OA2020: A Global Initiative to Drive Large-Scale Transformation of the Subscription System

1 October 2017
1. The distinctive OA dilemma
Lack of significant progress in the OA movement

Open Access is (exceptionally) strong as a principle
- cf. the many resolutions, policies, guidelines etc.

...but still fairly weak as a practice
- only 14-15% of outputs immediately OA
- growth in pure OA publishing only 1-2% annually
- subscription system as prosperous as ever for publishers
Standard OA indicators

a) Directory of Open Access Repositories

http://www.opendoar.org
Standard OA indicators

b) Directory of Open Access Journals

http://www.doaj.org

cf. “Dramatic Growth of Open Access 2015 first quarter” by Heather Morrison,
http://poeticeconomics.blogspot.de/2015/04/dramatic-growth-of-open-access-2015.html
Standard OA indicators

c) Registry of Open Access Repository Mandates and Policies

http://roarmap.eprints.org/

Policies Adopted by Quarter

- Research organisation
- Funder
- Sub-unit of research organisation
- Funder and research organisation
- Multiple research organisations

Number of Policies vs. Year and Quarter

Highcharts.com
Over the past 20 years, many laudable efforts have been made to advance the open access movement.

- University Presses/OJS
- SCOAP³
- arXiv
- Biomed Central
- OA mandates
- PLOS
- Repositories
- PubMed Central
- Cooperative models
- Community journal initiatives (e.g. LINGOA)
Effects of OA on the paywall system

But despite these efforts, paywall access and the subscription system are as prosperous as ever

Only 15% of content is immediately OA
4% of the revenues go to OA (96% sustain subscriptions)
What will it take to make OA the default?

“If gold Open Access is to take place in the next few years it can only come about via the major publishers massively converting their portfolios of established journals, not via authors choosing outlets among newly started OA journals.”

2. Stronger leverage in a new approach
OA has been trying to change researcher behavior.
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Current advocacy, mandates and support efforts force researchers to adopt practices outside their natural workflow
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How about bringing OA to researchers?

By switching the business model of the existing corpus of journals, OA can be brought to the researchers.
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By switching the business model of the existing corpus of journals, OA can be brought to the researchers.
Let’s bring OA to the natural habitat of researchers

Instead of forcing researcher to change, we need to change the publishing system, specifically the underlying subscription business model.
3. Leverage to bring down the paywall
Proposing a rapid and straightforward transition

Open Access on a **large scale** can only be accomplished if and as soon as we **change the business model** of the existing scholarly journals and **leave the subscription system** behind.

The pursued disruptions would **affect only the underlying cash flows**, rather than the publishing process itself or the roles of journals and publishers.
The power of our spending decisions

Financial demographics* of the scholarly publishing system show

- **there is more than** enough money in the system
- through the subscription system we are putting in the range of $5,000 per research paper on the table

*2015 MPDL White Paper

Using our power as authors and subscribers, we can drive **large-scale transformation** of the subscription system to ensure

- outputs are open and reusable
- costs are transparent and economically sustainable
Enough money in the system

**Worldwide Publishing Market**

- **Market today subscriptions**
  - € 7.6 bn
  - Current worldwide spending on subscriptions

- **Market transformed open access**
  - € 4.0 bn
  - Estimated worldwide spending on open access publications after transition

# 2m

- Number of scholarly articles

7.6bn/2m

- Current price per article publication
  - € 3,800

45% Buffer

€ 2,000 x 2m

- Estimated realistic price per article publication
  - € 2,000

# 2m

- Number of scholarly articles

possible within the current financial system
Let’s change tactics to propel Open Access forward

We don’t need further mandates for researchers

we need a mandate for our money
Global view

Transformation means converting subscription expenditures to funds that support open access

Global subscription journal budget
7.6 bn EUR p.a.

(≥3,800 EUR/article)

Open Access volume:
~15% of articles;
~4% of budget

Today‘s global subscription market >> today‘s open access market
Global view

Transformation means converting subscription expenditures to funds that support open access

7.6 bn EUR

Remaining subscription budget 10% (~0.8 bn EUR)

2.8 bn EUR buffer for new & improved services etc. (without remaining subscriptions)

Global open access journal base budget 4 bn EUR p.a. (2,000 €/article)

Assuming 90% conversion
4. The added leverage of a deteriorating system
A painful lesson for publishers

http://31.184.194.81/
And a painful lesson for libraries

Going to SciHub is not only an act of necessity! It is an expression of convenience!

