Responses to the Question: “Five Years from Now, How Will You Know Whether Your Transformative Deal Has Been a Success?”

Wiley/DEAL

Jay Flynn (Wiley)

Five years from now we will really have “moved the needle” on Open Access. This means that a far greater number of total papers from Germany will be published OA in both gold and hybrid journals. This will be because researchers will have realized the benefits of OA (speed, reach, impact, transparency) on a large scale. For Wiley, we will demonstrate how a highly selective OA journal developed in partnership with DEAL can thrive. And, because we will be deeply involved in shaping the future of scholarly communications with regard to Open Data in particular, we will have substantially evolved the role publishers play in disseminating research.

Ralf Schimmer (DEAL)

Responding to your question is a bit of a challenge. Not because I do not have a clear idea of how to define success with regard to transformative agreements, but because I see the success of any agreement already at its entry point.

Transformative agreements come with a purpose: to offer a cost-neutral setting in which the logic, operations, and money flows of subscriptions can begin to be disaggregated and shifted to support open access publishing of an institution or, as in the DEAL-Wiley case, country’s outputs. But this purpose is larger than any single agreement alone; success is assessed by observing their uptake, proliferation and continuous evolution as new benchmarks are achieved. It is the moment of departure that is the key success indicator of any single agreement.

Yet even taken together in their many iterations they do not define a new standard, but rather characterize a transition, as they build a bridge to the future. Real success will come when these agreements are no longer needed, because scholarly communication will have new modes of operating based on open access.

Five years from now, if transformative agreements were no longer needed, that would be the ultimate success.

Incidentally, the DEAL-Wiley agreement set a number of key benchmarks on which we (Projekt DEAL) and others can build:

- Money no longer flows directly to the publisher in lump-sums, but costs are disaggregated and based purely on actual publishing output (per-article PAR fee).
- The PAR fee, set at EUR 2,750, when multiplied by the expected number of articles published a year (based on publishing trends), are a cost-neutral reflection of the previous total subscription expenditure; former ‘hybrid’ APCs have been reined in and removed from the equation.
- While the total amount in PAR fees may be on the level of the previous subscription spend, the German research community receives, in return, greater value for money: open access
publishing and perpetual reading access to the full Wiley online portfolio extended to all DEAL institutions

- At an operational level, the agreement has instituted certain technical obligations on the part of the publisher that are necessary to support open access publishing workflows, from submission interface customization, to metadata requirements, to tracking author affiliation, invoicing and reporting.

**Springer/JISC**

**Renee Reagon (Springer)**

- Agreement allows UK article output in these journals to be published immediate OA
- Agreement allows members unlimited access to non-OA content in these journals
- Agreement has had broad scope membership within the UK including universities with differing research intensity, varied disciplinary focus, as well as research institutes. These members have decided to renew the agreement and some lesser funded areas have been able to publish immediate OA where they had not previously
- The agreement has enabled and supported OA policy and compliance for the UK, its institutions and authors
- There has been a constructive and transparent ongoing negotiation and communication between us and the consortium, including member institutions and funders where relevant
- There has been continuous engagement and reporting throughout the agreement term, including joint problem solving where necessary
- The workflow has been simple and efficient and saved time, effort and money for institutions, administrators and individual researchers
- Institutional needs have driven the build and iterative improvement of systems and reporting and these improvements have made further time and cost savings for institutions and authors
- The terms and costs of the agreement have been sustainable for both parties for the term of the agreement
- The agreement has supported the transformation to OA on an institutional and regional level
- The articles published through this agreement have had an increased impact on other research through being published OA.

The success of Springer Nature’s transformative agreement with JISC in the UK would be driven by having a broad scope of members who have been able to publish their output in Springer Open Choice Journals as immediate OA alongside unlimited access to non-OA content. The agreement would have enabled and supported OA policy and compliance for its members, and a simple well-regarded workflow would have saved time and money for institutions, administrators and authors. The terms and costs of the agreement have been sustainable for both parties and this success would have been achieved through ongoing constructive and transparent dialogue between publisher, consortia and members.

