

Advancing the Transition to Open Publishing at Temple University Libraries

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Executive Summary/Summary of Recommendations

Why does Temple University Libraries support open access? Equitable and open access to knowledge benefits not just Temple faculty and students, but people across the globe. Funding open access (OA) publishing initiatives has many local benefits, including the availability of more content for our community, and tangible support for faculty publishing. These initiatives even have the potential to save the Libraries money. However, the primary reason the Libraries fund open publishing initiatives is to help fundamentally change the scholarly communications landscape. **Although there are many ways that Temple University Libraries can and does advance open publishing—including through our institutional repository, [TUScholarShare](#), and through our library publishing program—the goal of this report is to specifically explore how the Libraries might more strategically use the collections budget to help make open publishing the norm both in the United States and around the world.** The report examines three types of open access publishing initiatives: transformative agreements, open access publishing funds, and collaborative/crowdsourced funding programs.

We recommend that the Libraries pursue all three of these initiatives, in order to both support the current OA environment while also recognizing the inequities of a system based on article processing charges (APCs). Proceeding with three different strategies will also make it possible for us to support the transition to open for all disciplines, not just STEM. In particular we recommend that the Libraries:

1. Enter into its first transformative agreement with a university press or society publisher as a pilot project, prioritizing publishers with a plan to transition to full open access. A transformative agreement is an arrangement with a publisher in which the Libraries' payment covers publication charges in addition to or instead of subscription costs.
2. Continue to fund the OA Publishing Fund, modifying eligibility guidelines so that the fund prioritizes early career researchers and first-time awardees. Modify the BMC Shared Support Membership to include all fully OA Springer Nature journals.
3. Continue to fund collaborative and crowdsourced open access initiatives, and look for new initiatives to support. This is a less risky, more traditional approach, and supports an open future that is not based on APCs or BPCs (book processing charges)

In addition, we propose an overarching set of institutional priorities to guide which open access publishing initiatives the Libraries support financially in the future:

1. Innovative models for OA not based on APCs or BPCs.
2. Initiatives that support OA in disciplines that are less likely to have funded researchers.
3. Initiatives spearheaded by university presses or scholarly societies.
4. Models where the cost is comparable to a similar paywalled product, and/or there is the ability to predict change in cost over time.

We hope the document will be useful both in providing guidance to decision-makers within Temple University Libraries and as a primer for others whose work is affected by these decisions.

Introduction

Overview

How should Temple University Libraries best utilize our collections budget in order to help support the global transition to open access? This question has become especially pertinent in the last few years as open access business models have proliferated in the scholarly communications sphere and publishers have begun to approach Temple with new options. As an institution, we would like to think carefully about not only the value Temple gets for our money but the ways the Libraries' spending can influence the scholarly publishing market and the ways that decisions we make now could end up affecting us in the future. Our goal in this report is to evaluate in depth the currently available options for funding open access publishing initiatives in terms of both their feasibility for the Libraries and possible impact on scholarly publishing more generally, so that we can be better prepared to make decisions about new and continuing opportunities. Without ruling out any funding model completely, the report offers guidance on choosing specific projects to support within each model as well as overall priorities to bear in mind when selecting which open access projects to fund.

This report offers three strategies for how we might continue or alter our current use of collections funds to support open access publishing initiatives. The first strategy would be to sign a transformative agreement with a publisher. MIT and the Royal Society of Chemistry signed the first transformative agreement in 2018,¹ and in the three years since then, Temple University Libraries has been approached by two publishers offering their own versions of transformative agreements. This type of agreement bundles together the traditional subscription fees with some of the publication charges that authors have been paying to make their published articles open access. The second strategy is to continue funding Temple authors' article processing charges (APCs) in open access journals. The Libraries currently supports researcher publishing charges through the Open Access Publishing Fund, as well as our agreement with Springer Nature to cover part of the APCs of Temple faculty who publish in open access Springer Nature journals.² The Open Access Publishing Fund was started in 2016, and our agreement with Springer Nature began in 2011. The third strategy involves support for collaborative and crowdsourced open access projects. The Libraries support five varied open access collections which include books, journals, and special collections:

¹ <https://libraries.mit.edu/news/royal-society-chemistry-3/27769/>

² This new deal is the successor to our previous agreement with BMC.

Independent Voices (Reveal Digital); the Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development; Knowledge Unlatched; Open Library of Humanities; and SCOAP3 (the Sponsoring Consortium for Open Access Publishing in Particle Physics).

History

This document builds off of work done by the Scholarly Communications Strategic Steering Team (SCSST) and research done by other institutions. In 2018, the SCSST released a [report](#) on Temple University Libraries' investment in open. This report described a variety of efforts the Libraries were already undertaking to support open content and infrastructure. These included encouraging faculty to switch to open textbooks through the Textbook Affordability Project, committing parts of our collections budget towards collaboratively funded open collections such as Knowledge Unlatched, providing publishing opportunities through Temple University Press, and contributing to open infrastructure projects. This report also introduced Temple's first systematic guidelines for evaluating open access collections.

Another inspiration for this report was the University of California's 2018 toolkit on [Pathways to Open Access](#).³ The toolkit includes an extensive chart categorizing numerous ways that libraries promote and fund open content. While the chart does not take an explicit stance, it lists opportunities, challenges, and possible next steps for each strategy. The toolkit helped crystallize for us the need for the Libraries to make our own decisions about which pathways to support with our finances and time.

Finally, as preparation for writing this document, we hosted [four discussions](#) throughout 2020, open to all Libraries and Press staff. The topics of these were: Introducing the Series, Transformative Agreements, Impacts of Covid on Open Access, and Open Infrastructure. For the second event, Lisa Janicke Hinchliffe from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, who has [written](#) about transformative agreements on the Scholarly Kitchen blog, was our guest speaker. The discussions, which drew roughly 25 attendees each, demonstrated an interest in open access across the organization and helped to educate staff, which we hope will lead to a broader sense of engagement with this report.

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<https://osc.universityofcalifornia.edu/uc-publisher-relationships/resources-for-negotiating-with-publishers/pathways-to-oa/>

Collections Budgets Used to Advance OA at Other Institutions

In writing this report, we spent significant time researching how other academic libraries use their collections budgets to support open access. Overall, there is a moderate amount of support amongst U.S. libraries for the funding models described in this report. Transformative agreements, being relatively new and complicated, have the lowest number of participants in the nation. As of January 2021, the ESAC Initiative⁴ offers a non-comprehensive list of 12 transformative agreements currently in place in the United States, involving five different institutions. Open Access APC funds for faculty are more common. As of December 2020, the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC) was tracking 43 libraries that had active programs for funding APCs to assist their faculty in publishing open access.⁵ Ninety-four institutions in the United States are currently members of the open-access publisher BMC (which is part of Springer Nature).⁶ Institutional membership provides affiliated authors with a discount on APC charges. By far, the open access strategy with the highest level of participation is collaborative and crowdsourced funding schemes. Knowledge Unlatched reports 259 U.S. libraries that have contributed funding to at least one of their collections since their pilot in 2014.

Of libraries similar to us in rank and expenditures (ARL libraries falling in the second or third quartile of the 2019 rankings), MIT and Iowa State may be considered to be at the forefront in supporting new open access strategies. MIT famously merged its scholarly communications and collections departments, and has dedicated \$100,000 to an experimental open access collections fund.⁷ MIT started their open access publishing fund in 2010 and signed the first transformative agreement in the United States in 2018. They also support Knowledge Unlatched⁸ and are members of BioMed Central.⁹ Iowa State has signed six transformative agreements with different publishers. In addition, they have a publication subvention grant for open access journal articles.

⁴ <https://esac-initiative.org/about/transformative-agreements/agreement-registry/>

⁵

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/10Ask0ac-N91B4EMLV0hW0xL5CKv1h47aGmLysACn_8Q/e/dit#gid=0

⁶ <https://www.biomedcentral.com/about/institutional-support/membership>

⁷ Ellen Finnie, "Voting with our dollars: making a new home for the collections budget in the MIT Libraries," *Against the Grain*, September 2016, Volume 28, #4, pp 90-92, in Column "Being Earnest with Collections." <https://dspace.mit.edu/handle/1721.1/105123>

⁸ <https://knowledgeunlatched.org/library-partners/>

⁹ <https://www.biomedcentral.com/about/institutional-support/membership>

Thus far Temple University Libraries has been more or less in sync with our peers. Though the Libraries have not yet signed any transformative agreements, Temple does support other open access publishing initiatives. Recent years, however, have seen frequent announcements of new agreements or funding schemes, and there is a desire at the Libraries to move from responding to what is offered towards thinking strategically about what kinds of open access initiatives to pursue. This report aims to prepare the Libraries to make those choices.

Strategy 1: Explore the potential implications of participating in APC-based transformative agreement(s)

Definition and Goals of Transformative Agreements

In her widely read explanatory blog post, Lisa Janicke Hinchliffe explains that: “A contract is a transformative agreement if it seeks to shift the contracted payment from a library or group of libraries to a publisher away from subscription-based reading and towards open access publishing.”¹⁰ Transformative agreements are so named because they have the potential to transform both how scholarly journal publishing is funded and the percentage of published articles that are open access. The hope is that these agreements will lead to a dramatic increase in open access articles.

