

# **Society Publishers** **Accelerating *Open Access* and *Plan S* (SPA OPS)**

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## **Final Project Report**

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***Information Power Ltd***



# An independent report commissioned by:

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UK Research  
and Innovation



The Association of  
Learned & Professional  
Society Publishers

# What did we do?



- Interviewed funders, librarians, and publishers
- Surfaced a wide array of transition strategies and business models in an online discussion document.
- Surveyed library consortia and society publishers about the models and how to make these successful
- Engaged with society publishers during workshops held in Europe, the UK, and the US
- Convened a workshop in which learned society publishers, library consortia, and university presses co-developed a model offer and a framework for implementing transformative agreements



# What we learned from society publishers

through our survey on OA business  
models and transition strategies

# Our survey of learned society publishers

105 respondents  
including  
UK (64),  
US (23),  
China (4),  
the Netherlands (3),  
Sweden (2),  
Belgium (1),  
France (1),  
Germany (1),  
and Switzerland (1)

76 publish via  
larger publishing  
partners,  
29 are independent  
society publishers

63 respondents  
identified as  
STEM societies,  
30 as HSS societies,  
7 as both HSS and STEM,  
3 as 'other'

# HSS and STM

A majority of the independent society publishers were in STEM disciplines. There were virtually no independent HSS respondents.

STEM and HSS learned societies have nearly the same amount of experience with OA publishing.

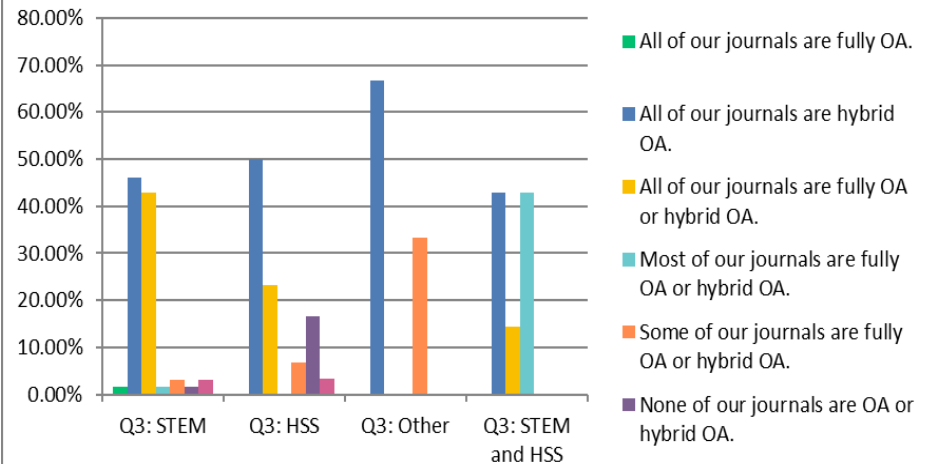
However, throughout this project we heard HSS publishers state that publishing in their disciplines is different to STEM

Both HSS and STEM publishers are concerned about the number of authors without funding to pay for APCs

We found no difference in the way the OA business models and transition strategies we have identified can be applied to HSS and STEM publishers

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## Please tell us about the transition status of your portfolio of journals.