**Anna Vernon (Jisc)**

Jisc were one of the first consortia to pilot a Compact read and publish agreement and it has been successful in the aims the sector set us which were to:
• Contain the costs of publication and subscription access.
• Reduce the cost and administration barriers to hybrid OA publishing and support compliance with UK funder policies.

The agreement provides us with a framework to transition away from the legacy print model to a new OA model in a cost neutral way. So far, we have achieved the cost neutral aspect and institutions have benefitted from significant cost avoidance - 37 institutions published articles to a greater value than their reading and publishing fee combined. The agreement completely removes ‘spend in the wild’ - APCs paid by individual researchers, e.g., via a credit card. Compact is frequently referred to as an exemplary read and publish agreement by our members and has accelerated UK OA output with Springer. 85% of all UK articles published in Springer journals were published OA in 2019 and of those 99.97% met funder requirements including deposition in PubMed Central and the application of CC-BY licences.

However, we haven’t yet achieved the move away from legacy pricing to a new framework or flipped the full portfolio of Springer titles to OA. With other Compact participants in Austria, Sweden, Germany and the Netherlands we monitor our publishing in Compact journals, global levels of OA to identify commonalities and candidate journals to flip to fully open access.

In five years time we’d like to continue to meet our 3 aims and include the other hybrid titles published by Springer Nature within Compact. More generally we will have negotiated agreements that make it easier for fully OA and smaller, society publishers to offer national agreements that remove friction to authors and institutions.

We are also working with the sector on new allocation models for pricing for open access agreements so we will have in place a new allocation methodology that will enable institutions to move to paying for publishing services that will challenge elements that relate to legacy, subscription business, such as upfront payments, guaranteed amounts and ensure that costs relate to production costs and services. We will have in place an agreed and active framework for flipping titles to full open access at the global / consortia level.

Much of this is dependent on a global shift but essential to this is that publishers and institutions work together globally to design affordable, sustainable and policy-compliant open access options.

Elsevier/VSNU-UKB

Sacha Boucherie (Elsevier)

Success for us is meeting our customer’s needs in a sustainable way. In the Netherlands this means supporting them to reach 100% open access, alongside the co-development of open science infrastructure services designed to achieve our collective goal of improving research performance.

Bart Pierik (VSNU)

We don’t evaluate contracts in isolation. Our goal as VSNU is to reach new agreements that are increasingly transformative, aiming for 100% Open Access in the Netherlands as well as in other
countries. We believe that in this respect, the effect of a single deal is very hard to ‘measure’, but the result of all the deals combined should be very clear to all who are somehow involved with Open Access. I hope I somehow managed to convey our perspective, even when not literally answering your question.

Taylor & Francis/Bibsam

Jeff Voci (Taylor & Francis)

Taylor & Francis reached a transformative agreement with the Bibsam Consortium in 2018, covering read access to over 2,000 journals, and open access publication for Swedish authors of approximately 1,400 articles in hybrid journals at no cost to the author.

Whilst Taylor & Francis is engaging with individual consortia to make transformative agreements, we view our work in this area as part of a wider move to transform research communication. Our ethos comes from a desire to meet the needs of researchers in the 21st century and to maximise the opportunities offered by technology to do so. We have consistently evolved to deliver what researchers expect, however they are funded: a range of services characterized by quality, trust and impact. We want to continue to work in collaborative partnership with institutions, researchers, funders and consortia with these goals in mind.

The measures of success for this agreement are based on four criteria:

1. sustainability, both in costs for our customers and revenue to support the ongoing development of our journals and services;
2. an increase in the volume and proportion of OA research;
3. real-world impact stemming from the research published OA via this agreement;
4. a rapid development of technology and tools to enable OA workflows.

