

# Exploring a Read and Publish Agreement

## The Three-Year Taylor & Francis Pilot

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*The Ohio State University Libraries (University Libraries) entered into a three-year read and publish pilot agreement with Taylor & Francis in 2020—the first read and publish agreement for The Ohio State University and the first such deal for Taylor & Francis in the Americas. This study provides an overview of University Libraries’ motivations behind the agreement, the lessons we learned implementing and supporting the agreement, and the open access publishing outcomes of the pilot agreement that ended December 2022.*

The scholarly publishing marketplace’s primary model of licensing electronic journals via paywall subscriptions is unsustainable.<sup>1</sup> Increasing journal subscription costs have necessitated that libraries pursue a variety of cost-containment strategies to maintain access to these resources.<sup>2</sup> These strategies often center around Big Deal agreements in which a licensee makes a multi-year commitment to journal access at scale in order to reduce the annual inflation cost.<sup>3</sup> At The Ohio State University (Ohio State), Big Deal agreements include collective investments for journal content from library consortia and membership organizations to maximize scale and agreements directly between the institution and a publisher or vendor. The Big Deal, however, falls short of a sustainable strategy for electronic journals.<sup>4</sup>

Calls to disrupt the subscription journal marketplace and transition to large-scale open access escalated in the 2010s.<sup>5</sup> By 2018, new open access business models were beginning to proliferate.<sup>6</sup> The canceling of Big Deals was gaining momentum alongside the signing of open access agreements that aimed to transform scholarly publishing.<sup>7</sup> In Europe, the launch of the Plan S principles, including that “all scholarly publications on the results from research funded by public or private grants provided by national, regional and international research councils and funding bodies, must be published in Open Access Journals, on Open Access Platforms, or made immediately available through Open Access Repositories without embargo,” accelerated the impact of open access on subscription models.<sup>8</sup>

In April 2019, The Ohio State University Libraries (University Libraries) approved the strategic initiative Transforming the Scholarly Publishing Economy (TSPE) to plan, prioritize, and enable University Libraries to proactively contribute to the transformation of the scholarly publishing marketplace.<sup>9</sup> The collections strategist and scholarly sharing strategist—broadly responsible for collection development and scholarly communication, respectively—were appointed co-leads of the strategic initiative under the sponsorship of the vice provost and dean of University Libraries and associate dean for content and access. Building off the success of established open access programs and

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services—such as the University Libraries diamond open access journal publishing program, institutional repository, and membership in community-supported open scholarly infrastructures, including DSpace, Fedora, and the Public Knowledge Project—the co-leads outlined principles and priorities to frame and ground aspirations into actualities.

An initial goal of the new strategic initiative was to develop, propose, negotiate, sign, and implement a transformative agreement with a scholarly publisher. A transformative agreement is one where costs for reading access to subscription content are shifted toward paying for open access publishing.<sup>10</sup> Identifying an opportunity based on previous communication regarding expanding subscription access to journal content, we proposed a read and publish agreement to Taylor & Francis in June 2019. A read and publish agreement is a type of transformative agreement in which an institution pays for both reading access and open access publishing for its authors in one payment determined from a single contract.<sup>11</sup> After several rounds of negotiations, our first read and publish agreement, and the first for Taylor & Francis in the Americas, was finalized in April 2020. This paper describes the factors that led to this pilot agreement, outlines the negotiation process, provides details about the implementation, discusses its impact on open access publishing outcomes, and notes future considerations for this and other transformative agreements.

## Background

Ohio State is a large, doctoral-granting university with very high research output. In 2022, it had research and development (R&D) expenditures of \$1.38 billion, with \$636 million in federal R&D expenditures.<sup>12</sup> The university is a land grant institution with a research mission tenet dedicated to “creating and discovering knowledge to improve the well-being of our local, state, regional, national, and global communities.”<sup>13</sup> As of 2022, Ohio State comprises fifteen colleges and four regional campuses. It includes more than 67,700 students and more than 51,500 employees, of which more than 8,100 are faculty.<sup>14</sup>

