Funding Article Processing Charges

SPEC Survey
Webcast Series
December 7, 2016
Introductions

Gail McMillan

Leslie O’Brien

Philip Young
Funding Article Processing Charges
Introduction to an evolving business model: Gail McMillan
Advantages to Libraries Funding APCs

- Expands the role of libraries
- Direct support to their authors
- Academic freedom: choices about where to publish
- Transparency not available in subscriptions
Goals for the FAPC Survey

- Document the current landscape in ARL libraries
- Identify strategies to address APCs
- Gather policies and procedures
- Inform those in the development stage
- Help assess existing FAPC models
- Reveal common or best administrative practices
- Enhance existing resources
Survey Participants

- 62% ARL members participated in survey
- 56% have, are planning, or previously funded APCs
  - 30% funding APCs
  - 8% planning
  - 18% previously
- 44% not planning
Topics We’ll Cover

● Funding and administration of APCs

● Policies, including eligible authors, funding limits, journal criteria

● Procedures and outreach

● APCs in the context of academic libraries worldwide
Administration and Funding of APCs: Leslie O’Brien
Funding and Administration

- Budget sources
  Library, Provost or Chancellor, Research Office
- Administration
  Scholarly Communications, Collections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fund amounts (US$)</th>
<th>FY16</th>
<th>FY17</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>$49,600</td>
<td>$40,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maximum</td>
<td>$263,750</td>
<td>$415,000</td>
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Cost of APCs

Range of APCs Paid
● Minimum $74
● Maximum $5,200

Funding Caps per Article
● Minimum $1,000
● Maximum $3,000

Mean Article Cost
● Minimum $276
● Maximum $2,524
Policies and Procedures

Funding limits

- Per article cap? (91% yes)
- Individual author limit? (85% yes)

Eligible authors

- Any author at the institution (61%)
- Certain categories only (39%)
APC Policies: Journal Criteria

● Hybrid journals
  • 84% of libraries do not fund
  • Double dipping
● Peer review
  • required by 70%
● Directory of Open Access Journals
● Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association
No APC Support

- 14 out of 77 libraries discontinued a fund
- 34 out of 77 libraries have no plans to start
- “Unsustainable”
- Pilot funding partners withdrew support
- Outside the library’s mission?
- Impact on open access publishing
Outreach and Recognition

Promoting the APC Fund

• Library liaisons
• Website
• Word of mouth
• Open Access Week/Open Education Week activities
Recognition of Authors

- 64% have no formal recognition
- Website
- Ceremony/event (OA Week activities)
- Institutional repository
External Open Access Initiatives

58 of 72 libraries fund external OA initiatives

• PeerJ
• Open Library of the Humanities
• SCOAP3
• Reveal Digital
• Open Textbook Network
• arXiv
• Knowledge Unlatched
• and more...
Discussion and Further Research: Philip Young
Discussion

- Number of library funds not scaling with APC growth
- Lack of campus-wide data
- Lack of open data
Future Research

- How can libraries create budget flexibility to accommodate APCs?
- What is the role of consortia in negotiating/funding/paying APCs?
- How can an efficient way of cost sharing be developed?
- How can the APC model accommodate unaffiliated/developing world researchers?
The Ongoing Debate

Envisioning a World Beyond APCs/BPCs
OA2020
Charleston Conference APC debate
Jisc on APCs and subscriptions (May 2016)
University of California Pay it Forward project
Questions & Discussion

Join the conversation by typing questions in the chat box in the lower left corner of your screen.
Thank you!
SPEC Survey Webcast on Funding Article Processing Charges

1. Welcome (Lee Anne)

Hello, I am Lee Anne George, coordinator of the SPEC Survey Program at the Association of Research Libraries, and I would like to thank you for joining us for this SPEC Survey Webcast. Today we will hear about the results of the survey on Funding Article Processing Charges. These results have been published in SPEC Kit 353.

Announcements (Lee Anne)

Before we begin there are a few announcements:

Everyone but the presenters has been muted to cut down on background noise. So, if you are part a group today, feel free to speak among yourselves.