Five years from now, the first and most compelling measure of success has to be whether it has effectively met the fundamental goal of significantly increasing the proportion and volume of research being published gold open access immediately on publication. This needs to be balanced with maintaining sustainable costs for Bibsam and sustainable revenue for Taylor & Francis.

Under the current agreement the proportion of Bibsam affiliated OA publications has grown from 18% in 2017 to 94% in 2019. The aim is to maintain or grow current publication levels and to reach as close to 100% OA as possible. As well as being dependent on the contractual terms, the proportion and growth of open access is also critically linked to having a workflow directing authors smoothly down the correct publication route. This deal, and others, allow us to make rapid investments to ensure that authors find the experience of publishing OA just as seamless and efficient as publishing on a subscription basis.

In order to meet the goal of being a sustainable pricing model for us, as the publisher, the revenues from the agreement need to reflect the regional research output (including if that research output has increased) whilst not significantly diminishing global revenues elsewhere due to subscription pricing adjustments. There is risk that if this is not handled sensitively, some journals may no longer be able to continue. Our goal as a publisher is to continue to support researcher choice, and that includes doing all we can to ensure that the communities that we work with continue to have a voice via their journal.
Taylor & Francis will also consider the impact of the agreement by evaluating the effect of increased dissemination, with the aim of seeing real-world impact from the articles published under the agreement.

Finally, not explicitly covered under the agreement but for future consideration, will be other factors such as whether the agreement has facilitated conversion of titles from hybrid to full open access, and author satisfaction as measured by a published author survey.

Christian Linders (Bibsam)

2020 is the last year covered by the agreement, so we will negotiate a new agreement for 2021 and the following years. When we look back at this in five years’ time, the current agreement with T&F will have been our first transformative agreement with T&F, very likely followed by new and different agreements, up until the business model has been transformed and we no longer need transformative agreements. That is one element to take into account when we evaluate the success of the current agreement: How well did the first agreement pave the way for the following agreements, and will they lead to a transition from reading fees to publishing fees?

In five years we will be in 2025. In Sweden, the national goal is that the transition to open access to scholarly publications, research data and artistic works should be fully implemented in 2026 at the latest. In 2025/2026 the current transformative agreements should no longer be relevant - if they are successful. We will have moved from subscription costs to a business model where publishers are “remunerated a fair price for their open access publishing services” and we have achieved open access to all Swedish scholarly publications. The model has been “transformed” and the transformative agreements will have served their purpose and no longer be necessary.

We have already evaluated one transformative agreement: our first transformative Springer Compact agreement. The conclusions list the parameters that were used to evaluate how successful that agreement had been:

The evaluation group finds that the advantages of the SC agreement are that it generates more OA publications compared to how many publications would have been published OA without the agreement. It also generates less administration for the individual researchers and prepares the university libraries for a transition from reading fees to publishing fees. The main disadvantages are that the agreement increases the total cost for reading and publishing and that it promotes hybrid OA over gold OA. Hybrid publishing is one way to reach the goals of OA, according to Plan S, but it is not part of an OA future.

IOP/TIB

Steven Hall (IOP)

We would define success as an agreement that enables full open access publishing by authors at participating institutions.

Dana Vosberg (TIB)
First of all, I would like to emphasize that from our point of view this IOP-TIB-agreement (2019-2021) is not really a transformative agreement but rather an offsetting agreement. That means, that the calculation of costs is still based on subscription costs and not on publication output. That’s why our succes criteria in 5 years time would be as follows:

- having negotiated a 3 year subsequent contract (2022-2024) where costs are divided into a transparent publication and reading fee per institution containing a certain transition period to balance out the shift of costs between institutions with high research outputs and those publishing less
- alternatively: having negotiated a subscribe to open-agreement
- alternatively: having negotiated a contract which allows for 90-100% of articles of the institutions to be published Open Access without further cost increase with full flexibility in redistributing article contingents per institution

CUP/CDL

Kellie O’Rourke (CUP)

From a purely quantitative perspective, success will look like consistent progress: year on year increases for author take-up of open access publishing, to the point where the deal has achieved fully open publishing from University of California authors, across the Cambridge journals portfolio.

