

Two perspectives on offsetting from one of the earliest experiments

Austria and IOP Publishing

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About the Austrian Academic Consortium (AAC)

- Founded in 2005
- Coordinates the acquisition, licensing and administration of databases and electronic journals and books
- 58 Members: 18 Universities, 8 Private Universities, 18 Universities of Applied Studies and 14 others
- Currently over 60 products are administered via the consortium
- Since 2014 Open Access is one of its major objectives
- First offsetting deal with IOP in 2014

Why did Austria make its first offsetting agreement with IOP?

- Mandated by FWF and other major funders
- Enabling more Austrian academics to publish on an Open Access basis
- Avoiding having to pay for both publication and access (double dipping)
- Strong working relationship with IOP, good mutual trust

Why did IOP make its first offsetting agreement with Austria?

- IOP long engaged in open access publishing
 - *New Journal of Physics* launched in 1998
 - Hybrid model since 2011
 - Strong engagement with open access through Steven Hall's participation in Finch group in UK
- IOP already discussing an offsetting pilot with UK universities
 - Pilot in UK also launched in 2014, with 22 universities
- FWF and KEMÖ approached IOP
- Strong working relationship between KEMÖ and IOP
 - Good basis for running an experiment together

Why did IOP develop an offsetting model?

- Response to librarians and funders who wanted to support gold open access but were concerned about the additional costs as first-movers
 - In any transition to a gold open access model there will be winners and losers, at local and global levels
- Development of a scalable and sustainable offsetting model
 - Offsetting models developed by other publishers at that point, e.g. voucher schemes, neither effective nor scalable

How does the IOP model work?

- 100% of hybrid APC payments are offset against subscription prices and licence fees
- Balance between local and global offsetting
 - Sliding scale of local and global offsets based on the proportion of hybrid articles in IOP's subscription journals
 - At low levels of hybrid, most of offset is local, in refunds against licence fees; balance of offset is global through reductions in subscription and package prices
 - At 4% hybrid, 90% local offset, 10% global
 - At 14% hybrid, 70% local offset, 30% global
- At higher levels of hybrid, all customers will expect a price reduction, even if they do not support gold oa themselves

How well has IOP's model worked?

- Austrian agreement renewed for 2017-2019, and extended from FWF funding to institutional funding at KEMÖ members
- UK agreement renewed from 2017 and now covering 30 universities (all research-intensive universities in physics, with one exception)
 - One UK university fully offset its licence fee in 2016
 - Very substantial growth in open access publishing with IOP by UK authors since 2014; mostly hybrid
- Two new national agreements in 2017, currently being finalised