We do want you to join the conversation by typing questions in the chat box in the lower left corner of your screen. We will answer as many questions as possible at the end of the presentation. I will read the questions aloud before the presenters answer them.

This webcast is being recorded and we will send registrants the slides and a link to the recording in the next week.

2. Introductions (Lee Anne)

Now let me introduce today’s presenters, who are on the faculty at Virginia Tech Libraries:

Gail McMillan is Director of Scholarly Communication

Leslie O’Brien is Director of Collections and Technical Services

Philip Young is Scholarly Communication Librarian

Use the hashtag ARLSPECKit353 to continue the conversation with them on Twitter.

Now, let me turn the presentation over to Gail.
3. Funding Article Processing Charges. Introduction to an evolving business model (Gail)

When we began our research into Open Access publishing policies we decided to look at the approach that requires authors to pay article processing charges (APC) for publishing their peer-reviewed articles in OA journals. The hope is that this relatively new business model for publishing would counter the constantly increasing journal subscriptions. Now APCs don’t feel like such a new model but that they are making scholarly literature more accessible and more affordable, impacting researchers and readers, libraries and publishers, academe, and the public alike.

4. Advantages to Libraries Funding APCs (Gail)

The first topic I’ll cover is the advantages to libraries funding APCs:

Funding APCs directly supports our university community members and expands the role of libraries.

It also develops lots of good will towards the library.

Funding APCs provides benefits to readers and to authors, that is all of the library’s immediate community of users. These funds remove barriers and give readers access to scholarly publications.

Authors gain a degree of academic freedom in choosing where to publish with less worry about the cost to read or the cost to publish.

Journals funded by APCs may provide a larger degree of transparency in their business operations than do subscription-based journals.

5. Goals for the FAPC Survey (Gail)

Our goals for the Funding Article Processing Charges Survey were to:

- Document what ARL libraries were doing in this area.
- We thought it would be helpful to identify strategies that address APCs and
• Gather policies and procedures
• The SPEC Kit would inform those in the development stage and
• Help assess existing FAPC models.
• Another goals was to reveal common or best administrative practices and to
• Enhance the body of resources available on our topic, funding APCs. We hope you’ll find the accompanying bibliography helpful.

6. Survey Participants (Gail)
77 of 124 ARL members participated in July 2016 survey

30% funding APCs: 23 ARL libraries

81% (29) started funding APCs w/in the last 6 years

8% / 6 are planning APC funds

18% / 14 previously funded APCs

44% / 34 do not plan to fund APCs.

Interestingly, the majority of ARL members (62%) responding to the survey have discontinued funding APCs or do not plan to fund them.

7. Topics We’ll Cover (Gail)

The topics we will cover in the rest of our presentation include:

• The funding and administration of APCs

• Highlight some of the policies, such as who are eligible authors and what are the funding limits and journal criteria to receive funding.

• We’re going to also share some information about procedures and outreach.

• Lastly, we’ll put APCs in the context of academic libraries worldwide and respond to your questions and welcome your comments.
Next, Leslie will discuss some of the survey findings.

8. Administration and Funding of APCs (Leslie)

Thank you, Gail.

Our survey included 42 questions, 28 of which were about funding, administration, policies, and procedures. In our analysis, we included answers from libraries that have discontinued their APC funds.

9. Funding and Administration (Leslie)

Our survey did not inquire about APCs paid directly by authors or departments from other sources of funding, so the responses only pertain to funding happening within the library.

97% of respondents said that the library contributed to and administered the allocation of APC funds. Other partners for the APC fund included the provost, chancellor, or president, research office, or an academic college or department.

Administration for the fund often resides with a unit or individual with scholarly communications duties, or with the collections unit, or is shared among these.

The median fund amount for fiscal year 17 dropped from the previous year, despite at least one library reporting a significant increase in their FY17 funding. You can see that the maximum jumped from $263,000 to $415,000. From the survey comments we learned that most libraries struggle to determine the appropriate funding level. People reported that the funding level was “arbitrary” or was allocated according to the previous year’s spend.

