Heading for the Open Road: Costs and benefits of transition in Scholarly Communications

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Background

Aim:
To improve understanding of the dynamics of transitions needed to improve access to research papers

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Funders:
Methodology Overview

Scenarios
- GREEN
- GOLD
- DELAYED
- LICENSING
- TRANS.

Analysis

Changes in costs
• Steady state costs
• ‘One-off’ and Ongoing costs of transition

Drivers
Policy implications
Risks

Change in Access → Economic Benefit

Results:
UK Cost-benefit analysis of alternative
Scenarios

**GREEN**

**Driver:** Increased rates of deposit driven by enforcement of Funder and Institutional mandates

**Assumptions:** 40-60% deposit (funder mandate); 15–30% (institutional); Embargo periods (6-24 mth)

**GOLD**

**Driver:** Increase global coordination between research communities and funders.

**Assumptions:** Proportion published via gold: 40% (Bmed); 15% (ST); 5% (AH)
One-off transaction Costs

- Green: £2.3 million
- Green Zero: £10.9 million
- Gold (higher APC): £7.1 million
- Gold (lower APC): £7.1 million

£ million
Ongoing costs

- Ongoing costs for Green, Green Zero, Gold (higher APC), and Gold (lower APC) are shown in a line graph.

- The graph displays the costs in £ million from 2011 to 2023.

- The graph indicates a decrease in Green Zero costs from 2011 to 2013, followed by stabilization from 2015 onwards.

- Gold (higher APC) shows an increase from 2011 to 2015, then stabilization.

- Gold (lower APC) exhibits a decrease from 2011 to 2013, followed by stabilization.

- The Green line indicates a decrease from 2011 to 2015, then stabilization.

- The Green Zero, Gold (higher APC), and Gold (lower APC) lines show stabilization from 2015 onwards.

- The graph helps visualize the financial implications of each category over the specified years.
Costs per unit of access

- Green: £22.50
- Green Zero: £54.10
- Gold Higher APC: £50.80
- Gold Lower APC: £(67.10)
Conclusions

- Could substantially increase access and is cost-effective since infrastructure already built
- Low transition/outcome risks, but major risks to system from potential subscription cancellations
Conclusions

- Sustainable business model and also offers improved economic efficiency (transparency, lower barrier to entry)
- Lower net costs to UK academic institutions, provided average APCs are low enough.
- But significant transition risks: funding “hump”, APC pricing, UK/Global take-up