In reaching that milestone, it will mean that we’ve successfully communicated the opportunity and benefit of publishing open access with Cambridge. We expect to be able to demonstrate that open publishing increases real impact for these authors, for instance through usage and citations, dramatically. Behind all that, the work we’re doing now on metadata and workflow will increasingly improve the user experience. It should be the case that OA publishing is no more onerous for the author than the traditional workflow ever was – and hopefully less! This particular agreement, because of the willingness of both California and Rightslink to collaborate and learn with Cambridge on workflow improvements, will increase our mutual efficiency overall. This is an important point as another key measure of success is the achievement of sustainable, unlimited OA publishing. This implies that the cost of publishing an article for Cambridge must decrease in order to accommodate increased volumes at modest, manageable annual price increases for the University of California.

At a macro level, no single agreement, however successful in its own right, can represent success for the model. Cambridge has set itself the target of transformation of the majority (80%+) of its journals list to Gold open access by 2025. The major research publishing countries of Europe are well advanced on the roadmap to this ambition, but there must be far greater take-up of the model in North America for Cambridge to effect a list-wide flip to Open on this timeline. This would take Cambridge from transactional relationships with institutions to true publishing partnerships, allowing new open models to be developed mutually. A number of deals are now in negotiation, and a key measure of success is therefore to have the vast majority of Cambridge’s output covered by R&P agreements well within the five years.
First, it’s worth noting that we’re in the process of presenting assessment plans for our OA agreements to a variety of committees for input and feedback, so I can’t tell you yet exactly what the final shape of those plans will look like or how they will specifically define or measure success. But here is my personal list of the kind of success criteria toward which we’ll be attempting to chart our progress, which I anticipate will find their way into our assessment plans (taking your 5-year timeframe into account, which is longer than any of our pilots). Although this is written for Cambridge – which was the deal you asked about – the same general criteria would apply to all of our agreements, with appropriate customization of course for individual publishers.

- Open access uptake by UC authors has become or is becoming nearly universal
- Our multi-payer model is successfully combining institutional and research funds in an affordable and sustainable way
  - authors with available research funds are contributing those funds when called for by the model;
  - authors lacking grant funds are able to successfully publish their work as OA (and are choosing to do so)
  - costs for the library are affordable, and authors feel empowered in their publishing choices
  - major bonus: other institutions and publishers have taken up this model, and it is making a real contribution to OA sustainability
- Author open access workflow is straightforward and non-controversial, and authors are happy with the OA publishing services that Cambridge is providing
- UC articles are receiving higher usage and citation rates than previously under the subscription model, with greater community and research impact
- Costs for the library and for the university are known, sustainable, and holistically managed
- Workflows are effective, routinized, and not overly burdensome
- Library-publisher relations are productive and collaborative – we are able to work as partners, not adversaries
- It all feels normal!
- Even if our multi-payer ideas don’t pan out quite as we intended, I would still consider these pilots a success, if:
  - We have learned a great deal and have advanced our knowledge and ability to make informed decisions about open access strategy and funding models
  - Or, even better: we’ve successfully transitioned to another, even more sustainable model (since we’re always prepared to continue to innovate!)

There are also a number of community impact considerations that will be important to evaluate going forward, toward which I hope our pilot agreements will contribute. A few success indicators of this type:

- Open access is expanding across the publisher’s portfolio, with more journals supporting OA options, more articles published as OA, and more journals transitioning to full OA
- More institutions are negotiating transformative deals, creating additional momentum toward OA transformation
• The multi-payer approach is being employed at other institutions and contributing to OA sustainability
• Global south authors and countries are successfully accommodated in the ecosystem of transformative agreements without economic disadvantage