

Our path to open scholarship: *Read & Publish* from the Biochemical Society and Portland Press

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From the point that our journal portfolio moved to a hybrid publishing model back in 2009, which first introduced the option for authors to choose open access (OA) publication, the Biochemical Society and our publishing arm, Portland Press, have been on the path towards more open scholarship. Key milestones since then have included the ‘flipping’ of our journal, *Bioscience Reports*, to full OA publishing in 2012, which helped shift the proportion of OA articles across our journals to well over 50% in recent years (see accompanying figure). Associated objectives really gathered pace in 2017, when the decision to focus on the sustainable transition of all our journals to full OA was made. Open Science and Open Scholarship position statements effectively encompassed our agendas on this front, authored in 2018 and 2019, respectively, with the launch of our pilot *Read & Publish* model in late 2019 representing a real-world implementation of our transformative approach.



Percentages across all Biochemical Society and Portland Press journals.

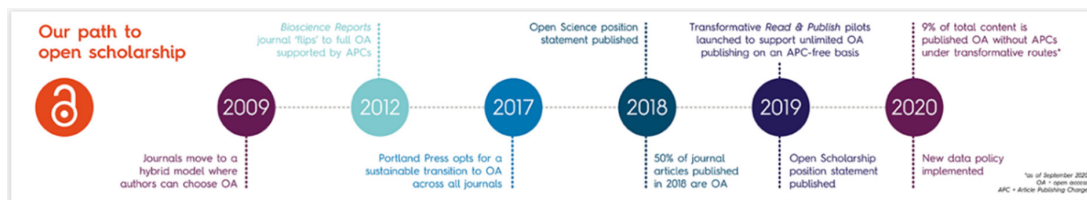
As a community focused, self-publishing learned society on a relatively small scale, our development of *Read & Publish* has necessarily differed from the offerings of this type being trialled by larger, commercial publishers. This article considers the significant progress our *Read & Publish* model has made, which now offers unlimited OA publishing to more than 200 institutions worldwide.

Our *Read & Publish* model takes flight in 2020

As the Biochemical Society’s publisher, Portland Press represents one half of a joint mission to disseminate and advance bioscience research. Offered to approximately 700 subscribing institutions around the world, our take on the *Read & Publish* model combines read access and unlimited OA publishing across our entire journal portfolio. This was designed to enable subscribing institutions’ authors to access all of our published content and automatically publish their work OA – entirely removing the burden of article publishing charges (APCs) facing scholars.

The first library-consortia ‘transformative agreements’ using these *Read & Publish* principles were signed for 2020 (and running beyond that) with Jisc and CAUL, bringing the benefits of read access plus unlimited OA publishing (without APCs) to researchers based at major institutions across the UK and Australia/New Zealand. Combined with other subscribing institutions from all over the world opting for a ‘transformative’ option, our *Read & Publish* pilots benefitted more than 50 international institutions in 2020.

Alongside a range of author-facing benefits, seamless OA publishing was built into the model and we were delighted to see this account for 15% of all OA content



published across our journal portfolio in 2020 (without the hassle or financial burden of APCs). We have been committed to working with institutions throughout this model's debut run, ensuring cost-effectiveness and simplicity for libraries, as well as acknowledging the institutional subscription to *Read & Publish* making OA publications possible. Articles published OA under our new *Read & Publish* offerings equated to 60% of all OA content published in our five hybrid journals, meaning over half of these journals' OA output in 2020 was accepted with no author-facing charges or APCs.



Going from strength to strength: the upward trajectory of *Read & Publish*

Alongside the renewal of *Read & Publish* across our subscribing institutions and existing transformative agreements with Jisc and CAUL, the signing of *Read & Publish* deals with The Max Planck Society and the Spanish National Research Council at the start of 2021 means over 200 international institutions are now benefitting from this all-inclusive offering. Affiliated researchers and authors the world over have read access and unlimited, APC-free OA publishing across our entire journal portfolio, with participating organizations across four continents spanning the globe from Tokyo to Texas (see accompanying map).

Open data and more

Our efforts to support open scholarship haven't stopped at OA. Our revised Data Policy is now fully implemented and we also recently announced an integration with Figshare, making our published data more open and incorporating a range of benefits for researchers, including compliance with funder mandates, enhanced data integrity and full transparency. We believe research data should be findable, accessible, interoperable and

reusable and are making our published data available in a way that best supports the understanding and advancement of future research.

We are also a signatory of both the Initiative for Open Citations and the Initiative for Open Abstracts. These represent collaborations between scholarly publishers, infrastructure organizations, librarians, researchers and other interested parties to advocate and promote the unrestricted availability of article citations/references and abstracts, respectively.

The incorporation of these practices complements the transformative approach we're taking to embrace OA and actively endorse the key tenets of open scholarship.

Working across the community and raising the profile of open scholarship

As a Society publisher, we're working to provide the best possible service for our community, implementing publishing models, as well as broader policies and practices, that support a more open research culture for the benefit of science. We're not doing this alone and for the past 2 years have been working collaboratively across the research sector as an active member organization of the Society Publishers' Coalition (SocPC).



United by a common ambition to embrace OA in the interests of global research, SocPC was formed to help navigate the shifting landscape of international scholarship and improve the means through which we share knowledge and contribute to the advancement of open scholarship. Combining the voices of almost 100 like-minded organizations who publish as part of their charitable objectives, we've been at the forefront of open scholarship conversations, cultivating a collaborative spirit as we look towards long-term cooperation and the development of models supporting a more open future.



Biochemical Society and Portland Press *Read & Publish* institutions.

Making this change in a sustainable manner is the key to ensuring we can continue to support our communities, wherein *Read & Publish* forms the basis of our next steps in transitioning to full OA. SocPC members published over 120,000 articles in 2018, investing the generated surplus from this work back into the research community. Over £800 million was collectively spent by SocPC members

on charitable activities in 2018 alone, facilitating the running of conferences, events and training courses, the awarding of grants and bursaries, the provision of career guidance and educational resources, the operation of public engagement programmes and policy networks and so much more.

Harnessing the kind of influence needed to affect a sea change in the research ecosystem, we continue to work in partnership with researchers, funders, institutions, industry partners and all other relevant parties. We're on the path to open scholarship and are excited to be offering *Read & Publish* as the model to take us further with OA.

If you're reading this and are unsure of your institution's access to *Read & Publish* from the Biochemical Society and Portland Press, speak to your librarian or contact our sales team (sales@portlandpress.com) for more information. You can also visit our website for full details and FAQs on our *Read & Publish* offering.