

# Updates on Open Access Journals

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The purpose of this session was to offer inspiration and guidance for organizations that are considering launching an open access (OA) journal and to inform attendees about the variety of OA models publishers and societies are leveraging, and how each are performing. Four speakers shared their organizations' success stories during this session and the lessons learned developing and maintaining a sustainable OA program. The speakers also presented information related to the different methods for generation of content for OA journals.

Helen Atkins, Director of Publishing Services at the Public Library of Science (PLOS), was the first speaker and she focused her presentation on what is beyond OA and where PLOS is heading next. Helen started by explaining that PLOS is a nonprofit publisher with a mission to accelerate progress in science and medicine by leading the transformation in research communication. As a result, PLOS is taking initiatives to increase research transparency through open access, open data, and credit. In 2016, PLOS published more than 27 000 articles contributed by authors from more than 190 countries. The articles have had over 12 million monthly online views and 2 million monthly downloads.

Helen explained that PLOS journals require authors to make all data related to the findings described in their manuscript fully available without restriction. When submitting a manuscript online, authors must provide a Data Availability Statement describing compliance with PLOS's policy.

Finally, Helen highlighted some digital tools that facilitate better credit and recognition such as ALMs, ORCID, CRediT taxonomy, and Data citations. Helen mentioned that PLOS was one of the original group of publishers to sign the ORCID

open letter in January 2016. They were collecting ORCIDs in Editorial Manager, but many were not authenticated. PLOS finally made ORCID a requirement for corresponding authors at the beginning of December 2016.

PLOS has adopted the CRediT Taxonomy of author contributions: The submitting author will be responsible for completing this information at submission, and it is expected that all authors will have reviewed, discussed, and agreed to their individual contributions ahead of submission. Helen showed an example of how author contributions are published with the final article.

Suzanne Kettley, Executive Director of Canadian Science Publishing (CSP) presented updates on CSP's OA journals: *Arctic Science*, *FACETS* (Canada's first multidisciplinary OA journal), and *Anthropocene Coasts*. CSP is a modest-size publisher facing challenges such as global decline in subscriptions and the institution of OA requirements by Canadian funding agencies. CSP responded to those challenges by giving the authors different options for OA: 1) Authors could publish in one of the three fully OA journals, or 2) authors could choose the OpenArticle option in a subscription journal.

Suzanne presented results of an author survey on OA funding to explore whether their desire to publish OA was affected by their financial ability. Almost 70% would publish their research as OA but only 10–20% have the required funds.

CSP has an active content development program. When launching OA journals, CSP needed to generate both awareness of the new journals and new submissions. Their efforts included educational campaigns, promotional contests, article-level promotion, conference attendance, special issues, partnerships, and expanding the scope of the journal to react to the needs of the scientific community as disciplines grow (i.e., *FACETS*, originally launched with 6 subject pillars, is adding a 7th).

For OA journals, it is important to look beyond the impact factor and find other metrics, such as Altmetrics, that authors can take back to a granting or tenure committee. Also, the ability to reach a broader audience is appreciated by OA authors. CSP provides plain-language summaries on a special platform.

Finally, Suzanne outlined the next steps such as expanding *FACETS*, partnerships and community engagement, educational campaigns, and joining Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association (OASPA) and Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ).

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The third speaker was Darla Henderson, Assistant Director of the Open Access Programs at the American Chemical Society (ACS). Darla kicked off her presentation by identifying ACS as the world's largest scientific society and one of the world's leading sources of scientific information with 176 000 members. The ACS publishes over 40 000 manuscripts per year, of which, paid OA represents 1% of content in hybrid journals. ACS has adopted several strategies/initiatives to drive OA content. Darla explained the first of such strategies, expanding options. In the past three years, ACS expanded OA outreach, launching several new programs and journals, including the following:

- *ACS Central Science* (ACS' first fully OA journal): Publishes research that highlights the centrality of chemistry
- ACS Author Rewards: A program worth \$60 000 000 in credits to be used by ACS authors over two years to assist in the purchase of OA options
- ACS AuthorChoice: ACS provides various licenses to help authors choose the best option that suits their needs
- *ACS Omega*: ACS's second fully OA journal is aimed at publishing technically sound research with a focus on expedited editorial decision making

Darla elaborated on *ACS Omega* by mentioning that it is publishing about 600 manuscripts/year right now (about 1.5% of ACS's total published manuscripts). In its first partial year, it published about 100 manuscripts (or 0.25% of the total published manuscripts).