The mechanism for doing this is by shifting the money that institutions have been spending on subscriptions and APCs to a single combined payment that primarily supports open access publishing. Instead of paying to read journal articles, libraries will pay the fees that allow their institution’s researchers to publish them in venues that are free for everyone to read. New articles published under these agreements will immediately be made open access. However, rather than having consistent terms or structure, transformative agreements exist in a “continuum of contract types ranging from traditional subscription licences that grant APC discounts or vouchers for a certain number of articles to unlimited OA publishing agreements, with a wide range of options in between.”¹¹ Transformative agreements are often described as belonging to one of two categories: “read and publish” and “publish and read.” With “read and publish” agreements, a library bundles payment to a publisher for reading subscription articles along with payment for scholars at that institution to publish OA articles in their journal(s), instead of charging individual APCs to authors. Over time, the proportion of the payment towards publishing relative to reading should increase as the number of open access publications increases. With “publish and read” agreements, the library only pays for publishing and access to read is free.¹² Even within a category such as read and publish, however, agreements can vary widely, as will be described in more detail below.

¹⁰ Hinchliffe, Lisa Janicke. (April 23, 2019) Transformative Agreements: A Primer *Scholarly Kitchen* blog, <https://scholarlykitchen.sspnet.org/2019/04/23/transformative-agreements/>

¹¹ Borrego, Á., Anglada, L., & Abadal, E. (2020). Transformative agreements: Do they pave the way to open access?. *Learned Publishing*, <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1002/leap.1347> (p. 6)

¹² See Hinchliffe for an overview of the implications between “read and publish” and “publish and read” agreements - <https://scholarlykitchen.sspnet.org/2019/04/23/transformative-agreements/>

Transformative agreements are meant to be transitional with an end goal of having all scholarship available open access, although the timeline is expected to be long. With most transformative agreements, authors retain their copyright, rather than transferring it to the publisher, meaning the author can determine how their article can be shared and if derivative works are permitted. The details of transformative agreements are expected to be transparent, unlike the opaque nature of big deal subscriptions between libraries and publishers. In practice, the details of agreements are not always shared publicly. The ESAC Initiative (Efficiency and Standards for Article Charges) provides information about transformative agreements and sometimes links to the full terms on their website.¹³

When the very first transformative agreements emerged, libraries may have hoped to reduce their costs through these agreements; however, this has not been a common outcome. Hinchliffe notes that “[m]ore aggressive library approaches seek a decrease in price rather than a cost-neutral approach; however, while some successfully concluded agreements to date may be cost-neutral, others in reality cost more.”¹⁴ While earlier literature, such as the UC System’s 2018 *Pathways to Open Access* toolkit, referred to these as “offsetting agreements” in which “the cost of university-affiliated authors’ APCs are offset against the overall subscription price that the library pays to a publisher,”¹⁵ Borrego, Anglada, and Abadal noted in 2020 that “[t]he negotiation of journal licence agreements has shifted its focus from cost containment towards the inclusion of clauses in favour of open access.”¹⁶ When launching their transformative agreement with the Royal Society of Chemistry in 2018, MIT knowingly increased their payments to this publisher, concluding that doing so was “a worthy experiment” given its goal of increasing the amount of scholarship available open access.¹⁷ **While cost is an**

¹³ ESAC Initiative. ESAC Transformative Agreement Registry <https://esac-initiative.org/about/transformative-agreements/agreement-registry/>, Accessed February 12, 2021.

¹⁴ Hinchliffe, Lisa Janicke. (April 23, 2019), Transformative Agreements: A Primer *Scholarly Kitchen* blog, <https://scholarlykitchen.sspnet.org/2019/04/23/transformative-agreements/>

¹⁵ University of California Libraries. (2018). Pathways to Open Access. <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/5gc4r5mq>

¹⁶ Borrego, Á., Anglada, L. and Abadal, E. (2020), Transformative agreements: Do they pave the way to open access?. *Learned Publishing*. <https://doi.org/10.1002/leap.1347>, p.2.

¹⁷ Finnie, Ellen (June 21, 2018) Offsetting as a path to full Open Access: MIT and the Royal Society of Chemistry sign first North American ‘read and publish’ agreement. *In the Open*, <http://intheopen.net/2018/06/mit-rsc-read-and-publish-agreementn-access-mit-and-the-royal-society-of-chemistry-sign-first-north-american-read-and-publish-agreement/>, accessed via Archive.org

important consideration when evaluating transformative agreements, the Libraries should not assume that such an agreement will save the institution money.

History and Growth of Transformative Agreements

Getting their start in Europe in the early 2010s, transformative agreements have recently begun to spread in North America.¹⁸ In 2018, MIT and the Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC) signed the first transformative agreement in North America. The press release issued by MIT at that time emphasized that this was a values-based decision and that the agreement was intended as a step on the path to full open access.¹⁹ In the three years since, RSC has also signed read and publish agreements with Iowa State University and Virginia Commonwealth University.²⁰ Participation in transformative agreements has grown significantly in the short time since the first one was signed. The ESAC Transformative Agreements Registry, which is not comprehensive, lists nine different publishers with at least one agreement in North America.²¹ In 2020, Cambridge University Press had signed read and publish agreements with 12 U.S. institutions. By January 2021, that number was 130.²²

The University of California system has been a major player in the world of transformative agreements and of open access in general. As of early 2021, their website noted agreements with Elsevier, Cambridge University Press, Association of Computing Machinery, and Springer Nature.²³ They have also taken a leadership role in

¹⁸ Borrego, Á., Anglada, L. and Abadal, E. (2020), Transformative agreements: Do they pave the way to open access?. *Learned Publishing*. <https://doi.org/10.1002/leap.1347>

¹⁹ Fay, Brigham (June 14, 2018), MIT and Royal Society of Chemistry Sign First North American “Read and Publish” Agreement for Scholarly Articles. *MIT Libraries: News & events* <https://libraries.mit.edu/news/royal-society-chemistry-3/27769/>

²⁰ Royal Society of Chemistry. Read and Publish Community. <https://www.rsc.org/journals-books-databases/open-access/read-and-publish/community/> Accessed February 12, 2021. The Royal Society plans to flip four of their journals to be completely open access once read and publish deals have made 75% of articles open access. <https://royalsociety.org/news/2021/05/royal-society-open-access-plans/>.

²¹ ESAC Initiative. ESAC Transformative Agreement Registry <https://esac-initiative.org/about/transformative-agreements/agreement-registry/>, Accessed February 12, 2021.

²² OA2020 US Working Group (January 19, 2021) Community of Practice <https://oa2020.us/community-of-practice-2/>; Cambridge University Press, OA agreements in the Americas, <https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/open-access-policies/read-and-publish-agreements/americas>, Accessed February 12, 2021.

²³ Office of Scholarly Communication. University of California UC-Publisher Relationships. <https://osc.universityofcalifornia.edu/uc-publisher-relationships/> Accessed February 12, 2021.

terms of providing tools and advice to other libraries interested in transformative agreements.²⁴

As noted earlier, transformative agreements are structured in a variety of different ways. Agreements can be categorized by their position on several different continua. Borrego et al. present a continuum according to how many open access articles an agreement covers. Others describe agreements in terms of whether the library's spending is primarily going towards APC costs (the "publish" part of read and publish) or towards subscription costs (the "read" part).²⁵ The following examples illustrate the variety of agreements by noting where each agreement falls on these two scales.

University of Florida and Elsevier²⁶

- **Number of APCs covered:** None. Authors receive a 10-15% discount on APCs.
- **Publish costs v. Read costs:** All spending is "read" costs, i.e. traditional subscription costs.
- **Cost:** similar to previous subscription costs

Iowa State University and Cambridge University Press²⁷

- **Number of APCs covered:** limited to 40 articles in 2021. If ISU researchers publish more than the designated number of articles, they will be asked to pay separate APCs but will receive a 30% discount.²⁸
- **Publish costs v. Read costs:** Payment is split between subscription ("read") cost and APC ("publish") cost
- **Cost:** similar to previous subscription costs

University of California System and Cambridge University Press²⁹

- **Number of APCs covered:** Unlimited; no charge for publishing above a certain number of articles.

²⁴ Negotiating with scholarly journal publishers: A toolkit from the University of California. <https://osc.universityofcalifornia.edu/uc-publisher-relationships/resources-for-negotiating-with-publishers/negotiating-with-scholarly-journal-publishers-a-toolkit> Accessed March 23, 2021.