# The models

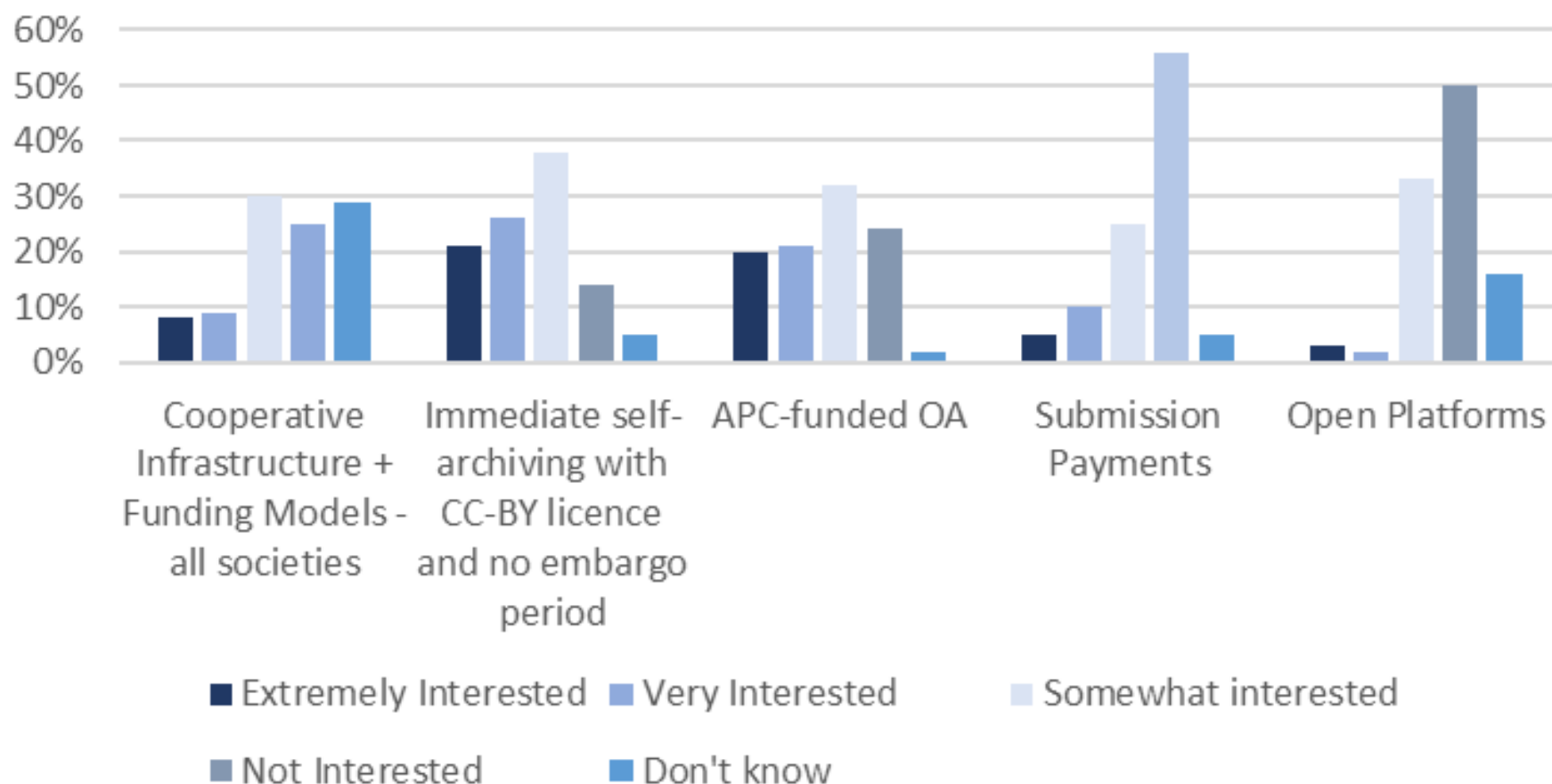
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- Transformative Agreements
- Cooperative Infrastructure & Funding Models
- Author self-archiving
- Article Transaction Models
- Open publishing platforms
- Other Revenue Models
- Cost Reduction