Challenges to IOP model

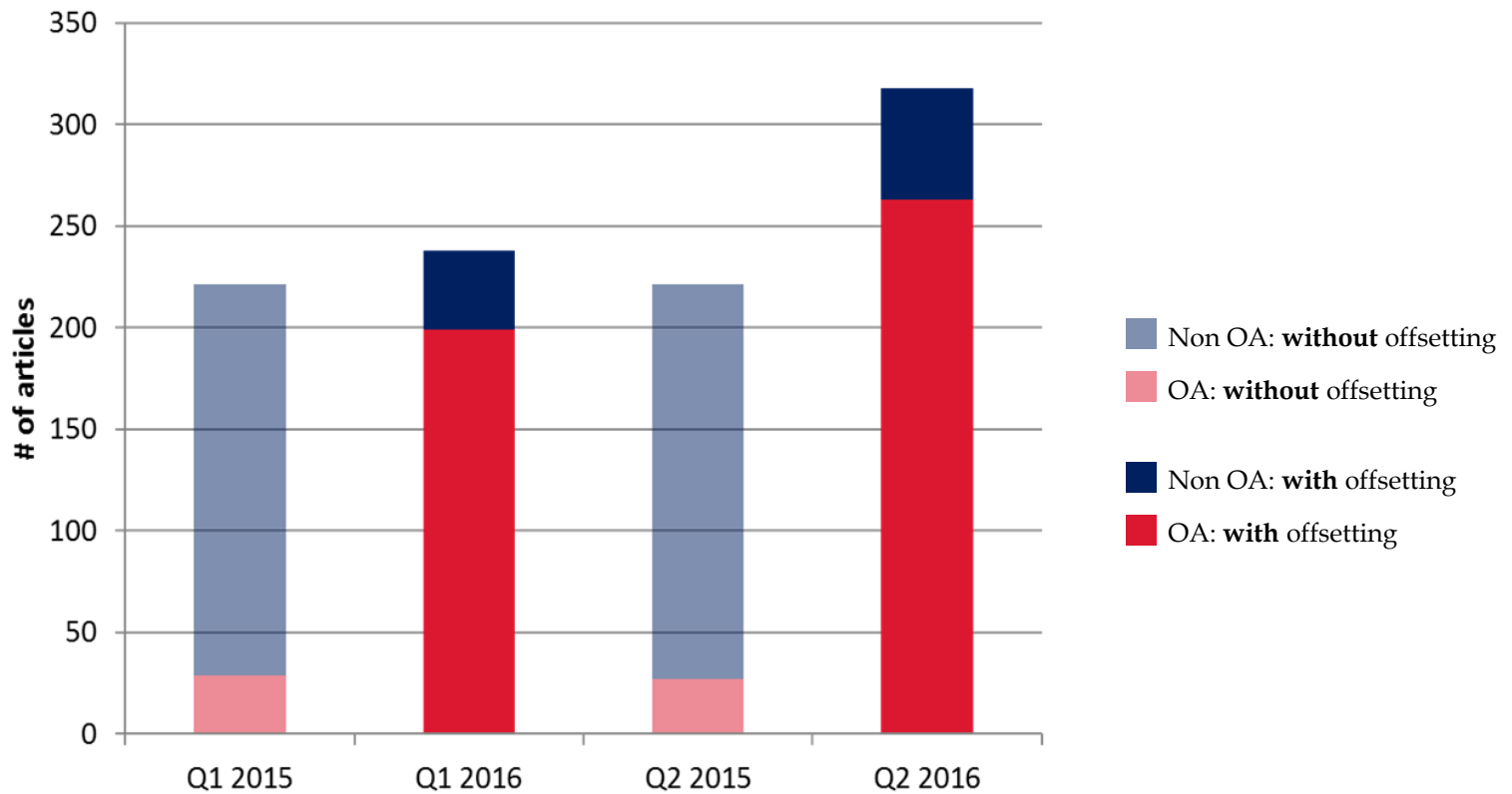
- More labour-intensive than some offsetting agreements
- Considerable work for IOP in identifying qualifying articles/authors
- Would be most effective (especially in any agreement not centrally funded) if licence fees aligned more closely with value (e.g. measured by research-intensity in physics, FTE in physics, etc.), rather than with historical print spend
 - More of licence fee could be offset for more institutions
 - IOP has just concluded first national licence with complete rebasing of licence fees according to value

The Austrian approach to offsetting models

We welcome offsetting models in general but those currently in place are suboptimal in two aspects:

1. Workflow of offsetting process
2. Global reduction

Article output comparison



The Austrian approach to offsetting models - Workflow

Workflow should be as simple as possible!

- Challenges on publisher's side:
 - identifying eligible authors and articles
 - communication with authors
 - communication with APC funding institution
- Challenges on APC funding institution's side:
 - verifying/ approval of articles asap (publication delay)
 - communication with authors
 - communication with publishers

Recommendations for workflows will be published by [ESAC](#) (Efficiency and Standards of Article Charges) soon.

The Austrian approach to offsetting models - Global offsetting

- Global offsetting is not targeted and not transparent enough so far
- IOP's sliding scale model has potential, but it must be guaranteed that institutions funding hybrid APCs will not have to pay more and more as OA uptake increases (e.g. not to pay more in the 70/30 distribution vs. the 90/10). Otherwise early adopting APC funders have to pay a disproportionate amount for the transition to Gold OA that they themselves are pioneering.

Where do we go from here?

Transition to Open Access is dependent on

- Implementation of effective workflows between publishers and institutions/funders, reducing friction for authors
- Offsetting models which work for both publishers and institutions/funders and which scale with open access growth
- Wider support for Open Access by funders and institutions, in Europe and beyond