²⁵ Hinchliffe, Lisa Janicke. (April 23, 2019) Transformative Agreements: A Primer, *The Scholarly Kitchen*, <https://scholarlykitchen.sspnet.org/2019/04/23/transformative-agreements/>

²⁶ ESAC Initiative. (2020) els2020ufl (Elsevier agreement with University of Florida) <https://esac-initiative.org/about/transformative-agreements/agreement-registry/els2020ufl/>

²⁷ Cambridge University Press and Iowa State University of Science and Technology, "Cambridge University Press 2020 Iowa State OA FINAL" (2020). https://lib.dr.iastate.edu/cos_agreements/3

²⁸ <https://esac-initiative.org/about/transformative-agreements/agreement-registry/cam2020iowa/>

²⁹ ESAC Initiative. (2019). cam2019cdl (Cambridge University Press agreement with California Digital Library) <https://esac-initiative.org/about/transformative-agreements/agreement-registry/cam2019cdl/>

- **Publish costs v. Read costs:** 40% of payment covers subscription cost in the first year, decreasing by 5% each year
- **Cost:** “Cost is equivalent to our previous license fee, slightly upgraded to cover all Cambridge journals, plus the amount of APCs paid outside of the agreement in the previous year.” (from ESAC site) i.e., more than previous subscription costs

University of California System and Elsevier³⁰

- **Number of APCs covered:** 4,370 articles, pre-paid with a 15% discount in APC cost. UC will receive a credit if fewer articles are published in a year than were pre-paid. The library pays \$1,000 if the research is grant-funded (as the grant is expected to cover the difference) and the full cost for research that is not grant-funded.
- **Publish costs v. Read costs:** all expenses go towards APCs.
- **Cost:** “The agreement also lowers UC costs relative to what they would have been had we continued a subscription agreement with Elsevier.”³¹

PLOS’s Community Action Publishing (CAP) program should also be noted here as another example of what a “pure publish” agreement could look like. In a pure publish agreement, a library pays money to a fully open access journal, or set of journals, which either fully funds or subsidizes the institution’s faculty publications in that journal.³² CAP is a membership program in which institutions pay a fee that allows their researchers to publish at no additional cost in two PLOS journals, *PLOS Biology* and *PLOS Medicine*.³³ According to *Nature*, “profits are capped at 10% with any revenue exceeding this being given back to members.”³⁴ CAP is a new effort limited to these two journals. The remaining PLOS journals are funded through more traditional APCs, either paid by an institution or individual authors. Since PLOS is a fully open access publisher with no

³⁰ Rick Anderson, (2021) “Six Questions (with answers!) about UC’s and Elsevier’s New Transformative Deal”, *The Scholarly Kitchen*.
<https://scholarlykitchen.sspnet.org/2021/03/25/six-questions-with-answers-about-ucls-and-elseviers-new-transformative-deal/>

³¹ Office of Scholarly Communication. University of California. (2021) “Elsevier Transformative Open Access Agreement.”
<https://osc.universityofcalifornia.edu/uc-publisher-relationships/elsevier-oa-agreement/#basics>

³² For more explanation, see Hinchliffe, Lisa Janicke (February 20, 2020) The “Pure Publish” Agreement, *The Scholarly Kitchen* <https://scholarlykitchen.sspnet.org/2020/02/20/pure-publish/>

³³ Public Library of Science. Publishing FAQs
<https://plos.org/publish/publishing-faqs/#plos-community-action-publishing>, Accessed February 12, 2021.

³⁴ Holly Else, “Open access publisher PLOS pushes to extend clout beyond biomedicine,” *Nature*, May 13, 2021. <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-020-01907-3>.

subscription costs, CAP is not technically a transformative agreement, although the payment structure is similar.

Agreements under Consideration by Temple University Libraries

Temple University Libraries has begun to be approached by publishers proposing transformative agreements. We are in the preliminary stages of investigating and considering these but have not formally expressed interest to any publishers. This section notes the structure of two of the initial proposals we have received as well as some questions we have posed internally but have not yet sent to the publishers.

Representatives from Cambridge University Press came to Charles Library in November 2019. The agreement they presented had some features in common with the deals they had made with the University of California system and with Iowa State in that the cost would be split between a “read” portion and a “publish” portion, with the publish payment covering a set number of APCs. Cambridge expected that we would want to cover more APCs each year, and that as we did so the payment would shift so that a greater percentage of the spending would be covering publication rather than reading. The representatives indicated, however, that their plan didn’t allow the university’s spending to ever be dedicated entirely to publish costs; there would always be some cost to read. They noted that they expected more Temple authors would publish in their journals once faculty knew they could publish open access without paying a fee. Though there is no way to know if this is an accurate prediction, it raises the possibility that the cost of a transformative agreement could increase if the agreement itself entices more of our faculty to publish in a given publisher’s journals. The Libraries has not yet asked how pricing would be calculated for future years, and the representatives did not provide a written copy of the proposal; thus, we cannot share the exact numbers from this proposal.

Some analysis based on records in the Web of Science shows that between 2016 and 2020, Temple-affiliated authors published an average of 34 articles per year in Cambridge University Press journals. This may be close to what Iowa State University publishes, given that their agreement with Cambridge covers forty articles per year. Web of Science also indicates whether or not an article had external funding. The data shows that the disciplines most represented in TUL’s Cambridge publications are also those unlikely to have funding, with political science and history being the most common disciplines. Though the number of articles published in Cambridge journals is

small, these are some of the researchers who could most benefit from a transformative agreement.

In November 2020, Temple University was approached by the Company of Biologists, which publishes just three journals (*Development*, *Journal of Cell Science*, and *Journal of Experimental Biology*). At that point there were 15 U.S. institutions listed on the publisher's website as participating in read and publish agreements.³⁵ The package that the Company of Biologists was offering would consist of the existing subscription costs plus the average annual article processing charges paid by Temple authors from 2017–2019. Between 2016 and 2020, Temple faculty have published two or three articles each year in Company of Biologists journals, although the Libraries do not know if any of these authors paid APCs. The publisher's price quote noted that the APC spend for the smaller time frame of 2017 to 2019 was zero. As the price quote was based on past subscription charges plus past APC spending (\$0), the agreement would initially be cost-neutral for Temple. However, the quote did not include information on how pricing would be calculated for future years. The Libraries would need to ask more questions of the Company of Biologists before entering into this agreement.

Impact on the Publishing World and on Temple University

Because transformative agreements could potentially take up a large share of the Libraries' collections budget, and because they are intended to make significant changes in how scholarly research is funded, it is important to think carefully about how they might affect both Temple and the larger publishing world. As they are still relatively new, many of the concerns below are speculative and do not have data or sources to back them up. Dealing with speculation can be complicated, but it is nevertheless important as we try to make conscious choices about our subscriptions.

Impact on Researchers

There is real worry that transformative agreements will increase inequity in scholarly publishing. If the agreements succeed in shifting journals to entirely open access, paid for by publication fees, then scholars at institutions that have not signed onto a transformative agreement with a publisher would be responsible for paying this fee themselves. This could make it even more difficult for scholars in the Global South and at less well-funded institutions elsewhere in the world to publish in open access

³⁵ The Company of Biologists. Read and Publish: Participating institutions, <https://www.biologists.com/read-publish/participating-institutions/>, Accessed February 12, 2021.

journals. What becomes of independent scholars or lone researchers at teaching-focused institutions? Without an agreement to cover their APCs, they may become limited to publishing in a (hopefully) shrinking number of non-open access journals, meaning reduced readership for their scholarship. While most publishers offer APC fee waivers and discounts for researchers in the Global South, they are not universal and are typically based on the GDP of a scholar's home country.³⁶ The entire system of APCs as the funding mechanism for open access publishing, which is perpetuated through transformative agreements, is not inclusive of alternative open access publishing models like the non-commercial system in Latin America.³⁷

Given that transformative agreements are so new (particularly in the U.S.), it is unclear what impact they may have on faculty publishing behavior. There are many factors that influence where researchers choose to publish; prestige and reputation of a journal are likely the most important, due to their role in the tenure and promotion process. But it is possible that researchers will begin publishing more often in journals where APCs are covered through a transformative agreement. Since these agreements are predominantly with major publishers, this could lead to libraries inadvertently strengthening the market power of these publishers. Other than advocating for faculty to publish open access whenever possible, libraries have not typically tried to influence the publishing choices of faculty. But this could change inadvertently if transformative agreements proliferate and become a preferred method to cover APCs. Additionally, if libraries negotiate to fund the majority of APC charges through transformative agreements, faculty will likely remain unaware of the actual cost involved in being able to publish open access. Researchers' lack of knowledge of the earlier rising costs of subscription journals helped to fuel the serials crisis.³⁸ It is important for these agreements to be transparent to all stakeholders.

Although there doesn't seem to be literature about the potential impact of transformative agreements on scholars in disciplines that don't typically charge APCs, like the humanities, it is worth speculating how this might work. If humanities journals

³⁶ For example, [here are the countries which receive fee waivers and discounts from Wiley](#). But it seems that a researcher in Guatemala or Vietnam (which are on the "discount" list) may still struggle to pay 50% of an APC.

³⁷ Aguado López, Eduardo and Arianna Becerril García (November 6th, 2019) Latin America's longstanding open access ecosystem could be undermined by proposals from the Global North. <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/latamcaribbean/2019/11/06/latin-americas-longstanding-open-access-ecosystem-could-be-undermined-by-proposals-from-the-global-north/>

³⁸ "Four Concerns about the New UC-Elsevier Deal." *The Taper: Copyright and Information Policy at the UVA Library*. March 19, 2021. <http://thetaper.library.virginia.edu/2021/03/19/four-concerns-about-the-new-uc-elsevier-deal.html>

are included in transformative agreements, these journals might also begin charging APCs to authors whose institutions are not part of the agreement so that they can become fully open access. The introduction of APC charges by journals that do not currently have them would be especially problematic for humanities researchers since they typically don't have grant money to cover publishing costs, as illustrated in the publishing data from Cambridge University Press in the previous section. While a trend toward more open access journal literature in the humanities would be positive, moving to an APC model could make publication more difficult for these researchers.

Publishing Market

Several librarians and publishers have voiced concerns about how transformative agreements could affect the publishing market, given that they entail a continued commitment to spend significant amounts of money with the largest publishers. Alison Mudditt, the CEO of PLOS, a non-profit publisher whose journals are all open access, stated her belief that committing money to transformative agreements will “reinforc[e] the market dominance of the biggest players as subscription funds simply flow in full to new deal models,” thereby detracting from libraries’ ability to financially support “native-open access publishers.”³⁹ Others have noted the risk of “entrenching the existing structure of the journals market”⁴⁰ or “crowning the OA royalty,” thereby keeping library funds in the hands of the same traditional journal publishers without fundamentally changing the system.⁴¹ Will transformative agreements with major publishers keep resources away from other organizations we may ideologically want to support, because they are fully open access and/or not-for-profit? We need to find ways to support purely open access publishers, whether through pure publish agreements or other funding, in addition to supporting long standing subscription publishers in their shift towards open access.

