Critical Transformative Agreement Components at the University of California

Mathew Willmott, California Digital Library
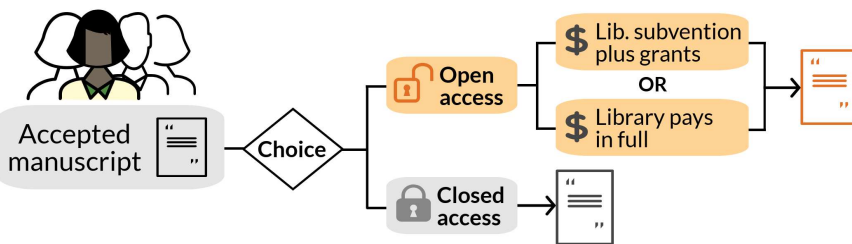
Multipayer Model

What is it?
A strategy to include an author's research grant funds into the publication payment stream, when the author has funds available to be used for this purpose, while covering the full cost of publication for authors without available funding.

Why is this important?
UC envisions the Multipayer Model as a potentially sustainable strategy for large research-intensive North American institutions to shift to OA:
1. It augments library contributions with available grant funds, which are generally controlled by researchers in the US context
2. It requires authors to directly participate in economic decisions around publishing, which over time could help control publishing fees.

How does it work?

APCs are discounted from list price and paid in two steps:
- The UC libraries pay the first $1000 of every APC as a subvention
- The author is asked if they have research funds available to pay the remaining cost.
  - If the author has funds available, they pay the remainder
  - If the author has no funds available, the UC libraries pay the remainder.
- Authors may opt out of open access publication if they wish.
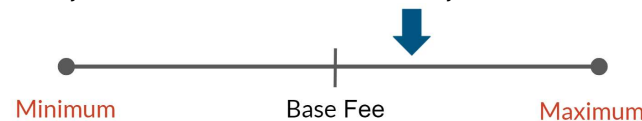
Cost Control Corridors

What is it?
Restrictions on how much the total UC spend (including both library spend and author spend under the Multipayer Model) can vary within an agreement, to create guardrails to protect both the institution and the publisher while still enabling some flexibility within in an experimental model.
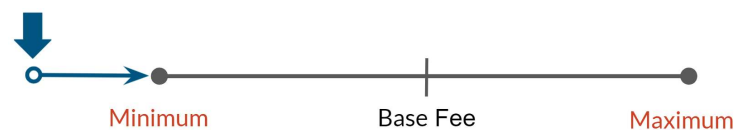
How does it work?
The most basic version involves setting a Base Fee and defining a minimum and maximum below/above that Base Fee.

If the total spend from all sources (library and author) is **within** this range at the end of the year, no reconciliation is necessary.

Minimum — Base Fee — Maximum

If the total spend from all sources is **below** the minimum, the libraries make a reconciliation payment up to the minimum spend.

Minimum — Base Fee — Maximum

If the total spend from all sources **exceeds** the maximum spend, *library* payments stop, articles continue to be made OA, and the publisher may still collect grant contributions under Multipayer.

Minimum — Base Fee — Maximum

Approval Services

What is it?
The ability to review articles to ensure that the corresponding author is affiliated with a participating University of California campus.
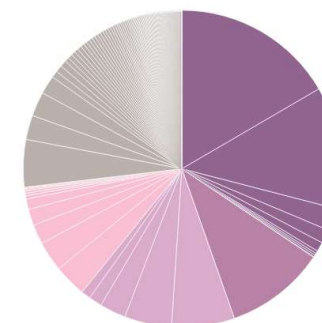
Why is this important?
We want to create a landscape where UC pays for its corresponding authors, and other institutions pay for theirs. That scenario enables us to get to OA across the board.

How is it conducted?
Approval systems generally differ by publisher; some have a homegrown system while others use a third-party interface. Several publishers are working towards piloting approval services via the OA Switchboard, a community-driven hub for messaging related to publication.

We have already automated approval successfully for one publisher and are actively exploring opportunities to use automation more extensively to further reduce our workload and speed up the publication process. In the meantime, current approval processes tend to focus on edge cases for fuller review, making the time commitment manageable.

Progress Update

As of August 2021, UC has reached 10 transformative agreements, covering approximately one-third of all UC publications.

If we reach agreement in all of our ongoing conversations and negotiations, TAs will cover over 70% of all UC publications.

Legend:
- Agreement
- Negotiation
- Active Discussions
- Preliminary Discussions