



Plan S and the Royal Society

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Publishing as mission

The first science publishers were learned societies

The Royal Society (1665), Leopoldina (1670), Lincei

Mission to support and promote science

Publishing was not ever considered to be profit-making

The Royal Society's journals made heavy losses until the 1950s

Publishing as business

Commercial publishers start acquiring society journals in the 1970s

Some (e.g. Pergamon) started to make large profits

1980s and 1990s - boom in commercial science publishing

Elsevier, Springer, de Gruyter, Blackwell, Lippincott etc

Many societies learned from them and built highly profitable publishing 'businesses'

Am Chem Soc., Am Med Assoc., Soc Neuroscience, ASM

For most societies publishing became their main income stream

Mission clash?

So now publishing had a second mission objective – generating funds

But...

It's much more profitable to limit access than to open it

So...

The two objectives of publishing are in opposition

Hence.. OA is a serious challenge for learned societies

Open access at the Royal Society

Open letter from 46 Fellows to the President, December 2005

Hybrid model launched in 2006 on all journals

APC set on revenue replacement model - £2400

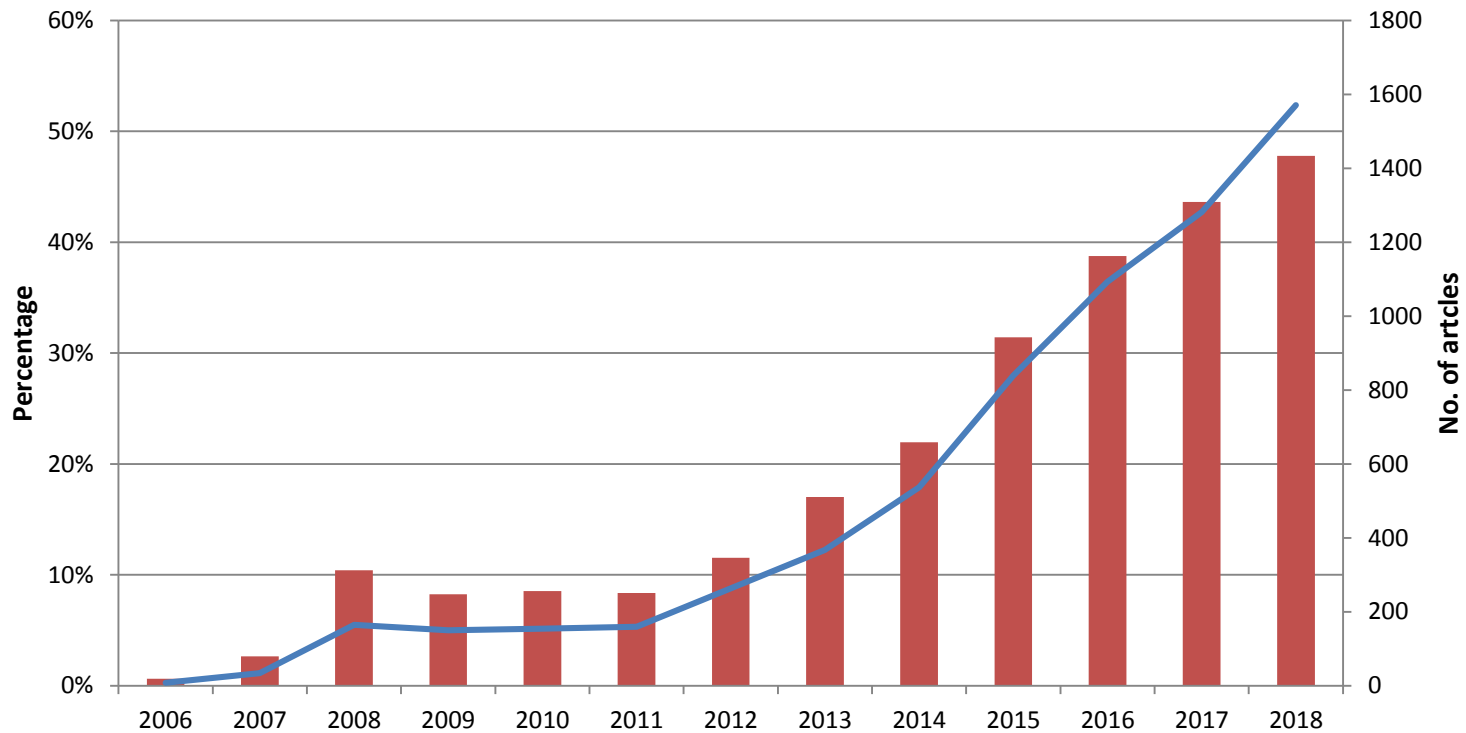
CC-BY and immediate deposit in *PubMedCentral*

APC lowered to 'market price' of £1400 in 2010

First OA journal launched in 2010 – *Open Biology*

Second OA journal launched in 2014 – *Royal Society Open Science*

Open Access growth



Our approach

To be as flexible as possible to all OA policies and mandates

We don't want to turn any author away...

...either because they want OA or because they don't

(and most don't!)

Authors and readers are the primary consideration, not the money

(publishing is only 8% of our income)

But... it's nearly half our unrestricted income

So. Plan S...

Policy is (and will remain) the key driver for OA

(especially funder policy)

Plan S is policy and it's from funders

So *should be* a positive development

But it focuses on journals rather than articles

...and funders don't fund journals

Our concerns

Serious impact on the careers of researchers (esp ECRs)

Time-based commitments to flip journals

Emphasis on 'transformative deals' – advantaging the big players

Rigidity over licences

Chilling effect on collaborations

Reduction in fully OA articles

Alienation of the research community (who were already pretty lukewarm!)

No allowance for unfunded/independent authors

So what can we do?

Plan S has certainly shaken things up and injected a sense of urgency

Let's collaborate! – www.socpc.org

Talk to our Fellows (members)

Explore Tx deals

Subscription Equivalent Transition

Work with Plan S to refine their thinking 🤔

We can (and should) remain in the scholarly communication game

Thanks for listening

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