Distribution of Costs

Another oft-asked question about how transformative agreements will affect the market is what will happen to institutions that are currently able to pay for subscriptions but are

³⁹ Mudditt, Alison (June 3, 2019) Plan S and the Transformation of Scholarly Communication: Are We Missing the Woods? *The Scholarly Kitchen* <https://scholarlykitchen.sspnet.org/2019/06/03/plan-s-and-the-transformation-of-scholarly-communication-are-we-missing-the-woods/>

⁴⁰ Lawson 2019, cited in Borrego et al. 2020.

⁴¹ Schonfeld, Roger C. (September 4, 2018) Read and Publish: Is It Good for the Academy? *The Scholarly Kitchen* <https://scholarlykitchen.sspnet.org/2018/09/04/read-publish-good-academy/>

not responsible for significant amounts of publishing (for instance a well-funded liberal arts college or a corporation). These are sometimes referred to as “read-only” institutions. If business models shift so that larger institutions are paying primarily for publishing fees and not for read access, and if the majority of the articles from major publishers become open access, will read-only institutions cancel their subscriptions? It seems possible that the burden of funding scholarly publishing would become more concentrated amongst institutions with high research output. This concern has come up in relation to consortia, who might negotiate agreements as a single body but divide up costs differently under a transformative agreement.⁴² The shift in which members of a consortium are paying the most will likely be mirrored by a shift in the market at large. In discussing their transformative agreement option, ACM OPEN, The Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) explains that the articles published in their journals come from a set of institutions one-third the size of their institutional subscriber base; therefore “the main challenge for ACM is how to generate roughly the same income from 1/3 the number of institutions over the long term.”⁴³

The possibility of having a smaller number of entities paying to keep journals active raises the question of whose responsibility it is to pay publishers. Inherent in the idea of open access is the fact that some people would be reading articles without paying. This is a positive outcome if people who are unaffiliated with an academic institution are able to read articles that they would not have otherwise. Institutions that have long been subscribers and become free riders are a more complicated question.

Library Budget

The cost to the library should be considered when evaluating any transformative agreement. When APC costs get bundled into the package price paid by a library, the agreement could be cost-neutral for the institution as a whole, but the library could end up assuming responsibility for expenses previously paid by grants or other faculty funds. Temple Libraries should consider whether the agreement can be structured in a way that still has authors with grant funding contributing some of the APC funding, as in the University of California-Elsevier agreement. Another consideration is how the price might increase in future years. Because the costs of agreements are often based on the

⁴² Borrego et al. 2020; Hinchliffe, Lisa Janicke (May 20, 2019) Will Transformative Agreements Unravel Library Consortia? *The Scholarly Kitchen*
<https://scholarlykitchen.sspnet.org/2019/05/20/transformative-agreements-unravel-library-consortia/>

⁴³ ACM OPEN (ACM's Transformative Model for Open Access Publication)
<https://libraries.acm.org/acmopen> Access April 9, 2021.

number of APCs paid in the past, it is not clear how pricing will change once faculty do not need to pay APCs. When considering potential transformative agreements, Temple will need to ask questions about future price changes and how grant funding is taken into account.

Workflow

As Temple University Libraries considers possible transformative agreements, we should be aware that we would likely need to design new workflows as we insert ourselves into a role that has not been traditional for libraries. Temple faculty who have articles accepted in journals covered by transformative agreements would need someone from the Libraries to verify that they are eligible to be included in the agreement. A 2019 presentation from the University of California noted complications in determining eligibility.⁴⁴ Questions arise if, for instance, a faculty member did research while employed at our institution but left before it was accepted for publication. In addition, would the APC cost only be covered if the Temple author was the corresponding author? There is a possibility that cross-institutional research teams would choose to list the Temple author as the corresponding author specifically for the purpose of taking advantage of the transformative agreement. We would need to discuss whether we see this as a problem and investigate whether there was any way to limit this behavior. We would also need to decide if graduate students were eligible to have their publishing fees covered. The 2019 UC presentation also noted the need to plan to promote OA publishing opportunities to faculty and to communicate about policy. At Temple, we would benefit from past experience managing the APC fund, as some of the same questions of eligibility may have already been discussed.

Recommendations

Pursue a transformative agreement with a relatively small non-profit publisher, which will be selected according to the criteria below, as a pilot.

While there are many reasons to be cautious about transformative agreements, we still recommend signing on to one for several reasons. One reason is that they do have the potential to dramatically increase the number of articles available open access in the

⁴⁴ Maurer, Jennifer, Andrew Sykes, Rice Majors, and Mat Willmott (November 6, 2019) Developing open access partnerships and transformative agreements, Presented at the *Charleston Library Conference: Issues in Book and Serial Acquisitions*, https://static.sched.com/hosted_files/2019charlestonlibraryconference/41/Developing%20open%20access%20partnerships%20and%20transformative%20agreements%20%28Charleston%202019%20UC_CUP%29%20-%20final.pdf

short-term, which is a worthwhile goal in itself. There cannot be a significant change in the number of open access articles unless major publishers flip their journals, and transformative agreements appear to be their main strategy for flipping.

We recommend starting slowly, with just one agreement, likely one from a smaller publisher. This approach will give us a chance to figure out the workflow for approving authors to have their APCs covered. Starting with a pilot agreement will also allow us to observe whether the agreement has an effect on our researchers' publishing patterns and to observe and resolve potential issues on a manageable scale. At the same time, we can watch the effects of transformative agreements at other institutions and in the publishing market over time. We recommend continuing to follow their evolution closely. While budget decisions are always complex, we also note that we would not want to increase our spending with major publishers if doing so would prevent us from supporting fully open access publications.

In choosing and negotiating transformative agreements, the following components should be required:

- The ability to share details of the agreement publicly
- Clarity about how future cost increases will be determined
- A plan for shifting over time so that a larger percentage of our payment covers publishing costs rather than subscription costs. The ideal would be for the agreement to eventually transform into pure publish, where the Libraries pay only publishing costs and no subscription costs.
- If the agreement does not cover unlimited APCs, we should have a process for prioritizing researchers who do not have grant funding.
- The initial agreement should be with a smaller publisher (<500 journals).

The following component is strongly preferred:

- A reduction in the overall costs that Temple has been paying through subscriptions and APCs combined, following the original intention of offsetting agreements in reducing double-dipping by publishers
- Begin with a non-profit publisher

Cambridge University Press or the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) could be promising, if not perfect, choices for our first transformative agreement.

Cambridge University Press

Cambridge is a non-profit publisher, affiliated with the University of Cambridge. They publish 380 journals, of which 53 are entirely open access and 319 are hybrid.⁴⁵ They have made a public commitment to lowering subscription prices as more articles in their journals become available open access.⁴⁶ An analysis of Temple-affiliated publications from 2016 to early 2021 showed that the largest number of articles (23 out of 173, or 13%) were in political science, and only 9% of these were noted in the Web of Science as having external funding. The second-most represented subject was history, with 11 articles, none of which had funding. The main obstacle to pursuing a read-and-publish agreement with Cambridge is that we expect to cancel our Big Deal agreement with them soon in an attempt to reduce spending, and a transformative agreement might lock us into maintaining our spending.

ACM

ACM is a membership organization for computer scientists. Their Digital Library product is a relatively small collection of 50 journals and proceedings from over 170 conferences. In March 2021 they announced transformative agreements with the University of California, Carnegie Mellon, MIT, and Iowa State University. They now refer to this model as ACM OPEN. One major difference between ACM OPEN and other transformative agreements is that the cost is not based on individual APCs. Their website spells out a clear plan for reducing subscription costs as the number of open access articles in their journals grows, and they hope to fully convert to open access in five years.⁴⁷ Since 2016, there have been 39 articles published by Temple-affiliated authors in ACM journals. Eighty-two percent of these noted external funding, although it

⁴⁵ <https://www.cambridge.org/core/what-we-publish/open-access> Accessed March 24, 2021.

⁴⁶ <https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/open-access-policies/open-access-journals/double-dipping-policy> Accessed March 24, 2021.

⁴⁷ <https://libraries.acm.org/subscriptions-access/acmopen> Accessed March 24, 2021.

does not seem that the authors used their funds to pay for APCs, as Web of Science does not indicate any gold open access. At this level of publishing activity, the Libraries would be placed in Tier 9 for ACM OPEN (\$10,000). While ACM could be a good candidate for a transformative agreement, it would also represent an over 30% increase in the Libraries current spending for these journals. Because of this significant increase, ACM OPEN would have to be pursued as an experiment not a model, as similar agreements with other publishers would not be financially sustainable for Temple University Libraries.

Strategy 2: Continue to fund Temple authors to cover APCs via the Open Access Publishing Fund + Springer Nature Share Support Membership

Background

Open access publishing funds were first established in the early 2000s. Support for open access publishing funds generally comes from academic libraries and/or the provost's office and the office of research. Local academic libraries that currently have active open access publishing funds include the University of Pittsburgh, Princeton University, Carnegie Mellon University, Villanova University, and Thomas Jefferson University. Penn State does not currently have an open access publishing fund. Although a number of libraries still maintain open access publishing funds, including MIT Libraries and the University of Illinois Chicago Libraries, some, such as Virginia Commonwealth University Libraries, have shut down their funds completely due to budget constraints.⁴⁸ Others are looking to reallocate the money towards non-APC based open access publishing.⁴⁹ Still others are signing transformative agreements with publishers that may ultimately remove the need for an open access publishing fund altogether.

