

## **The cost of open access at the university of Antwerp**

In this paper we explain how the market of academic publishing is organised and how this relates to the cost of open access.

Apart from digitization and the advent of the internet, the discontent with the existing price barriers and technical barriers to the access to research articles induced many scholars to support open access. (Eger, T.; Scheufen, M., 2018)

Although Open Access sounded promising to counter these barriers the emergence of gold open access and especially the hybrid model to open access has led to an even greater pressure on library and university budgets for scholarly communication.

Open Access publishing has gained a significant share on the market of academic journal publishing. According to several studies (van der Graaf, M., 2017; Universities UK, 2017) Open Access journals have acquired a share of 15 to 30% of the academic journal market. Many of these Open Access journals use the 'author pays' publishing model whereby the author pays an article processing charge (APC) to the publisher in order to make an article freely available .

Another share of about 30% is assigned to the 'Hybrid model' to open access. In exchange for the payment of an APC a researcher is offered the possibility of retrieving an article from behind a paywall (journal subscription). The hybrid model can be disastrous for universities, as it actually forces them to pay the publishers twice. When there is a lack of offsetting arrangements universities must pay for the journal subscription, followed by additional payments to make works available through open access.

Apart from this changing landscape of scholarly communication more than 50% of all scholarly output is in one way or the other open access available (Science Metrix, 2018)

With these statistics in mind and the fact that research funders and governments are mandating researchers to make the output of publicly funded research open access available, it comes with no surprise that this evolution puts pressure on university budgets. In several countries this has already led to stalemates in negotiations between universities and publishers (most recently in Sweden, Germany and the Netherlands). (Else, H. 2018)

Based on data from the [institutional repository of the University of Antwerp](#) we calculated that for 2015–2018 more than €1.5 million was spent on article processing charges, with 49% going to journals working according to the hybrid model. The calculations are based on APC data available in the public domain.

### **Bibliography:**

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