

The View from the Other Side: The Perspective of a Native Open Access Publisher

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Founded in 1996, MDPI have grown to become the largest open access (OA) publisher globally, publishing more than 160,000 papers across 360 journals in 2020. The continued transition to an open research landscape has opened up many benefits for MDPI and other OA publishers. Plan S has helped to accelerate the transition to open, and for many OA publishers this had led to increased demand and the opportunity to innovate and invest in improving services to authors. The focus of Plan S on price transparency frameworks has also helped to increase trust between publishers and authors/funders.

However, despite close alignment with national and funder mandates, it is important to recognize some of the ongoing challenges faced by OA publishers. Despite an acceleration towards an open research workflow, OA publishers and their innovative new business models still face ongoing resistance and criticism from some sectors of the academic community. It is also important to ensure that the requirements of OA publishers are fully represented. In recent times, there has been much focus on 'transformative agreements' as the most immediate model for achieving the transition to OA. Focusing exclusively on 'Publish and Read' deals between subscription publishers and institutions comes at the expense of neglecting OA publishers, who have played a major role in moving scientific publishing away from a subscription-based model. Going forward it is important to ensure that there is a more balanced approach to working towards open research strategies.