History of Temple's OA Publishing Fund

In 2016, Temple University Libraries established an Open Access Publishing Fund, drawing on \$10,000 in funds from its collections budget and \$10,000 from the Health Science Libraries collections budget.⁵⁰ At the time, Temple was one of the few R1 libraries that did not have such a fund. The fund currently provides up to \$3,000 per article to faculty and graduate students who want to publish in a fully-open access journal but do not have the funds to cover the article processing charge. Hybrid journals are not eligible. Because many articles have multiple Temple authors, individuals are eligible for up to \$1,500 total a year. This amount is generally in line with other libraries as evidenced by a 2016 ARL survey of 77 member libraries with open access publishing funds. They found that annual limits for individuals seeking reimbursement ranged from

⁴⁸ The VCU Libraries Open Access Publishing Fund program ended in 2020.
<https://www.library.vcu.edu/research-teaching/publishing/open-access/>

⁴⁹ See, for example, the University of Minnesota Libraries:
<https://www.lib.umn.edu/openaccess/open-access-publishing-fund>

⁵⁰ Since that time the two collections budgets have merged.

\$1,000 to \$5,000.⁵¹ For the 2020–2021 year, the fund received \$25,000 and was exhausted before the end of fall semester. Temple’s total fund amount is lower than many other libraries. According to the 2016 ARL survey, the median funding allocation was \$40,000.⁵² Since the Fund began, the Libraries have approved 67 articles. The Libraries have funded an average of 13.4 articles per year and a median of 13 articles per year. How does this compare to other institutions? One study of open access publishing funds found that libraries funded an average of 21 articles and a median of 16 articles per year.⁵³ However, the lower numbers could be because our Fund is smaller than those at many other libraries.

In addition to the Open Access Publishing Fund, Temple University Libraries is a “shared support member” with [BioMed Central](#) (now part of Springer Nature), the massive publisher of around 300 open access peer-reviewed journals covering a variety of disciplines including medicine, public health, and science.⁵⁴ As part of this membership, which began in 2011, Temple researchers receive a 5% discount on their APC. In addition, 50% of the APC cost is paid for by the Libraries. Since 2015, the Libraries have supported the publication of 82 articles. On average, the Libraries fund about 13 articles per year. The Libraries are currently in talks to change this agreement to include all Springer Nature open access journals, however the agreement will only cover 25% of the APC. The reason for this change is that many of the Nature journals are high-impact journals that are popular with Temple faculty, however the APCs for these journals are also much higher.

Risks/Benefits

The primary risk with the Open Access Publishing Fund is that it is not financially sustainable. All of the money for the fund comes from the collections budget, which continues to face cuts due to the rising costs of journal subscriptions and the financial fallout from the pandemic. Another risk is that the fund could be furthering support for an APC-based system for open access. While some libraries believe that APCs are

⁵¹ Gail McMillan, Leslie O'Brien, and Philip Young, *Funding Article Processing Charges*, SPEC Kit 353 (Washington, DC: Association of Research Libraries, November 2016), 3.

<https://doi.org/10.29242/spec.353>

⁵² Gail McMillan, Leslie O'Brien, and Philip Young, *Funding Article Processing Charges*, SPEC Kit 353 (Washington, DC: Association of Research Libraries, November 2016), 3.

<https://doi.org/10.29242/spec.353>

⁵³ Amanda B. Click and Rachel Borchardt, “Library Supported Open Access Funds: Criteria, Impact, and Viability,” *Evidence Based Library and Information Practice* 14:4 (2019), 25.

<https://doi.org/10.18438/eblip29623>.

⁵⁴ Although it is called a “membership,” there is no additional membership fee.

necessary in order to achieve the wide-spread transition to open access, many others believe that paying APCs isn't the most effective way to move open access forward, as doing so does not really fix the problems with the current scholarly publishing system. In addition, as noted earlier in the section on transformative agreements, an APC-based system makes publishing open access primarily available to academics with financial resources and therefore potentially perpetuates existing inequities in scholarly publishing.⁵⁵

At the same time, the benefits of the fund are many and go beyond simply helping to make Temple scholarship openly available. The fund has enabled the Libraries to learn more about faculty publishing practices and to discuss open access and predatory publishing with faculty members in a way that is directly relevant to their work. Although the Libraries have tried different approaches to talking to faculty about open access over the years (such as tabling and workshops), these efforts have been met with limited success. The open access publishing fund has helped the Libraries identify faculty champions, such as Assistant Professor of Psychology David Smith, who, after receiving money from the open access publishing fund, went on to speak on a panel about open science at OpenCon Philly in 2019. As will be discussed in more detail below, another benefit of the fund is that it supports the publishing efforts of Temple graduate students, who need to publish in order to secure academic employment.

Impact

There are many different ways to assess the impact of open access publishing funds.⁵⁶ For the purpose of this report, we took a quantitative approach and chose to assess impact by looking at the disciplines and type of researcher the fund has supported over the past five years. We also looked at the publishers that the fund was supporting.

Each year, the following data elements were tracked in a [spreadsheet](#) for the fund. These align closely with SPARC's recommended assessment measures:⁵⁷

⁵⁵ The University of California Libraries have largely embraced the use of APCs. SPARC and a handful of other libraries have spoken out about the problems with this approach. See, for example, "Flipping Open Access Away from APCs," CNI Fall 2019 Membership Meeting.

<https://www.cni.org/topics/economic-models/flipping-open-access-away-from-apcs>

⁵⁶ For example, see Amanda B. Click and Rachel Borchardt, "Library Supported Open Access Funds: Criteria, Impact, and Viability," *Evidence Based Library and Information Practice* 14:4 (2019), 21-37.

<https://doi.org/10.18438/eblip29623>.

⁵⁷ Greg Tananbaum, "Campus-Based Open-Access Publishing Funds: A Practical Guide to Design and Implementation," Scholarly Publishing & Academic Resources Coalition (2010), 11.

<https://sparcopen.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/oafunds-v1.pdf>.

- Number of articles approved
- Number of articles funded
- Unique submitting researchers
- Unique colleges/schools and departments
- Unique journals
- Unique publishers
- Number of involved undergraduate/graduate students

Tracking these quantitative measures over time allows us to identify trends, determine who the money is going to, and understand how this influences the scholarly ecosystem. For a more nuanced data analysis, see [this spreadsheet](#) for a breakdown of each fiscal year.

Summary of Fund Disbursements

In its five years of operation so far, the Open Access Publishing Fund distributed funds to researchers in support of publication fees for 67 articles. Award amount requests averaged \$1,168 per application. Fourteen accepted applications were later not funded because they were not accepted by the publisher, not funded in time, or the researcher failed to follow up about their application. These remaining funds were not carried over to the following year.

Table 1
Open Access Publishing Fund awards, FY 2016–2021

Total applications accepted	81
Applications funded	67
Applications not funded after acceptance	14
Average award amount requested	\$1,168

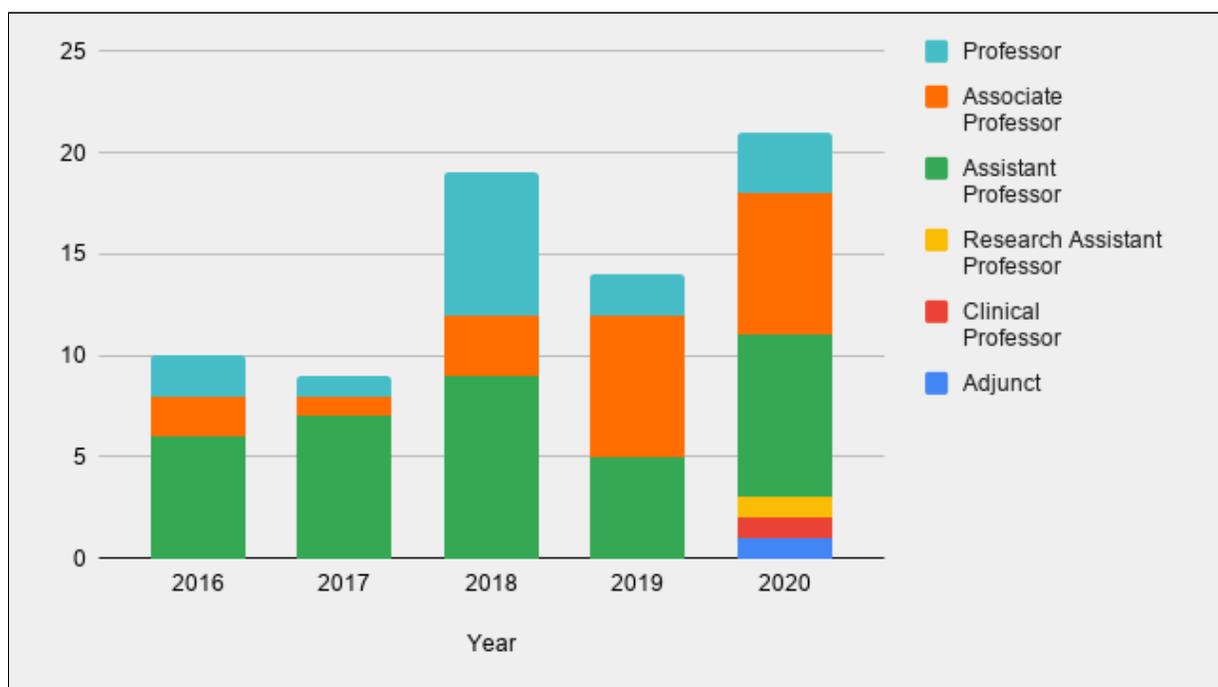
Across the five years, 46% of the researchers funded were at the rank of assistant professors and 30% were associate professors, indicating that the fund was helping tenure track and early career scholars at Temple the most. This could be because younger scholars are more aware of OA, more open to publishing in new journals with new publishing models, or need the funding. In addition, 55% of articles that were funded had at least one undergraduate or graduate student co-author, illustrating

collaborative efforts as well as wider outreach of this funding scheme (this percentage does not include residents). Nineteen percent of the researchers funded were tenured/full professors, which could be because they already have funding on their own, or that they are less interested in open access publishing. The 2020–21 award year saw not only the highest number of applications funded, but also increased diversity among ranks of researcher applicants as adjuncts and professors of practice were funded.