University Libraries comprises nine libraries and seven archives and special collections. Other libraries at Ohio State include the Health Sciences Library, the Moritz Law Library, and regional campus libraries. Although we have different administrative reporting lines and budgets, we work together as responsible resource stewards to meet the needs of the entire Ohio State community. University Libraries manages a materials budget of approximately \$14.6 million. More than 80 percent of the budget supports ongoing collections expenditures for resources such as subscriptions, packages, and memberships. This includes support for our consortia and member associations, which include OhioLINK, the Big Ten Academic Alliance (BTAA), the Center for Research Libraries, and Lyris, among others. University Libraries leverages relationships with our consortia and as a single institution to advance our priorities in providing access to resources and materials that support teaching, learning, and research.

## **Consortia**

OhioLINK consists of 117 member libraries from eighty-eight different universities and colleges in the state of Ohio. It includes a print borrowing network, shared catalog, and a state depository network. OhioLINK also manages licenses for and access to academic and scholarly content on behalf of the membership.<sup>15</sup> In 2019, OhioLINK had no read and publish agreements, although it was piloting a consortial open access fund with Wiley.<sup>16</sup>

The BTAA is comprised of fifteen member institutions, the majority of which are also large public flagship land grant institutions; all members have very high research output. Under the Library Initiatives unit, the consortium supports members in aligning print borrowing and lending, targeted collections purchasing, licensing scholarly content, and investments in digitization and data.<sup>17</sup> In 2019, the BTAA had no collective open access agreements.

## **New Models for Scholarly Communication**

University Libraries launched new strategic directions in 2018 that aligned with the teaching, research, and engagement priorities set out in the university's strategic plan.<sup>18</sup> One of the focus areas within the Empower Knowledge Creators strategic direction was "New Models for Scholarly Communication." As part of the launch of the strategic directions, University Libraries established a proposal and approval process for strategic initiatives to support the new focus areas.

University Libraries has a long history of supporting open access archiving and scholarly publishing. The institutional repository program dates to 2002 and the University Libraries diamond open access journal publishing program to 2007. Although Ohio State does not have an open access mandate, in 2012 University Libraries adopted an open access resolution for University Libraries faculty. In 2014 and 2015, both University Libraries and the Health Sciences Library supported an open access fund pilot for fully open access journals. University Libraries locally launched TOME (<https://www.openmonographs.org/>) in 2017, an open access scholarly monograph initiative of the Association of American Universities, Association of Research Libraries, and Association of University Presses. We were also funding supporters and participants in the shared governance of scholarly archiving and publishing infrastructures such as arXiv, DSpace, and Fedora. To advance our work in this area, the collections strategist, scholarly sharing strategist, and electronic resources officer looked to emerging business models and our peers as we navigated a rapidly changing landscape and developed a proposal to support the Empower Knowledge Creators strategic direction and the New Models for Scholarly Communication focus area.

## **An Evolving Scholarly Publishing Landscape**

In 2018 and early 2019, we explored the scholarly publishing landscape. This period was a pivotal moment in time for open access in the United States. Blogs, listservs, news items, and national meetings served as our main sources for current information. At the time, the paucity of published

literature available on transformative agreements focused on European deals.<sup>19</sup> That trend has continued with the case studies available in the literature since that time.<sup>20</sup> We monitored events in Europe, including the canceling of Big Deals and the negotiation of national open access publishing agreements. Without a national consortium in the United States, however, we would need to look elsewhere, including research university, statewide, and system consortia, as well as individual institutions, for new models to effect change toward a large-scale transition to open access.<sup>21</sup> The United States accounted for about 50 percent of global journal subscription revenue and about 25 percent of the worldwide publishing output.<sup>22</sup> The University of California system accounted for nearly 10 percent of all United States research publishing output.<sup>23</sup> The universities of the BTAA together produced about 15 percent of the research publications in the United States.<sup>24</sup> Although we do not have a nationwide consortium, we had large-scale opportunities to advance models that aimed at transformative change in scholarly publishing.