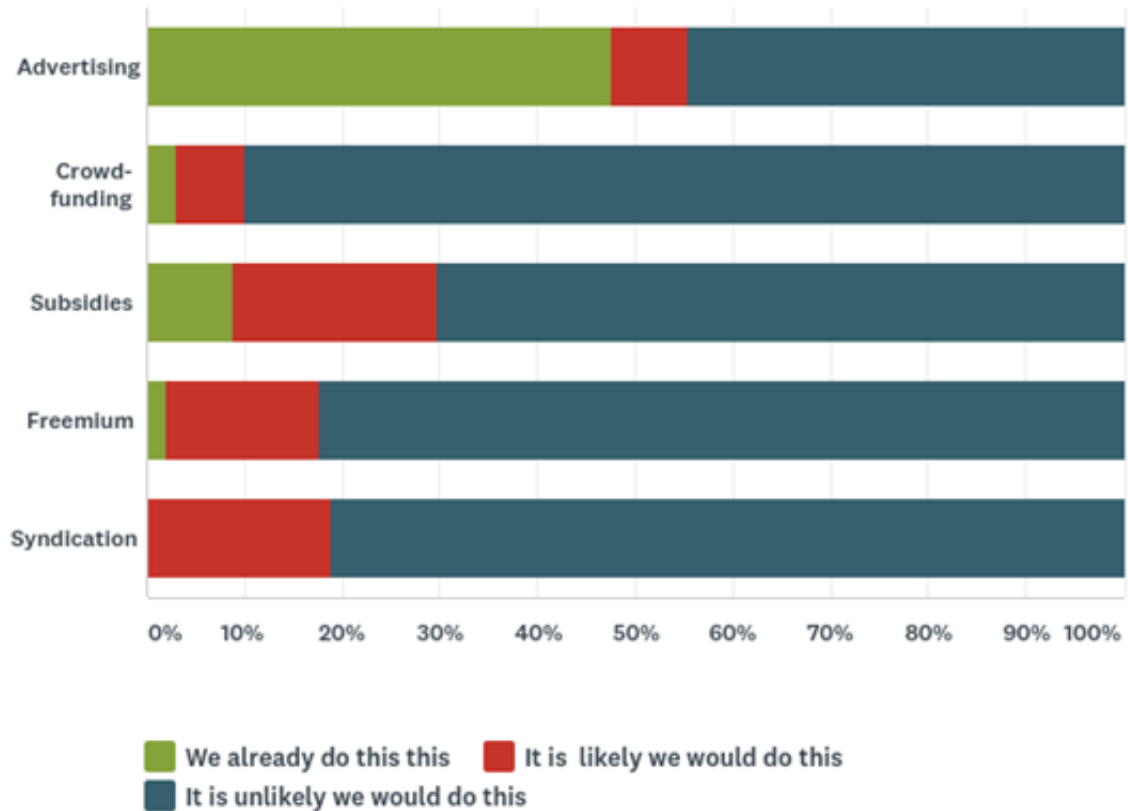


## Interest in various strategies and models

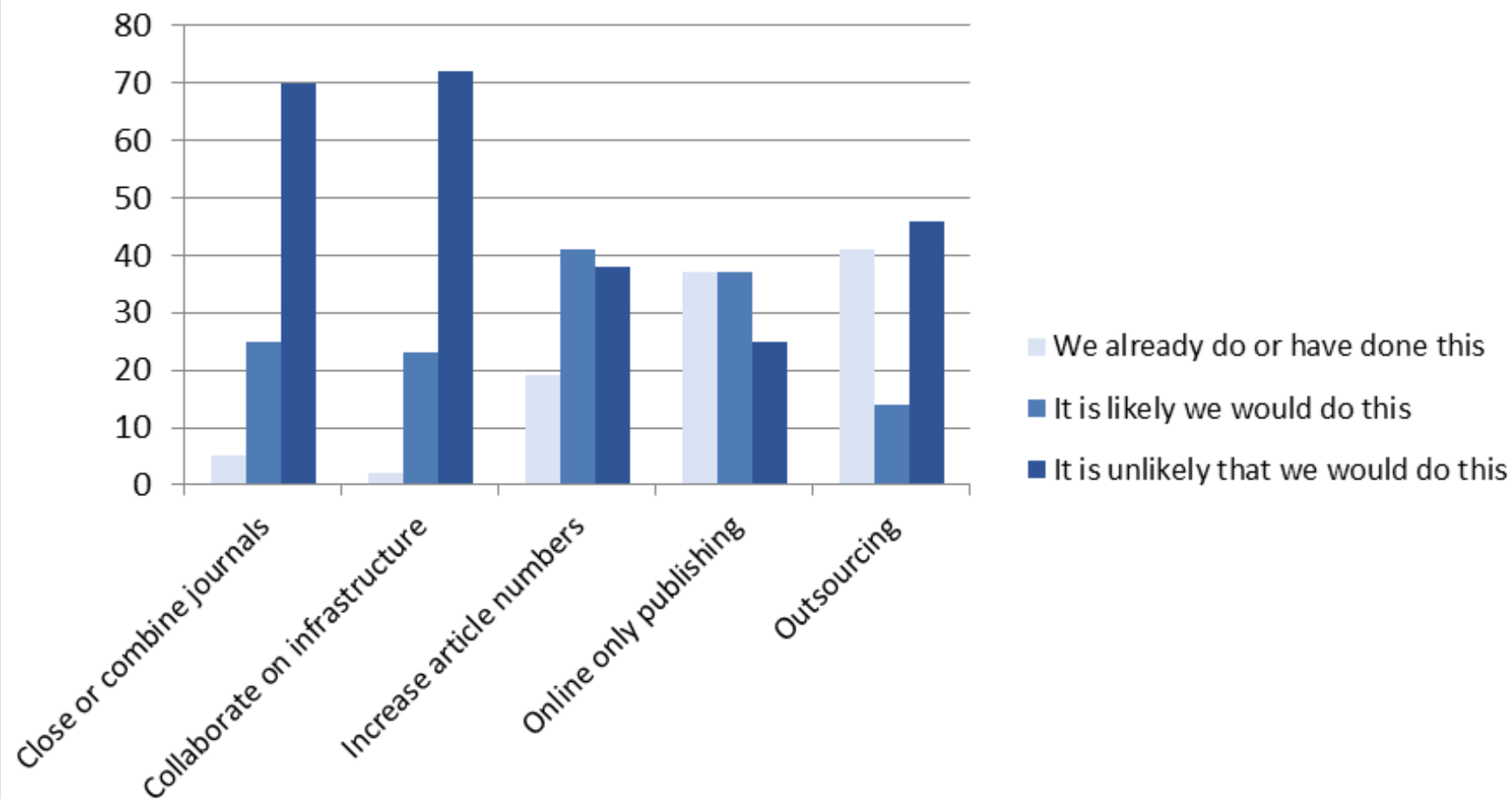




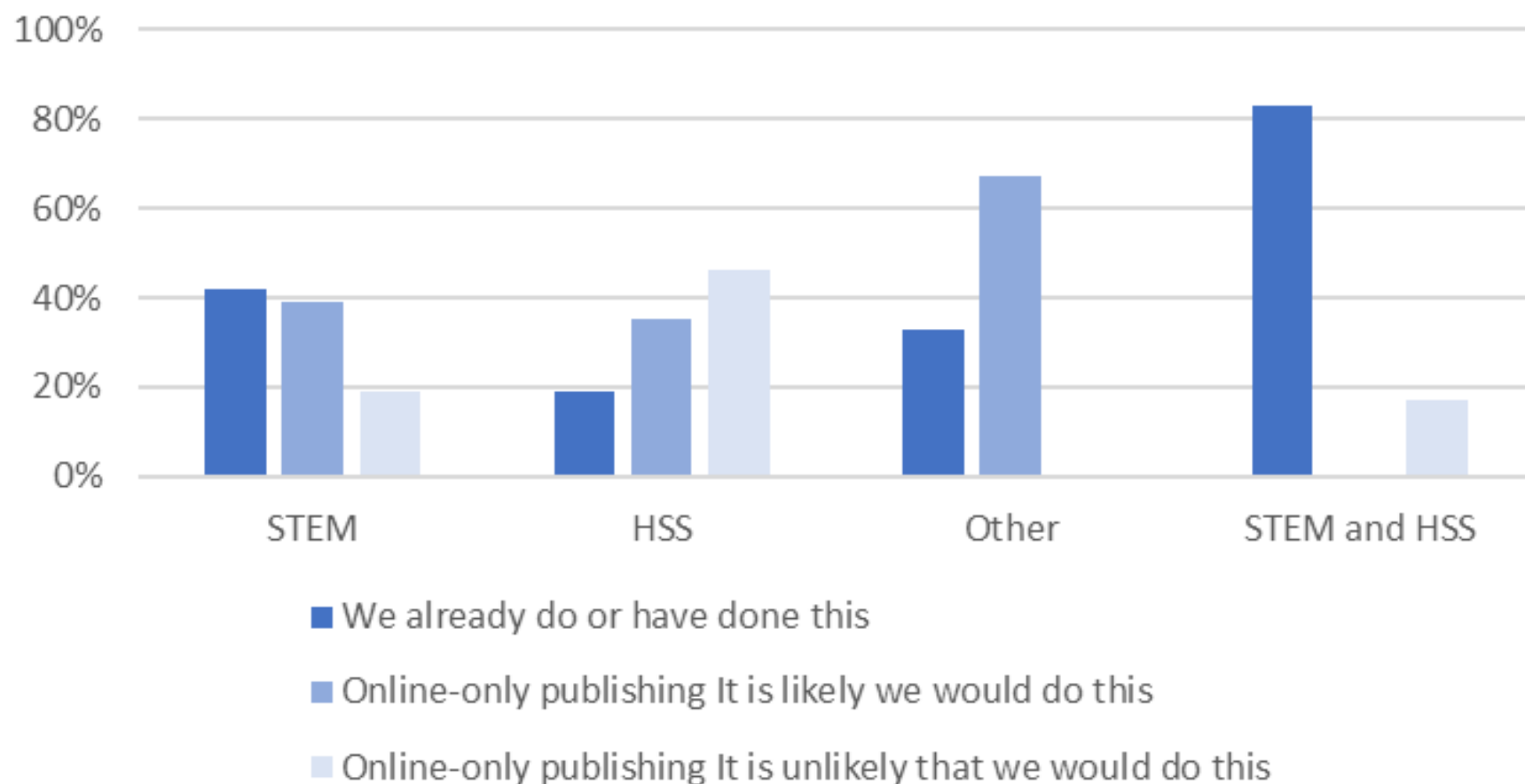
## Q11 Other revenue models



### Cost reduction - all society respondents



## Online-only publishing



Countries with at least 1 transformative agreement – 22 July 2019

## Transformative models

Repurpose existing institutional spend with publishers in order to open content

