Open Access agenda?

Some libraries have been able to identify Fund partners through these discussions. It is possible that in airing your plans with strategic members of your institution you will find others willing to put money into the initiative. Regardless, for the Fund to reach its fullest potential, the library will need to hear the concerns and interests of both those that will be using and those that will be supporting the Fund. Incorporating these perspectives into Fund policies and marketing strategies will improve its chances for success.

Such communication need not end with the Fund's launch, of course. As the Fund develops and participating authors share their experiences, an ongoing dialog with faculty and administration will be useful to tweak policies and strengthen procedures. The "Reporting the Fund's Progress" section of this guide discusses this issue in further detail.

RESOURCE ALLOCATION IN THE ESTABLISHMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF AN OPEN-ACCESS FUND

The set up energy expended among those institutions that have launched Open-access Funds to date has been relatively modest. Policies and procedures must be established as outlined above, often in consultation with various campus actors. A protocol for handling Fund requests needs to be created. If the application process is to take place online, this must be built and tested. Frequently asked questions and other marketing materials must be created to explain the program. For each of these activities, you must determine who will own the task. In addition, the various undertakings must be coordinated by a project manager. This is not to imply that such a position is a full-time role. To the contrary, institutions that have set up Open-access Funds to date have indicated that oversight of the Fund's creation takes up only a small piece of the designated manager's time over a one-to-three month period. Often, though by no means always, Fund project management is assigned to the scholarly communication librarian, consistent with other aspects of that position's portfolio. Indeed, there are potential synergies with self-archiving, institutional repositories, publishing, and other programs in which the scholarly communication librarian may be engaged.

- Whoever is ultimately assigned the task of managing your Open-access Fund's creation, he/she will want to keep track of at least the following project components:
- Drafting of policies, procedures, and eligibility requirements
- Vetting of above with relevant campus units
- Development and testing of application process
- Creation of marketing materials
- Development of application vetting process
- Creation of fund disbursement protocols
- Securing of actual funds

Once the Open-access Fund has been created, the system for vetting and processing applications must be overseen. Again, institutions that have set up Open-access Funds have indicated that management of the Fund takes up only a small piece of the designated manager's time. Among the tasks that he/she must perform or ensure that others perform are the following:

- Vetting of applications to ensure eligibility/compliance

- Outreach activities to promote the Fund among eligible authors
- Responding to authors' questions
- Verifying actual publication of article
- Disbursement of funds
- Tracking results

While it is difficult to quantify precisely how much time the processing of a Fund application will take, the experience of other institutions generates a very rough rule-of-thumb of 15 to 45 minutes per article from initial submission through payment. The investigation of journal/publisher policies and establishing the affiliation of multiple authors are among the tasks that can impact the time invested on a per-article basis.

PROMOTING THE FUND ON CAMPUS

Many institutions that have implemented Open-access Funds are leveraging existing communication channels to promote this opportunity within their authoring communities. Subject specialists who are already in regular contact with specific departments can be used to disseminate Fund information to their constituents. This requires bringing the subject specialists up to speed, of course. Provided they are comfortable with the program and its benefits, they can be an effective marketing force for the Fund. Some institutions have opted to convene formal meetings between subject specialists and key members of the faculty and administration. Other institutions rely on the informal lines of discussion that exist between the subject specialist and his/her department.

To the extent that the library is in communication with faculty regarding resource allocation and scholarly communication issues, an Open-access Fund fits neatly into these discussions. For example, schools that have participated in the annual Open Access Week or convened ad hoc Open Access events have used these as opportunities to promote the Fund. As another example, libraries that maintain a scholarly communication blog have regularly used that forum to highlight the Fund.

The library website can also be easily adapted to accommodate information about the Fund. Many institutions have created Open Access or scholarly communication resource pages. This is a logical home for background about the Fund, policy details, downloadable forms, and frequently asked questions. The library website can then be promoted by subject specialists and other marketing the Fund as a place to go for additional details.

Regardless of the medium, it may be necessary to start at a very basic level when promoting your Fund. Many faculty members may have only rudimentary knowledge of Open Access and the problems that sparked the establishment of the OA model. Several institutions with established Funds have expressed regret that they assumed too high a level of understanding of the driving scholarly communication issues among their faculty. To avoid this pitfall, make sure to contextualize your Fund pitch and be prepared to educate potential participants on the basics of the underlying factors. Note also that the conversation may differ across disciplines. The exposure that bio-scientists have to open-access journals compared to humanists, for example, is likely to be quite different. Attune the marketing message to the specific audience at hand.

On any campus and in any discipline, there is a limit to how much you can push your faculty to embrace Open Access. The desire to promote OA adoption must be balanced against the need to play a supportive role in your faculty's publishing activities, whatever those may be. In certain instances, Open Access will simply not be a viable first-choice option to authors. While the library cannot force authors to publish in certain journals, you can inform and guide their choices. The Fund, according to those with established programs, can be a useful tool to make the adoption of Open Access more attractive and viable as a publication outcome.

REPORTING THE FUND'S PROGRESS

To date, very little formal research has been conducted into the efficacy of Open-access Funds. As implementations proliferate across institutions, it will be important to develop metrics and benchmarks to evaluate their impact. Among institutions that have established Open-access Funds, none has a formal mechanism for judging whether its program is having the desired impact (owing in large part to the relative immaturity of most such Funds). However, most institutions are capturing data to make such analysis possible in the future. In creating an Open-access Fund, you should plan to track at least the following data elements:

- Number of Articles Approved
- Number of Articles Reimbursed
- Number of Unique Submitting Authors
- Number of Unique Departments
- Number of Unique Journals
- Number of Unique Publishers
- Amount of Money Disbursed
- Percentage of available Funds Disbursed

Capturing this information will allow you to perform a thorough quantitative and qualitative analysis of your Fund's impact. Because different institutions have different motivations in starting these Funds, no single formula will be applicable across all implementations.

The compiling of statistical evidence should no doubt be supplemented by qualitative inputs as well. Several institutions are informally surveying participating authors to understand their usage of the Fund and to identify areas for improvement. The notion of an author "exit interview" is worth serious consideration for any institution maintaining a Fund.

In the interest of transparency, both quantitative and qualitative data should be shared as openly as is practical on a regular basis. Many institutions are creating annual reports that blind and amalgamate their data. These reports can be shared with research offices, faculty advisory committees, faculty senates, and other interested parties. The advantage of this openness is that it invites the feedback of other stakeholders, and is likely to deepen their commitment to the Fund.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Greg Tananbaum is a SPARC consultant focusing on issues at the intersection of technology, content, and academia. His clients include publishers, information providers, universities, and other scholarly communication entities.

ABOUT SPARC

SPARC, the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition, is an international alliance of academic and research libraries working to create a more open system for the exchange of scholarly research results. Developed by the Association of Research Libraries, SPARC has become a catalyst for change. Its pragmatic focus is to stimulate the emergence of new scholarly communication models that expand the dissemination of scholarly research and reduce financial pressures on libraries. Action by SPARC in collaboration with stakeholders – including authors, publishers, and libraries – builds on the unprecedented opportunities created by the networked digital environment to advance the conduct of scholarship.