In February 2018, the University of California Libraries released “Pathways to Open Access,” a toolkit that analyzed approaches and strategies for advancing a large-scale transition to open access and posited next steps for University of California system-wide investment and experimentation.<sup>25</sup> MIT and the Royal Society of Chemistry announced the first North American read and publish agreement in June of 2018.<sup>26</sup> In July of 2018, Plan S was announced, and in September cOAlition S, built around Plan S, was launched.<sup>27</sup>

In January of 2019, Iowa State University Library signed its first read and publish agreement with De Gruyter—the second read and publish agreement in the United States.<sup>28</sup> The University of California announced in February of 2019, after eight months of negotiations toward a read and publish deal, that it would not renew its subscriptions with Elsevier, the world’s largest scientific publisher.<sup>29</sup> The University of California shared in their announcement that the talks broke down because “Elsevier was unwilling to meet UC’s key goal: securing universal open access to UC research while containing the rapidly escalating costs associated with for-profit journals.”<sup>30</sup> In April of 2019, the University of California announced a read and publish agreement with Cambridge University Press—the first for the publisher in the Americas and the first open access agreement with a major publisher for the University of California.<sup>31</sup> Big Deals were breaking up, new open access publishing agreements were signed across the globe at an increasingly rapid pace, funders pushed for open access to the research they funded, and high-stakes negotiations stalled or failed. It was in this atmosphere that we stood up a new strategic initiative and proposed our first read and publish agreement.

## **Transforming the Scholarly Publishing Economy Strategic Initiative**

TSPE, initially approved as a strategic initiative in 2019, is currently in its second three-year phase. At the launch of the initiative in 2019, we aimed to build on our work in scholarly publishing and open access by playing a stronger role in advancing a more open system to increase benefits for researchers and authors. We deployed a plan and set of priorities to shift key publisher negotiations and payments toward open access publishing for Ohio State authors. The goals of the first phase of the initiative

focused on consortially and institutionally directing funds away from unsustainable payment models and toward models that transformed the scholarly publishing marketplace. Our broader goals included building partnerships with stakeholders across campus and consortia to support actions to transform publishing economics, expand avenues of open access, extend read access, and support author's rights.

The foundational tenet of the first phase of the initiative was making the research and scholarship of Ohio State's faculty, staff, and students openly available while continuing strong financial resource stewardship. The core principles framing our approach to agreements were author's rights, copyright retention, academic freedom, licensing scholarly publications for reuse, and coverage for the full Ohio State system, including regional campus and medical campus researchers. When considering agreements, we aimed for cost neutrality, shared fiscal risk, and expanded and perpetual read access to content. We were committed to supporting purely open access publishers, diamond open access publishers, and scholarly and learned societies.

Our priorities included developing analytics capabilities to inform negotiations and monitor the impacts of new agreements and applying University Libraries equity values of advancing diversity, inclusivity, access, and social justice to the work of the initiative.<sup>32</sup> Issues of equity in the rapidly changing scholarly publishing ecosystem, particularly for researchers in author-side payment models of publishing, are a concern for us.<sup>33</sup> A commitment to addressing diversity, equity, and inclusion in the scholarly publishing ecosystem grounds our current work in the second phase of the initiative.

The first action of the strategic initiative was to pilot read and publish agreements with publishers to better understand the impact on our researchers and resources. We tasked ourselves with “undertaking a limited number of Offsetting, or Read and Publish, pilots—a transitional strategy to Open Access—that would integrate subscription charges and Open Access publishing fees, make Open Access the default for any article by a university scholar, and stabilize journal costs for the university.” The first read and publish proposal developed by the collections strategist, scholarly sharing strategist, and electronic resources officer was delivered to Taylor & Francis in June of 2019.

## **Proposing, Negotiating, and Licensing a Read and Publish Agreement**

As a member of multiple consortia, with each providing journal packages for member libraries, identifying potential publisher partners was complicated. By 2019, both our major consortial partners were engaging in discussions with member representatives about the potential impact of open access publishing agreements on the various Big Deals they manage on our behalf, but strategic approaches had yet to be developed. Goals of consortia do not always fully align with institutional goals, and consortia may move slower than individual institutions. The collections strategist and the electronic resources officer evaluated all active journal packages, local and consortial, to identify possible publisher candidates.