These are promising transition models, because libraries and library consortia currently provide the lion's share of funding

If this revenue stream is transformed to support OA, then journals can also transform to be fully OA

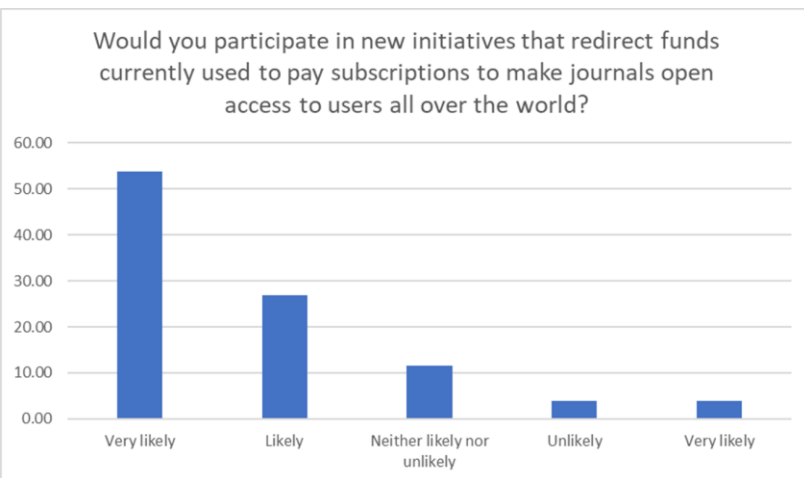
Easier to administer than hundreds or thousands of author payments and provide an attractive predictable flow of revenue

# Society publishers' views on transformative models



- Could offer a steady, predictable revenue stream
- They want confidence that transformative OA agreements would gain traction in the market
- A major concern is gaining access to consortia
- Publishers need to learn about transformative agreements *very quickly* to align with Plan S
- 2019 pilots are needed to allow for an entire renewal cycle before Plan S implementation begins
- Need to know what data are needed to enter a constructive negotiation with consortia

