

## **Shaping Open Access, creating transparency**

### **Appeal for disclosure of publication fees**

*The Alliance of Science Organizations in Germany recommends scientific institutions to disclose payments of Open Access publication fees to make the cost structure of the Open Access publication market clearly recognizable.*

Under the keyword of Open Access, the aim is to make scientific publications available to users via the Internet so they can be used without technical or legal restriction and free of costs. This practice has increased in significance globally over recent years. It opens new possibilities for researchers to access knowledge and information, and at the same time improves knowledge transfer in society, politics and the economy. Journal publishers have reacted to the demand for Open Access with business models in which scientific institutions and funding organizations reimburse publishers for their services by the payment of "Article Processing Charges" (APC).

The transformation process from the traditional subscription system to Open Access makes it necessary for scientific institutions to take into account the costs for the licensing of digital contents together with expenditures for scientific publishing. For this, the costs of Open Access publishing must be accounted for – and at a broader level than that of an individual institution. If different institutions make their payments for Open Access publishing publicly accessible, the financial flows from the institutions to different publishing houses, for example, can be compared and the time history of the costs observed and analyzed. This will make financial flows more transparent and comprehensible, and promote competition in a future Open Access publication market. For this reason, confidentiality clauses in framework agreements for Open Access publishing fees should be avoided.

The "Open APC Initiative" already provides a platform which allows publication costs to be aggregated and publicly documented, and cost structures analyzed. The corresponding data is entered there in machine-readable form and made available under open licences (Open Data), so that the costs can be compared and investigated across institutions.

In order to make cost structures transparent and thus promote competition, the Alliance of Science Organizations in Germany recommends scientific institutions to participate in the "Open APC Initiative".

German scientific organizations are actively working to shape the change towards Open Access in the scientific publishing system. They have been working together within the framework of the Priority Initiative "Digital Information" since 2008 to support scientists in the distribution of their research results in Open Access.

Information on the Priority Initiative "Digital Information":

<http://www.allianzinitiative.de/en>

Information on the "Open APC Initiative":

<http://dini.de/projekte/open-apc-initiative>

<http://treemaps.intact-project.org/> (data visualization)

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