The criteria for possible candidates were brief and flexible. The primary criterion was that the publisher was not involved in current consortial agreements for journal content. Additional key criteria included a publisher with existing open access agreements, not limited to ones with agreements in the United States, and one with an extensive portfolio of content, without limitations by subject. This was an important consideration, as many existing agreements were with predominantly STEM publishers.<sup>34</sup> Ultimately, Taylor & Francis was identified as a viable publisher candidate with which to try negotiating an open access agreement.

Several factors influenced this decision. Although Taylor & Francis worked with University Libraries' main consortia, the offerings tended to be of their journal archive packages, not current content. University Libraries had extensive subscriptions at a significant cost, as did other libraries throughout the Ohio State system, especially the Health Sciences Library and the Wooster Campus Research Library. Articles in Taylor & Francis journals were among the highest requested through University Libraries' interlibrary loan, and subject librarians frequently requested new subscriptions to Taylor & Francis journals. In 2019, Taylor & Francis had multiple read and publish agreements in Europe and one in Qatar—its first read and publish agreement was with the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (VSNU) in 2016—but none in the United States.<sup>35</sup>

The electronic resources officer had previously engaged with our Taylor & Francis sales representative about deepening the portfolio of journal content at University Libraries. In meetings about extending access to content, they discussed other initiatives underway at Taylor & Francis, including new forays into open access publishing. The electronic resources officer and the collections strategist, who had been working on the charter of the TSPE strategic initiative with the scholarly sharing strategist around this same time, recognized there may be an opportunity for both Taylor & Francis and the university. For Ohio State, it could be a chance to explore how a diverse subject publisher's open access program might work for campus authors, and for Taylor & Francis it could be a chance to experiment with their existing open access programs and explore adaptation for the United States market. The collections strategist, scholarly sharing strategist, and the electronic resources officer decided on the core aspects of an ideal agreement, met with the representative, and made a general proposal: University Libraries wanted to enter into a read and publish agreement with Taylor & Francis, one that included read access to the entirety of Taylor & Francis's journal content and covered open access publishing for all articles by Ohio State authors, with both content and open access publishing available to users and researchers across the entire Ohio State system, inclusive of those at regional campuses and the medical campus.

Over the next months, multiple meetings were held to refine the expectations of what would be included in an agreement and the publish allowance was capped based on Ohio State's historical publishing output and our collective perceptions of historical disciplinary differences in uptake of open access with any publisher. Taylor & Francis presented a formal offer to University Libraries and its partner libraries in Fall 2019. Following clarifications and further refinements, University Libraries and Taylor & Francis made final decisions in early 2020. The license negotiation was straightforward and not significantly different from other content licensing, beyond the addition of publish terms. Publish terms explained

how eligible authors are identified, under what type(s) of Creative Commons licenses articles could be published, and what would happen if any given year's open access article allotment was completely allocated. The license was completed and signed, and the agreement officially began in April 2020.

## **Taylor & Francis Read and Publish Agreement**

The three-year pilot agreement was structured in alignment with the goals, guidelines, and principles of our TSPE strategic initiative and was announced in June of 2020.<sup>36</sup> Covering more than 2,300 journals, the agreement increased Ohio State's read access to Taylor & Francis journal content by more than 1,800 journals. The agreement also included the open access publishing costs for Ohio State corresponding authors choosing to publish open access in either hybrid (i.e., subscription journals that offer open access) or fully open access Taylor & Francis journals, including Routledge and Cogent OA titles. Open access articles published under the agreement were not embargoed and had a Creative Commons license, and authors retained copyright. Ohio State retains perpetual access rights for the read content that was published during the pilot period.

We were intrigued by Taylor & Francis's humanities and social sciences publishing portfolio, which accounts for about 60 percent of their titles. Scholars in the humanities and social sciences may not have had as many opportunities to engage with open access as those in disciplines with a more mature market for open access publication.<sup>37</sup> Compared with their colleagues in STEM disciplines, humanities and social sciences authors may not have had the funding or inclination to publish open access in journals that rely on author-side payment (i.e., article processing charges, or APCs).<sup>38</sup> To support the adoption of open access for humanities and social sciences authors, the agreement did not mandate a specific Creative Commons license, allowing scholars to choose noncommercial and/or no derivatives licenses if offered by the journal.