10. Cost of APCs (Leslie)

The funding amounts for APCs vary greatly. Again, all the figures are in US $.

The lowest APC reported was $74 and the highest was $5,200. It’s important to note that the library didn’t necessarily pay the total amount for the highest APCs. 91% of the respondents place a cap on the APC amount that they will fund. So even though $5,200 is the highest reported cost per article, funding caps on per article
charges resulted in the author having to make up the difference after the library’s share was paid.

Using the amounts libraries gave us, we calculated the mean article cost ranged from $276 to about $2,500.

100% of the respondents told us that articles in science disciplines were most frequently funded. From the comments we got it appears that medicine, biology, and life sciences were the disciplines most often receiving funding.

11. Policies and Procedures (Leslie)

We asked for data about policies and procedures. Most libraries supplied us with links to their policies and procedures, and these are included in the SPEC Kit. Questions we asked had to do with funding caps, eligible authors, and their criteria for which journals could be funded.

FUNDING LIMITS: As we mentioned previously, 91% of libraries capped the amount paid per article, and this cap ranged from $1,000 to $3,000.

In addition, 85% of the respondents place a cap on either the annual dollar amount or the number of articles for individual authors that they will fund every year. The dollar cap on authors ranged from $1,000 to $6,000. In the comments, we heard that some libraries restrict authors to one or two article awards per year.

ELIGIBLE AUTHORS: We asked libraries which authors on their campus are eligible to receive APC funds. Just over 60% of the respondents indicated that funds were available to anyone affiliated with the university. About 40% of the libraries fund certain categories of authors. Most frequently excluded from funding are undergraduate students.

JOURNAL CRITERIA: 84% of the respondents do not fund APCs for hybrid journals, we’ll talk a bit more about that in the next slide.

12. APC Policies: Journal Criteria (Leslie)

So as we said, 84% of the respondents do not fund APCs for hybrid journals. We received many comments on this question. The most frequent reason mentioned
for not funding hybrid journals was the issue of double dipping. This refers to the institution paying APCs in addition to the full subscription price of the journal. One library commented that by not funding hybrid journals, they want to “incentivize publishing in and support for fully OA journals.”

In an effort to attract more authors from non-STEM disciplines to its APC fund, one library decided to pay APCs to hybrid journals in the arts and humanities.

More than two-thirds of the respondents reported denying paying APCs for journals not listed in a registry like DOAJ. Further, libraries expect the publishers they fund to adhere to a code of conduct such as is required for membership in OASPA.

A continuing theme we see in the comments is that libraries are constantly tweaking their funding policies in order to stretch their allocations to benefit more authors.

13. No APC Support (Leslie)

We asked why libraries discontinued their APC fund or chose not to start one. As we mentioned earlier, 62% of the libraries responding were in this camp.

The overwhelming reason for not having a fund was lack of money and/or administrative support. The word “unsustainable” showed up in many of the comments.

Almost 60% of the libraries began their APC fund with a pilot project of some type, usually with support from outside the library. Our survey results indicate that in many cases as the project moves out of the pilot phase, the seed money from outside sources goes away. Without this additional funding, many libraries cannot continue to fund APCs from their existing budgets.

Besides lack of money, other common reasons for not supporting APCs is a lack of confidence in the model, and uncertainty about the libraries’ role in this process. In some cases the library sees APC funding as outside its mission, especially as authors often have grant funding or departmental support to cover APCs. Some libraries
may want to wait for a university-wide APC policy before committing funds to new initiatives.

Finally, skepticism about how APCs advance the goal of open access was pervasive in the comments.

14. Outreach and Recognition (Leslie)

Our respondents rely on a variety of methods of making their communities aware of APC funding. This slide lists the most common ways.

A couple of libraries mentioned that they work with campus faculty councils to make faculty more aware of open access publishing.

15. Recognition of Authors (Leslie)

We received numerous comments throughout the survey responses having to do with demand for APC funds exceeding the resources. In fact, several libraries stated the fund was a victim of its own success and had to be discontinued because funding was exhausted. There was only one library who said they abandoned their APC fund due to lack of author interest.