Table 2
Awards by Status of Researcher

	Student	Non-tenure track	Tenure track	Tenured
Applications Funded	37	3	51	13

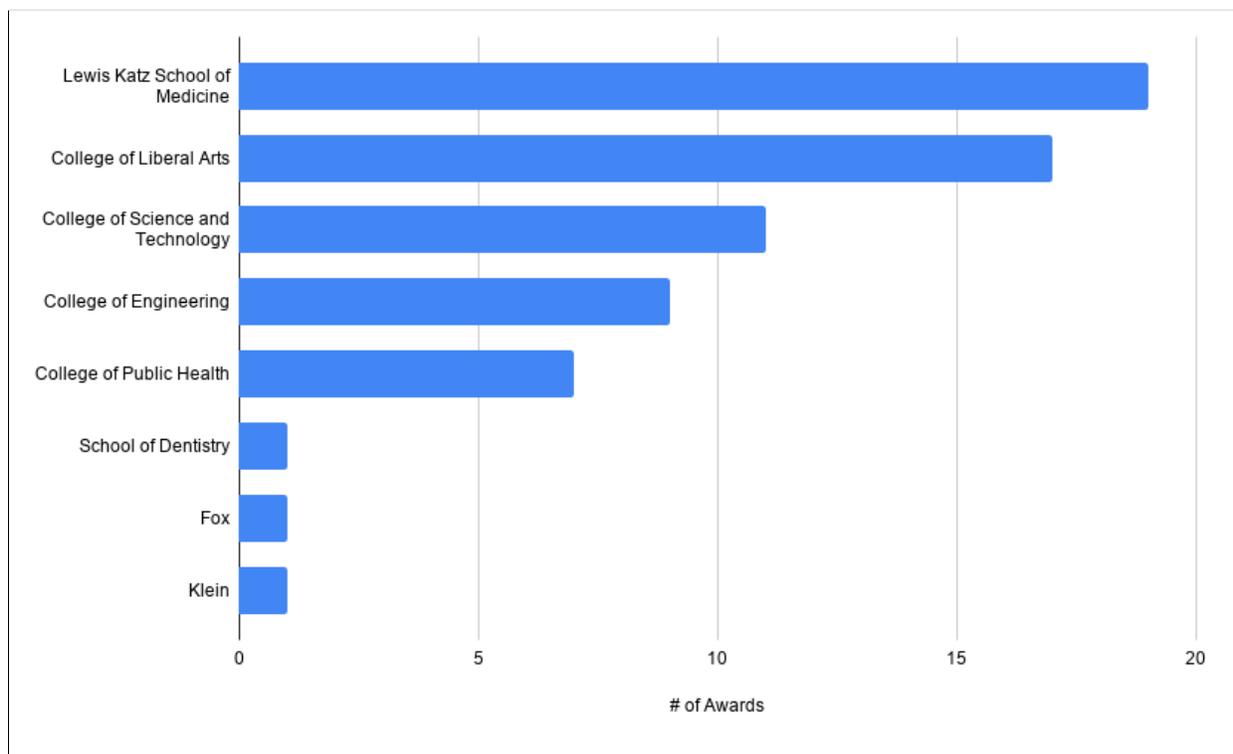
Figure 1
Researcher Statuses by Year



Funds were distributed to researchers across eight of the university’s 17 different colleges and schools as well as 34 different departments. More than half of the awards were given to researchers from the Lewis Katz School of Medicine and the College of Liberal Arts. Two researchers, Dr. Andrew Gassman (Lewis Katz School of Medicine)

and Dr. Eunice Chen (College of Liberal Arts), have applied for the fund almost every year. Over a third were first-time applicants.

Figure 2
Awards by College/School of Researcher



Although the College of Liberal Arts is largely represented in the data, the departments funded were from researchers engaged in more social science research compared to humanities-oriented research. In fact, 18% of the applications funded came from the college’s Psychology department. Other departments that received funding more than once encompass science and medicine-oriented disciplines. **This indicates that research being published through support from the Fund is not equally distributed across academic disciplines.** There are several possible explanations for this. First, many open access journals with APCs are not humanities focused.⁵⁸ In addition, journal publication outputs in the arts and humanities may also be less than journal publication outputs in the sciences. Moreover, arts and humanities scholarship may necessitate

⁵⁸ See Marcin Kozak and James Hartley, “Publication Fees for Open Access Journals: Different Disciplines—Different Methods,” *Journal of the Society for Information Science and Technology* 64:12 (2013), 2591-2594. <https://doi.org/10.1002/asi.22972>

obtaining permissions to use reproductions of copyrighted content, such as images, thus creating legal and financial barriers for the researchers.⁵⁹

Finally, arts and humanities researchers, who continue to place high professional value on the publication of scholarly monographs for tenure and promotion, may believe APCs sound too much akin to “vanity press” publishing.⁶⁰

Table 3
Awards by Department

Department	# of Awards
Psychology	12
Biology	5
Physics	5
Mechanical Engineering	4
Surgery	4
Bioengineering	3
Thoracic Medicine and Surgery	3
Orthopaedic Surgery and Sports Medicine	2
Pathology and Laboratory Medicine	2
Social and Behavioral Sciences	2

Note: This table excludes departments that only applied once.

Across the five years, 18% of funds went toward Springer Nature or a child company (i.e., Nature Publishing Group or BioMed Central). This amount is in addition to the money spent on our BioMed Central shared support membership. One caveat to percentage is that the open access publishing fund supported BioMed Central publications during its first year (FY 2016–2017) but has not since. Ten percent of funds went toward Elsevier journals.

⁵⁹ See Patrick Tomlin, “Every Man His Book? An Introduction to Open Access in the Arts,” *Art Documentation* 30:1 (2011), 4-11. <https://doi.org/10.1086/adx.30.1.27949561>

⁶⁰ See Bryna Coonin and Leigh Younce, “Publishing in Open Access Journals in The Social Sciences and Humanities: Who’s Doing it and Why,” In *Pushing the Edge: Explore, Extend, Engage, Proceedings of the ACRL 14th National Conference, Seattle, WA, USA, 12–15 March 2009*; Mueller, D., Ed.; Association of College and Research Libraries: Chicago, IL, USA, 2009; pp. 85–94.

The largest number of articles supported by the Open Access Publishing Fund were published by Frontiers, an exclusively open access publisher. These numbers may reflect the fact that multiple applicants are applying to the same journal, and that some journals are higher impact and therefore might be more desirable to faculty to publish in. There was some representation across a variety of smaller, more independent publishers, such as University of California Press and Regional Euro-Asian Biological Invasions Centre (REABIC).

Table 4
Awards by Major Publisher

Publisher	# of Awards
Frontiers	10
Elsevier	7
MDPI	7
Springer Nature	7
PLOS	6
Nature Publishing Group	3
BioMed Central	2

Recommendations

We think the Fund should continue to be one of the ways in which the Libraries supports the transition to open publishing. However, based on our analysis, we have the following four primary recommendations:

1. *Modify the fund to make it more inclusive*

Prioritize first-time applicants

Our existing data demonstrates that the fund helps tenure track and early career scholars the most. Modifying the fund to explicitly prioritize first-time applicants will show the Libraries' support not only for researchers, but also for their success. It will also ensure that funding continues to go to those who need it the most.

Consider including monographs

Arts and humanities researchers place high professional value on the publication of monographs, especially for tenure and promotion. Modifying the fund to support monographs in addition to journal articles may produce a dual-track option that appeals to these researchers, encouraging applications. However, before such a change went forward, we would have to do more research about how the funding of OA monographs would work, and specifically how much money the Libraries would be willing to spend per book.⁶¹

2. Modify the fund to ensure its sustainability

Place additional limits on individual funding

The University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries, for example, provides a maximum award of \$1,200. In general, authors are eligible for 50% of that. However, they can earn additional percentages towards the maximum award by meeting other criteria, such as being early career faculty or grad students, publishing in a field with minimal open access options, publishing with a scholarly society or non-profit organization, being a first-time applicant, and having an ORCID iD.⁶² Although these criteria add an additional layer of complexity to the administration of the fund, they also make it easier for the Libraries to support researchers who need the money the most, and encourage researchers to adopt the publishing practices that libraries writ large value.