Before our agreement, Ohio State's open access publishing with Taylor & Francis was very low. In 2019, Taylor & Francis ranked fifth as a publisher for Ohio State corresponding authors and accounted for about 5 percent of total article publishing. Based on data from Web of Science and Unpaywall, across all publishers, 19 percent of the articles by Ohio State corresponding authors were published gold open access in either fully open or hybrid journals in 2019. With Taylor & Francis, less than 2 percent of articles were published gold open access.

We aligned our negotiated publish terms with our past publishing output with Taylor & Francis and our "best guess" projection of the open access uptake across campus. With Taylor & Francis's significant portfolio in humanities and social sciences in mind, we were conservative in our calculations of potential author uptake. A foundational question for our pilot was this: if given the opportunity to publish open access at no cost, would authors in the humanities and social sciences choose open access? With an agreement that had annual publish allocations, the question of author uptake had financial implications for us. Going over the article allocation in any year would require an additional year-end payment to cover the open access articles over the contract's allocated number.

Based on the guiding principles of the strategic initiative, the new agreement prioritized authors' rights, open licensing, and an author opt-in workflow. Given Taylor & Francis's journal portfolio and our commitment to academic freedom for authors, it was important that Ohio State authors had the choice to publish open access via our agreement. It was also important that all Taylor & Francis journals that offer open access were included in the pilot agreement. We did not want a hybrid-only agreement, nor did we want to limit the agreement to a subset of journals. The pilot agreement included all Taylor & Francis open select (i.e., hybrid) and fully open access journals, all Routledge open select and fully open access journals, and all Cogent OA titles. Including fully open access journals in the agreement was a principled decision, but it also removed potentially complicated communications with campus authors regarding the journals that were covered by the agreement and those that were not. And as journals flipped from hybrid to fully open, they were not removed from agreement eligibility. We also made the decision that University Libraries would cover any annual publish allotment overage, but we kept that back-office information from our public communications. We publicized the pilot as an unlimited publish agreement. First and foremost, we wanted campus authors to take advantage of the agreement. We did not want communications regarding yearly article caps and the status of the remaining funding to negatively affect that choice.

### **Read and Publish Agreement Implementation**

Although Ohio State's read access to content was activated in April 2020 upon the signing of the agreement, access to the publish benefits did not begin until July 2020. As part of the new agreement, Taylor & Francis provided University Libraries with a research dashboard for the open access publishing workflow. The dashboard for Ohio State's publishing activity did not go live until July 8, 2020. For each accepted article added to the dashboard, we had access to the article title, journal title, article type, journal open access profile (fully open access or hybrid), list price APC, digital object identifier (DOI), submission date, acceptance date, research funder(s) if applicable, and corresponding author's name, email address, institution affiliation, and ORCID (if supplied).

To be eligible for open access funding, an author had to be the corresponding author and affiliated with Ohio State, inclusive of the medical campus and the regional campuses, when their article was accepted. All faculty (including emeritus), staff, and student corresponding authors were eligible if they were affiliated with the university upon acceptance of their article. In the Taylor & Francis author workflow, the corresponding author is the person who handles the manuscript and correspondence during the publication process, chooses whether to request open access via the agreement, and signs the author agreement. Original research or review articles were eligible if they were accepted within the agreement period. Manuscript types such as editorials, announcements, meeting reports, book chapters, and book reviews were not covered by the publishing agreement. For authors opting in to open access via the agreement, the APCs were paid in full for eligible articles; however, any additional costs, such as page charges or color charges, were not covered.



Taylor & Francis added accepted articles to the research dashboard by matching the corresponding author's email address or institutional affiliation information with our agreement. If an author requested open access via the publisher's author workflow, that "opt-in" would be flagged in the dashboard. The scholarly sharing strategist and the collections strategist monitored the dashboard and the automated emails from Taylor & Francis generated by newly accepted articles and open access requests. We reviewed each open access opt-in request and approved, or declined, based on the eligibility criteria.