The next strategy Darla discussed was streamlining workflows, including adding services such as ORCID, Ringgold, and Rightslink. The biggest improvement would be a direct system for moving a paper from one ACS journal to another.

Another strategy is that ACS has embraced partners by joining OA organizations and initiatives, such as CHORUS, and worked with their community (e.g., significant discounts for ACS members and authors at institutions that subscribe to ACS's All Publications package). ACS also gives a 50% discount to members. Their platinum OA journal has an average article processing charge (APC) around \$800. They also give two APC credits to authors who publish with them. As part of the previously mentioned streamlining workflows, Copyright Clearance Center manages all of these processes for ACS.

Also, ACS has agreements with funders/foundations to support OA (possibly to cover the cost for authors who cannot pay). These agreements resulted in ACS establishing new relationships with funding agencies and new key stakeholders. In addition to that, ACS partners with authors to allow them to experience OA and understand its benefits.

Other initiatives ACS has undertaken add value including promotional activities and programs such as ACS Editors' Choice. This is a program in which ACS journal editors recommend articles that should be OA and ACS then sponsors one new OA article every day of the year. ACS deposits published articles with aggregators, and any updates, and tracks data on the articles.

Feedback from authors has indicated true culture change: Almost 50% of the chemistry authors in the US and Japan, 40% in China, and a surprising 68% in Germany and the UK indicated that they published their research in a fully OA journal.

The key ACS outcomes of the OA initiatives have been revenue growth in OA well ahead of the science, technology, and medicine marketplace, establishing a diverse revenue stream, growth in the output of OA from 1% to 7% of newly published articles in hybrid journals. Also, the new fully OA journals are now publishing content not previously captured (i.e., growth in submissions) while established hybrid journals continue to serve communities in a different environment.

When Patty Baskin, Executive Editor, *Neurology*, American Academy of Neurology (AAN), joined the AAN in 2007, she worked with the editors to devise a strategic plan. Some of the elements included putting AAN in the position of 1) increasing international outreach, 2) expanding AAN's portfolio to subspecialties in neurology, 3) reaching new audiences in basic science areas related to neurologic disease, and 4) developing new sustainable business models for publishing. According to this plan, two new OA journals and one hybrid OA journal have launched within the last few years. Patty explained that there is a lot to think about when launching a new journal. The process starts with editor and staff selection; a dedicated editor with a vision is a must. Next, there were operational meetings to design the new workflow (dedicated staff). However, the most important step was content planning as getting the first few articles was difficult. The editor had to solicit content from colleagues and papers submitted to *Neurology* were trickled down to the subspecialty journals. This movement benefitted from re-using the reviews for the 2nd and 3rd journals, although additional reviews were sought.

Baskin then explained why AAN launched specialty/ niche journals rather than just one general OA journal. *Neurology* has received many papers in some subspecialties (e.g., multiple sclerosis and other neurological diseases, and genetics topics). Their top-tier journal was rejecting many high-quality papers, enough to start new journals. Market research before the launches indicated that the new OA journals would be filling a gap, as rejected papers were being accepted, published, and then cited in other journals.

The major challenge that editors faced was how to encourage authors to submit to a new journal that has no

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reputation, is not yet indexed in PubMed, and does not yet have an impact factor. Also, having to pay for papers to be published as opposed to free publication in *Neurology* required a change in the mindset of authors. Consequently, the promotional activities included calls for papers, increasing visibility at conferences, reaching out to potential authors, applying for acceptance in PubMed, and soliciting well-known members in the research areas for editorial boards.

Those efforts resulted in the new journals having a large number of international submissions (from 43 nations), international editorial boards, and a rapid growth in manuscripts submitted per year (which resulted in a decreasing acceptance rate each year). The journals are now deposited in PubMed, DOAJ, Scopus, and Web of Science.

Patty's final advice was for publishers to look for ways to reduce the APCs for authors and to be patient when starting a new OA journal.