Consider partnering with others at Temple

The Libraries could approach other partners on campus about co-contributing, such as the Office of Research. The Libraries could also target schools and colleges with the greatest number of funded faculty, such as the Lewis Katz School of Medicine, to ask if they would be willing to cost-share.

3. Monitor the anticipated new agreement with Springer Nature

Actively observe rising costs associated with faculty publishing in these journals and change course if necessary

⁶¹ The [TOME project](#), for example, pays publishers \$15,000 per OA monograph. If we were to offer a similar amount we would not have much money left in fund to support journal articles, and could likely only offer one such subvention a year.

⁶² <https://www.library.umass.edu/soar-fund/soar-fund-guidelines/>

In terms of Temple's likely new membership with Springer Nature, we recommend that we watch the publication trends with that agreement closely in order to see which journals Temple researchers are publishing in. It might also be worth doing the same kind of rank analysis that we did for the Open Access Publishing Fund. In addition, we should keep track of the funded articles in order to make sure that the costs do not get out of control, particularly because many of the most popular Springer Nature journals, such as *Nature Communications* and *Scientific Reports*, have very high APCs. In 2019, for example, 25 articles with a corresponding author from Temple were published in fully OA Nature journals. The average APC for these articles was \$3,046.36, according to our representative from Springer Nature, Patrice Galimore Weiss.

Strategy 3: Evaluate current support for collaborative and crowdsourced funding projects for open access materials and identify potential new projects to support

Background and Major Initiatives

Collaborative and crowdsourced funding projects are those in which universities and other organizations pool their contributions to support the creation of open access content, including books, journals, and digital primary sources. Unlike transformative agreements and open access publishing funds, collaborative and crowdsourced funding projects usually involve a flat fee. Also, each institution's funding does not necessarily go towards opening the work of its own researchers. In some instances, institutions pledge money and when enough money is pledged, the resource is published open access. However, models can differ. One variation of collaborative funding, specific to journals, is called Subscribe to Open. This model is used for journals that had previously been accessible only via subscription. Under Subscribe to Open, libraries indicate their intention to renew their subscriptions, and the publisher commits that if all libraries renew, then they will make a year's worth of content available open access. If the publisher does not get the desired number of commitments, then the journal will not be open access, but those libraries who have already paid will be granted access as they would with a traditional subscription.⁶³ Project Muse just received a Mellon grant to study this model in more depth.⁶⁴ Collaborative funding of open access collections began about 10 years ago with Unglue.it and Knowledge Unlatched.⁶⁵ The first publisher to use the Subscribe to Open model was Annual Reviews, which flipped *Annual Review of Cancer Biology* to open access in 2020.⁶⁶

The Libraries have long participated in open access collaborative and crowdsourced funding projects. Each year collections and agreements are reviewed, participation evaluated, and decisions made on continued support or in some cases identifying and joining new initiatives.

⁶³ Hinchliffe, Lisa Janicke. (March 9, 2020) "Subscribe to Open: A Mutual Assurance Approach to Open Access" <https://scholarlykitchen.sspnet.org/2020/03/09/subscribetoopen/>

⁶⁴ <https://about.muse.jhu.edu/news/mellon-grant-S20/>

⁶⁵ Audrey Watters, "Unglue.it: A Crowdfunded, E-Book Liberation Project," *Inside Higher Ed*, May 17, 2012. <https://www.insidehighered.com/blogs/hack-higher-education/unglueit-crowdfunded-e-book-liberation-project>; Lucy Montgomery, "Knowledge Unlatched: A Global Library Consortium Model for Funding Open Access Scholarly Books," *Cultural Science Journal* 7:2 (2015) <http://doi.org/10.5334/csci.68>.

⁶⁶ Hinchliffe, Lisa Janicke. (March 9, 2020) "Subscribe to Open: A Mutual Assurance Approach to Open Access" <https://scholarlykitchen.sspnet.org/2020/03/09/subscribetoopen/>

The Libraries currently participates in five collaborative funding projects:

- Reveal Digital (Independent Voices)
- *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development*
- Knowledge Unlatched
- Open Library of Humanities
- SCOAP³

[Independent Voices](#), available through Reveal Digital, is an open access collection of alternative press titles from the 1960s–1980s that includes complete runs of newspapers, magazines, and journals drawn from the special collections of source libraries. In 2021, the collection contained 19,675 issues comprising 524,646 pages. Other projects of Reveal Digital are: Diversity and Dissent, Understanding Hate in America, and American Prison Newspapers. In 2017 Temple made a one-time contribution to Independent Voices. In total, 123 libraries provided funding support⁶⁷ through either of two options: a one-time contribution or a five-year funding commitment.⁶⁸ Contributing libraries are given early access to materials. As of 2019, Reveal Digital’s collections are hosted on [JSTOR](#) under a new agreement with Ithaka.

[The Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development](#) is a peer-reviewed transdisciplinary international publication that became open access in January 2018. Funding support comes from university libraries and organizations such as the Agricultural Research Council in South Africa. It claims to be the world’s first community-supported journal. TUL had a traditional subscription to the journal before it became OA in 2018 and has continued to pay the same amount, now as a shareholder rather than a subscriber.

[Knowledge Unlatched \(KU\)](#) is an internationally-supported platform providing open access to scholarly books and journals. It uses a crowdfunding OA model through support from universities. Scholarly publishers agree to contribute selected books to the program in exchange for a flat fee. Final decision for inclusion is made by an editorial board. KU started in 2012 and in 2021 has over 2,300 books, 630 participating libraries, 100 publishers, and 50 journals. The model was updated in 2020 and now libraries can also support journals and even open infrastructure. Temple University Press contributes to KU and has published 16 books as open access with KU’s support. KU continues to

⁶⁷ Reveal Digital. “Independent Voices Funding Libraries” <http://revealdigital.com/independent-voices/independent-voices-funding-libraries/> Accessed May 4, 2021.

⁶⁸ Reveal Digital. “How It Works” <http://revealdigital.com/how-it-works/>

grow, with 30 new libraries joining in 2020. The 2021 round of funding “unlatched” 310 books and 31 journals, with the latter being released via the Subscribe to Open model.⁶⁹ There was some controversy when KU changed from being not-for-profit to for-profit and introduced their Open Research Library platform.⁷⁰ However, KU continues to be supported by most libraries.

[The Open Library of Humanities \(OLH\)](#) is a publishing platform that supports 28 peer-reviewed academic journals in humanities disciplines. Launched in 2013 with support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, it is funded by library memberships and publishes open access scholarship without author processing charges (APCs).

[SCOAP³](#) (Sponsoring Consortium for Open Access Publishing in Particle Physics) is a global partnership that coordinates funding to release physics journals as open access. SCOAP³ collects funding from its partners and distributes it to participating publishers. All SCOAP³-funded articles are published with a CC-BY copyright, which is retained by the author.⁷¹ Partners include over 3,000 libraries, research institutions and key funding agencies in 44 countries, and three intergovernmental organizations. The United States has the highest participation at 18.2%. SCOAP³ participation is managed by a representative organization; for the United States, LYRISIS manages all except for the members of The California Digital Library. In the most recent phase, 11 journals were funded via SCOAP³.

For this section of the report we have selected five peer libraries for comparison: MIT, Penn State, University of Pittsburgh (UPitt), University of Illinois Chicago (UIC), and Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU). These represent different types of peers. UIC, VCU, and UPitt are part of the Urban 13. Penn State and UPitt are regional peers, as large publicly-funded universities in our state. MIT is an aspirational peer, as a visible leader in supporting open education, with a slightly higher ARL ranking than Temple.

⁶⁹ Knowledge Unlatched (February 28, 2021). “Knowledge Unlatched Announces the Results of 2020 Pledging, Plans to Unlatch Hundreds of Titles in 2021” <https://knowledgeunlatched.org/2021/02/ku-results-of-2020-pledging-plans-to-unlatch-hundreds-of-titles-for-2021/>

⁷⁰ See, for example, Joseph Esposito, “Internal Contradictions with Open Access Books,” The Scholarly Kitchen Blog, June 4, 2019. <https://scholarlykitchen.sspnet.org/2019/06/04/internal-contradictions-with-open-access-books/> and “The Enclosure of Scholarly Infrastructures, Open Access Books, & The Necessity of Community,” <https://blog.scholarled.org/open-research-library/>.

⁷¹ SCOAP³ “What is SCOAP³?” <https://scoap3.org/what-is-scoap3/>

Of these five peer libraries, two (MIT and Penn State) contribute to all four projects. UPitt and UIC participate in three projects each. VCU contributed to one collection, and has voiced ethical objections to decisions made by Reveal Digital in the past. Specifically, they declined to fund the *Hate in America* collection due to the inclusion and method of presentation of Ku Klux Klan newspapers.⁷²

Of the five projects Temple supports, only SCOAP³ and Knowledge Unlatched are supported by all five peer libraries. Four of our peers support the Open Library of the Humanities and three support *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development*. Reveal Digital has the lowest level of support. Penn State and MIT support all four Reveal Digital Collections, VCU supports one, and UIC and UPitt do not participate at all.