Sci-Hub users in the United States seem to congregate near universities and likely have institutional access to the articles they request. This map excludes 27,000 download requests from anonymous U.S. IP addresses.

By continuing to support the subscription model, we are effectively propping a deteriorating system.

The current paywall system is undeniably outdated, dysfunctional and does not meet 21st century researcher needs and expectations.
Exposing the vulnerability of the subscription system

*The Emperor's New Clothes*, a fairy tale by Hans Christian Andersen, Denmark (1837)

Just as the little girl exposed the nakedness of the ruler in Andersen’s tale, SciHub has exposed the vulnerability and dysfunctionality of the subscription system.
Exposing the vulnerability of the subscription system

Knowing what our researchers want and need, can we really continue to conduct business as usual under the deteriorating subscription system?
5. The unfolding of OA2020
About OA2020

OA2020 is a **global alliance** committed to **accelerating the transition** of today’s scholarly journals to open access.

We collaborate to transform the current publishing system, **replacing the subscription business model** with **new models** that ensure that outputs are **open** and **re-usable** and that the costs behind their dissemination are **transparent** and **economically sustainable**.
A global alliance to meet global publishers at eye level

To date the OA2020 Initiative has been endorsed by 90 organizations from 30 nations across 5 continents.

Among the many national entities and library consortia supporting the OA2020 Initiative are:

- Austria, FWF
- Brazil, CAPES
- Denmark, DEFF
- Finland, FinELib
- Germany, DfG
- Hungary, EIS
- Italy, CRUI
- Japan, JUSTICE
- Netherlands, VSNU
- Norway, CERES/CRIStin
- Portugal, FCT
- Qatar National Library
- South Africa, SANLiC
- South Korea, KISTI
- Spain, CSIC
- Sweden, SUHF
- Switzerland, swissuniversities
- Turkey, ANKOS
- United Kingdom, Jisc Collections
As the nation’s largest public research institution and a source of two percent of the world’s research literature, the University of California is uniquely positioned to further this goal for the benefit of people all over the world who currently do not have access to the vast majority of scholarly research articles.

OA2020 is consistent with the Senate’s Open Access Policy and also aligns with UC’s larger mission to conduct research in the public interest and to serve society by “transmitting advanced knowledge, discovering new knowledge, and functioning as an active working repository of organized knowledge.”

UCOLASC and Academic Council support all efforts by UC campuses to promote Open Access to scholarly research, both in the service of the University’s Open Access mission and in the service of similarly-oriented global missions such as OA2020.
### Upscaling the OA2020 Initiative

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**Gather consensus**

**Build capacity**

**Take action**
6. Be part of the transformation
Endorse the Open Access 2020 Initiative

**OA2020 Expression of Interest**

- Transform a majority of today’s scholarly journals from subscription to OA publishing in accordance with community-specific publication preferences.
- Pursue this transformation process by converting resources currently spent on journal subscriptions into funds to support sustainable OA business models.
- Engage all parties involved in scholarly publishing, in particular universities, research institutions, funders, libraries, and publishers to collaborate on a swift and efficient transition for the benefit of scholarship and society at large

https://oa2020.org
Drive the transformation

Create and implement a local OA2020 Roadmap

Institutions pledge to make best efforts to repurpose subscription funds to support Open Access business models, according to local preferences.

Divest of subscriptions, invest in open access.

https://oa2020.org
Collaborate, Advocate, Participate in OA2020

https://oa2020.org
Summary: OA2020 is about…

- exposing the dysfunctions and outdatedness of the subscription system
- proposing to remove our money gradually from the subscription system…
- …and at the same time keep it in the system but reinvested for OA services (in a variety of ways)
- offering a proposal for a large-scale transformation of the system that can be accomplished in a few years
- leveraging momentum and global participation to face publishers at eye level
It’s time to unplug the system
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We need to discontinue the subscription system and to **find new ways to finance the publishing services** that are wanted and needed in the 21st century.
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