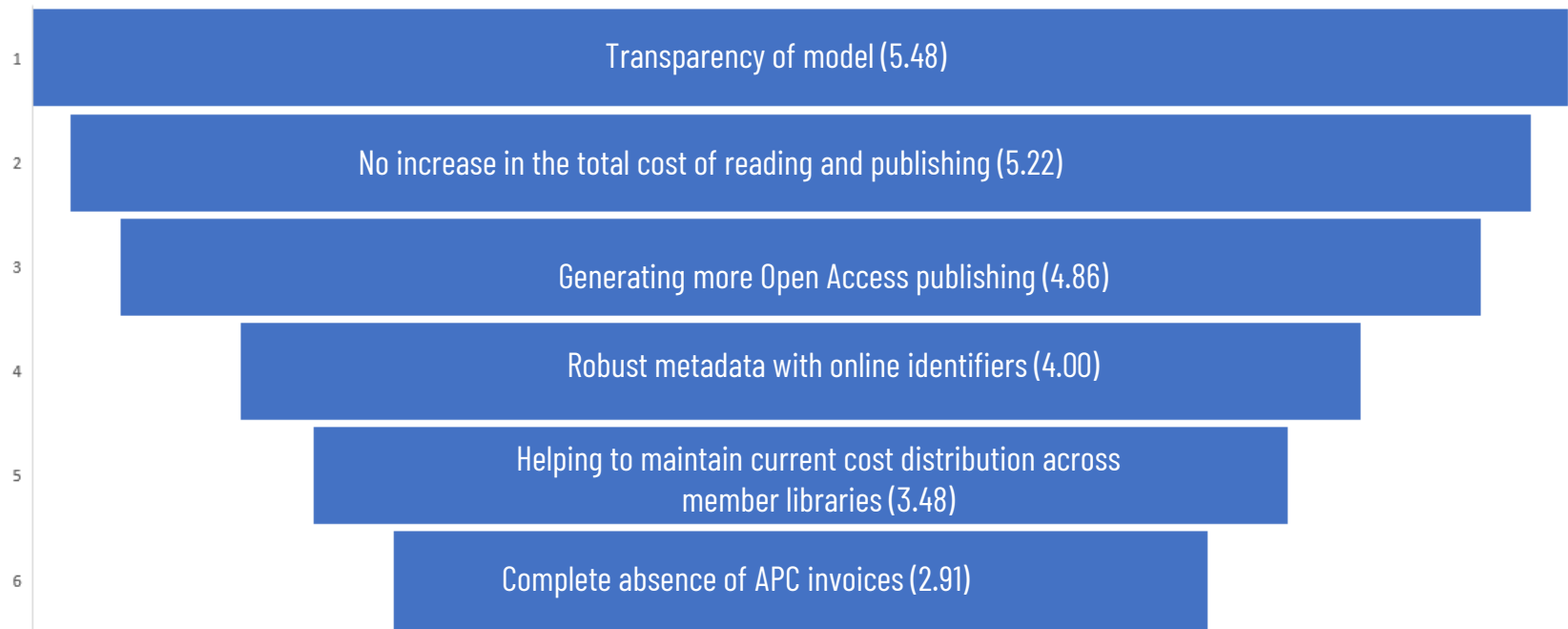
# Our survey of library consortia



- 26 consortia participated, located in Austria, Canada, Germany, Greece, Jordan, Norway, Qatar, Slovakia, Republic of Korea, Romania, Slovakia, the United Kingdom, and the United States
- 91% look forward to working with learned society publishers to develop new models
- 75% are very likely or likely to participate in new initiatives that redirect funds currently used to pay subscriptions in order to make journals Open Access to users all over the world



# How consortia rank the criteria for developing new models





# Principles for a model OA transformative agreement

Participants brainstormed potential factors for new pricing models and discussed the strengths and weaknesses of each

Libraries and publishers need to work together in the short term while starting a broader strategic discussion about pricing that could be put in in the future

The **most practical short-term approach** is for OA transformative agreements to be cost neutral and therefore based on current spend

**There was strong consensus, however, that current spend was not a desirable or sustainable basis on which to price OA transformative agreements going forward**

# Pilots

We were delighted when these partners agreed to pilot agreements based on these principles:

**Association of Dutch Universities (VSNU)**

**Brill**

**Consortium of Australian University Libraries (CAUL)**

**European Respiratory Society**

**IWA Publishing**

**Jisc**

**Max Planck Digital Library**

**Microbiology Society**

**Portland Press**

# Our recs for society publishers

- continue to learn together, collaborate, and pool cost and risk
- embrace this pressure as opportunity, and be strategic
- expend effort on action to experiment and find ways to transition to OA
- see funders and librarians as potential allies and supporters, as well as customers, and engage positively
- While transformative agreements seem to be the most promising, all the approaches and business models outlined in our report are compliant with Plan S and should be considered
- begin increasing transparency about all facets of your publishing with editors, members, and customers



# Our recs for funders, libraries, and universities

- keep talking often, consult widely, and be seen to do so
- work together with publishers to identify and resolve funding challenges that are genuine barriers to full OA transition
- universities should track their entire relationship with each publisher and assess the strategic value of these relationships
- reach out to commercial organisations about how they will help fund OA
- support the expansion of aligned OA funder policies such as Plan S
- work together with publishers on a PESTLE analysis and scenario planning for the next 5 years
- prioritize pragmatic work to transition to OA
- in parallel work on longer term changes ensure a more equitable, innovative, and sustainable scholarly communication system

# Further information

<https://www.informationpower.co.uk/spa-ops-project-plans-toolkit/>

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