Table 5
Selected Peer Institutions Compared to Temple Agreements

University	Reveal Digital	Journal of Agriculture...	Knowledge Unlatched	Open Library of Humanities	SCOAP3
Temple University	One (Independent Voices)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
VCU	One (Independent Voices)	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
UIC	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Penn State	All 4 projects via Big Ten AA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
UPitt	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
MIT	All 4 Projects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

⁷² Echterling, Amanda. "Ethical Dilemmas in Collection Development of Open Access Electronic Resources." *The Serials Librarian* 76.1-4 (2019): 141-146.
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/0361526X.2019.1571851>

Risks

As with all library material funding models (open access or traditional), there are risks and benefits to collaborative and crowdsourced funding. This type of funding is dependent on a critical mass of libraries investing in the content to keep the organization sustainable. If not enough libraries are interested in a collection and willing to invest funds, in some models the collection will not become open access or as with Reveal Digital, may not be created. In addition, there is a possibility that supporting libraries will commit and then leave in future years. If funding from these libraries can't be replaced, the price will most likely increase for the libraries that continue to participate.

While libraries provide funding to make content open access, in general libraries do not have any authority over the collaborative funding organization and platform. This leads to a number of risks. First, there is no guarantee of the stability of the hosting organization. There is also no guarantee that the hosting organization will maintain the same business model, as the situation with Knowledge Unlatched revealed. These risks lead to a need to regularly and vigilantly evaluate Temple's participation in ongoing collaborative funding with tools, such as the [Temple Guidelines for Supporting OA Collections](#).

Benefits

A major benefit of collaborative funding is that it provides an alternative to an author pays model. As discussed throughout this report, relying on authors to cover APCs leads to issues of equity for scholars without grant funding or institutional support. Collaborative funding may also be a more feasible alternative to BPCs for open access book publishing. BPC funding for books is expensive and authors often do not have grant funding to offset the cost.⁷³

Collaborative funding is also a method to move funds directly from subscriptions to supporting open access. This leads to less risk of budget fluctuations than found with other open access models, such as many transformative agreements, where the amount libraries pay depends on how many faculty publish in the agreed upon journals. Reinsfelder and Pike argue that collaborative funding is currently a better return on investment than APC funding. For example, \$25,000 of funding can pay APC for 12.5

⁷³ Bullock, C., & Watkinson, C. (2017). Opening the Book. *Serials Review*, 43(2), 153-157.

open access articles (using a low estimate of \$2,000 per article) or 471 new open access books at \$53 per book from Knowledge Unlatched.⁷⁴ Of course, this is not an apples to apples comparison.

Values

Collaborative funding is well-aligned with traditional academic library budgeting and values. In some cases, collaborative funding relies on the same procurement process and technology as subscriptions, so it does not require additional set up and staffing in the library.⁷⁵ **Collaborative funding schemes raise the question of whether Temple's priority is to convert our own researchers' work to open or to change the system overall.** Proponents of collaborative and crowdsourced funding say that library-funded APC programs "may be seen as providing a service primarily to authors, rather than the more traditional role of providing funds to make a work available to a community of readers."⁷⁶ Depending on the priorities of the Libraries, however, the fact that collaborative funding does not necessarily support Temple researchers' work may be viewed as negative.

Impact on the Publishing Ecosystem

According to FY21 budget figures, the Libraries is allocating the following amounts to these four collaborative and crowdsourced open access projects: *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development* (\$640); Open Library of Humanities (\$2,424); Knowledge Unlatched (\$15,860); and SCOAP³ (\$15,186). Choosing which initiatives will receive financial support from Temple University influences the open access ecosystem by either ensuring continued support for well-established projects, or providing opportunities for newer enterprises to develop.

Libraries might find greater strength and reliability in collaborative efforts, Naim, Brundy, and Samberg have noted: the "traditional article processing charge (APC) OA model has introduced sometimes unnavigable financial roadblocks, but cooperative arrangements premised on collective action principles can help to secure long-term stability and

⁷⁴ Reinsfelder, T. L., & Pike, C. A. (2018). Using library funds to support open access publishing through crowdfunding: Going beyond article processing charges. *Collection Management*, 43(2), 138-149.

⁷⁵ Bosshart, Sara. Guest Post – Subscribe to Open: The Why, The How and The What Now?! <https://scholarlykitchen.sspnet.org/2020/12/08/guest-post-subscribe-to-open-the-why-the-how-and-the-what-now/>

⁷⁶ Bullock, C. (2018). Crowdfunding for Open Access. *Serials Review*, 44(2), 138-141.

prevent the risk of free riding.⁷⁷ The collaborative model can also be used to influence and support smaller initiatives in the long term. LingOA, an effort to make several international linguistics journals open access, partnered with the Open Library of the Humanities to help ensure continued publication after the first five years.⁷⁸ Ideally, similar arrangements to the one between LingOA and OLH will help reduce the failure rate of journals converting to open access. A recent study of the longevity of open access journals over time reveals “174 OA journals that, through lack of comprehensive and open archives, vanished from the web between 2000 and 2019, spanning all major research disciplines and geographic regions of the world.”⁷⁹ When the Libraries supports initiatives like OLH, it enables the organization to continue growing and assisting other fee-free open access efforts.⁸⁰

Recommendations

Collaborative and crowdsourced funding schemes are an important strategy for advancing the transition to open. We expect the Libraries to continue to support such programs in the future. We recommend the following two areas of further investigation:
Strengthen the collaborative and crowdsourced funding evaluation process

Collaborative funding requires regular and vigilant evaluation using a tool, such as [Temple Guidelines for Supporting OA Collections](#), to determine continued participation. There are a number of reasons for this need. First, the stability of the hosting organization is not guaranteed. Second, the business model can shift, such as in the case of Knowledge Unlatched. Third, choosing which collections from collaborative funding organizations to support should focus on whether they will be useful to Temple affiliates, as is standard with collection decisions.

We also recommend that an ‘ethics’ component be added to any evaluative processes involved in Libraries’ open access collection development. The controversy over one of

⁷⁷ Naim, Kamran, Curtis Brundy, and Rachael G. Samberg. "Collaborative transition to open access publishing by scholarly societies." *Molecular Biology of the Cell* 32.4 (2021): 311-313.
<https://escholarship.org/content/qt2309z44m/qt2309z44m.pdf>

⁷⁸ Eve, Martin Paul and de Vries, Saskia and Rooryck, Johan (2017) *The Transition to Open Access: The State of the Market, Offsetting Deals, and a Demonstrated Model for Fair Open Access with the Open Library of Humanities*. In: Chan, Leslie and Loizides, Fernando (eds.) *Expanding Perspectives on Open Science: Communities, Cultures and Diversity in Concepts and Practices*. Amsterdam: IOS Press, pp. 118-128. ISBN 978-1- 61499-769-6.

⁷⁹ Laakso, Mikael, Lisa Matthias, and Najko Jahn. "Open is not forever: a study of vanished open access journals." arXiv preprint arXiv:2008.11933 (2020).
<https://arxiv.org/ftp/arxiv/papers/2008/2008.11933.pdf>

⁸⁰ Eve, M.P., Vega, P.C. and Edwards, C., 2020. Lessons From the Open Library of Humanities. *LIBER Quarterly*, 30(1), pp.1–18. DOI: <http://doi.org/10.18352/lq.10327>

the Reveal Digital collections speaks to potential concerns about whether or not all open access content aligns with the Libraries' mission and commitment to equity. Investigate new collaborative and crowdsourced funding opportunities

Seeking out collaborative funding opportunities for monographs would be one way for Temple to better support open access in the humanities and other book-centric disciplines. Transformative agreements and open access publishing funds (at least currently) focus on journals and journal articles and, therefore, tend to benefit STEM and other article-centric disciplines. Supporting collaborative funding is an opportunity to support open access equitably across the disciplines benefiting both academic book authors and readers. We recommend that the Scholarly Communications Strategic Steering Team (SCSST) continue to work with the Collections Strategy Steering Team (CSST) to create a list that prioritizes new collaborative and crowdsourced funding opportunities for Brian Scholar to consider.

Conclusion

This report has provided an overview of three strategies for using collections funds to advance the global transition to open access. We believe Temple University Libraries should pursue all three strategies to some degree, as following a variety of avenues will bring about a faster transition while ensuring that we are supporting a diverse array of open initiatives that benefit a wide range of disciplines and publication types. However, each strategy has potential concerns, and unfortunately there is much we do not know about how the open access publishing landscape will change in the next few years. By moving forward in a cautious and informed way, we hope to minimize possible negative effects on the publishing landscape and on our researchers.

We expect that in the coming years Temple University Libraries will continue to be approached by publishers and consortia with new proposals for funding open access initiatives. The following priorities should be considered across the board when evaluating any proposal:

- Innovative models for OA not based on APCs or BPCs
- Furthers supports for OA in disciplines that are less likely to have funded researchers
- Initiatives spearheaded by non-profit university presses or scholarly societies
- Comparable cost to a similar paywalled product, with the ability to predict change in cost over time

Note that this is not a checklist. We could conceivably fund initiatives that do not meet all the above criteria. However, with new payment schemes proliferating, these priorities should help us choose between them.

Furthermore, it is not enough to commit our money towards open access. We recommend that we make our commitments visible to Temple researchers and others via a dedicated page on the library website. While researching other institutions' involvement in open access initiatives/collaborative models, it became quite clear that this information can be difficult to find on some library sites and is often disjointed. We should look at other libraries such as [MIT](#), [University of Guelph](#), and [Iowa State University](#) as potential models for how we could make Temple University Libraries' support for open access more public.

Temple University Libraries is committed to doing its part to encourage and support publishers in transitioning more of the scholarly literature to open access. Although the paths to this transition are many and the landscape is complicated, we hope this report can provide some guidance as the Libraries continue to explore the most effective ways to support open access publishing.