But the fact that most libraries don’t formally promote the results of their APC fund surprised us. 21 out of 33 respondents said they have no formal recognition program for funded articles. The libraries who said they do recognize authors do so mainly on their website or by collecting the articles in the Institutional Repository.

There may be opportunities here for libraries to work with the funded authors to show the impact of their work, and to demonstrate if and how they have benefited from the library’s role in directly supporting their research.

16. External Open Access Initiatives (Leslie)

We were interested in knowing what types of external initiatives libraries are directly supporting beyond funding APCs. We were specifically looking for things like memberships, subsidies, and open educational resources. Here are some of the initiatives that libraries listed.
Of the 58 responding libraries, over half support memberships, journal subsidies, and open access monograph publishing. A few libraries mentioned HathiTrust in this category, which we had not considered, but is a type of open access initiative. A smaller number, 21 libraries, indicate that they are supporting open educational resources.

And now Philip will talk about some of the broader issues around APCs.

17. Discussion and Further Research (Philip)

Thank you, Leslie.

18. Discussion (Philip)

One interesting aspect of the survey is that library funds are not increasing at the same rate that the APC model is increasing in journals. Hybrid OA in particular has expanded to include more than 8,000 journals, and according to Walt Crawford’s research, just over half of OA articles are published using the APC model. This suggests a degree of demand among authors that is not being met by libraries, and evidence suggests that libraries with APC funds are supporting only a fraction of the APC spending on their campuses. Due to the distributed nature of APC funding, campus-wide data that might support internal decisions is lacking. In addition, the lack of open APC data from libraries means that research is largely dependent on open data from European libraries. Harvard recently became the first North American contributor to the Open APC project, and Virginia Tech plans to contribute soon.

19. Future Research (Philip)

Because the APC model is relatively new and still developing, there are numerous research opportunities available that would help libraries develop programs and policies. Here are three from our suggestions in the executive summary. One of the biggest questions is whether there are common strategies to incorporate APC funding into library budgets. Our survey showed that over half of the funds received some external support, but lacking this, how can libraries create budget flexibility for supporting OA? Is there a role for consortial support of APCs while avoiding
non-transparent bundling? Since there seems to be relatively little cost-sharing today, how can costs be shared to reduce the strain on library APC funds? And finally, how can the APC model accommodate researchers who cannot afford to publish, such as those who are unaffiliated with an institution and/or from the developing world? Currently, most OA journals that charge APCs have waiver policies, but how inclusive are they, and how could they be implemented without raising per-article APC costs?

20. The Ongoing Debate (Philip)

Our survey indicated that there is a deep divide among ARL libraries on supporting APCs, and APCs continue to be a hotly debated topic. We wanted to highlight some of those debates for those who may have missed them. Last month Kansas University hosted a forum called “Envisioning a World Beyond APCs/BPCs”, and 2 hours of video from that forum are available online. The OA2020 project seeks to flip scholarly publishing to APCs, and there have been lively exchanges between Jeffrey Mackie-Mason and David Shulenberger on the viability of the APC model. Also last month, there was a forum at the Charleston Conference on APCs that was livestreamed, and video should be available soon. There are also two reports that may be of interest, one from the UK on APCs and subscriptions, and the University of California’s Pay It Forward report, which evaluates the costs involved in shifting from subscriptions to an APC model. The Pay It Forward report is of particular interest for ARL libraries, because it estimates that a flip from subscriptions to APCs may increase costs for research-intensive universities if library funds are the only source of support. If grant or other funding is included, then a flip to APCs would result in similar or lower costs than subscriptions. This is one reason why further investigation into cost-sharing might be a useful research area.

21. Questions & Discussion (Lee Anne)

We welcome your questions. Please join the conversation by typing questions in the chat box in the lower left corner of your screen. I will read the questions aloud before the presenters answer them.

20. Thank you (Lee Anne)
Thank you all for joining us today to discuss the results of the funding article processing charges SPEC survey. You will receive the slides and a link to the recording in the next week.