We manually checked the eligibility of author opt-ins for two reasons. First, we were working with a capped allotment of articles covered under our agreement. Second, we relished the learning opportunity of diving as deeply as we could into understanding the nuances of this pilot—both expected and unexpected. Ohio State has a robust publicly available tool to search for employees and students that we used to check for current affiliation of authors requesting open access funding. On the rare occasion we needed to dig deeper, we consulted university websites, commencement records, ORCID, LinkedIn, and university human resources as a last resort. We also checked article eligibility by the article type and acceptance date supplied as part of the dashboard data. If we approved an article for funding, the article would be tagged in the dashboard and the author would receive an automated email regarding next steps for signing an open access publishing agreement. If we declined an ineligible request, the author received an email to that effect with an option to use other funding for open access, or for hybrid journals, to publish behind a paywall.

The collections strategist and scholarly sharing strategist met monthly with Taylor & Francis during the pilot period. We discussed open access and scholarly publishing broadly and our unique perspectives specifically, and we shared our feedback on the research dashboard as well as summative feedback gathered from Ohio State authors regarding the publisher's open access workflow. We navigated workflow issues that created barriers for authors together, and we partnered on incremental improvements. Taylor & Francis was essentially building a new workflow for North America, and the opt-in process was a work in progress. At the beginning of the pilot, some authors experienced issues with the Taylor & Francis author workflow system not recognizing a match between their affiliation and the agreement. As Taylor & Francis worked to refine the opt-in workflow for Ohio State authors, they took the additional step of contacting each corresponding author when their article was accepted with a direct email—outside of the regular open access publishing workflow—regarding the agreement between August 2020 and December 2021.

Throughout the pilot, we supported Ohio State authors publishing with Taylor & Francis. TSPE has a group email account that Taylor & Francis shared as the University Libraries contact via their author workflow emails and web pages and that we shared in our own supporting material for the agreement. Via video calls, email, and other online venues, we assisted authors with issues opting in, and we fielded questions on a range of topics, from eligibility requirements for authors, the journals and article types that were included, if the agreement would continue past 2022, and what other publishers we were working with to add new open access agreements.

## **Read and Publish Agreement Outreach and Engagement**

A robust outreach and engagement approach, led by the scholarly sharing strategist, is a pillar of our TSPE strategic initiative. But where and how to reach authors and other stakeholders is a constant challenge. For the new Taylor & Francis agreement, University Libraries and Taylor & Francis jointly put out a press release.<sup>39</sup> The scholarly sharing strategist created a website for the strategic initiative and a web page dedicated to the Taylor & Francis agreement.<sup>40</sup> Throughout the pilot, we published pieces about the agreement in the daily campus news and University Libraries news. Subject librarians shared information about the agreement with their constituents. We held regular online information sessions for campus and the campus libraries and presented at University Libraries faculty meetings, University Libraries management committee meetings, and the university's faculty council and senate committee meetings. In meetings arranged in collaboration with the vice provost and dean of University Libraries, we discussed the strategic initiative with the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and the senior vice president for research. Additionally, faculty who champion open access on campus and regularly support our programs in this space presented at their faculty departmental meetings and sent emails to their colleagues.

## **Read and Publish Agreement Open Access Publishing Outcomes**

The expanded read access afforded by the agreement was a significant reason why University Libraries approached Taylor & Francis in 2019. For the pilot, our main questions centered around the publishing piece and what uptake we would see across Ohio State. For the publishing outcomes presented in this paper, the scholarly sharing strategist collected and analyzed data from multiple sources: (1) pre-agreement publishing data supplied by Taylor & Francis; (2) article and author data available from our Taylor & Francis research dashboard; (3) journal subject categorization title lists supplied by Taylor & Francis and available publicly on Taylor & Francis's website; and (4) Ohio State's affiliation, rank, and status data for faculty, staff, and students. In this paper, all author data is for corresponding authors, and all humanities and social sciences departmental and subject area data includes the arts. We present our preliminary analyses of the author uptake of the publishing benefits of the agreement at the conclusion of the pilot, focusing on the "who," the "what," and the "where." Areas for future research include the "why" of author uptake and the impact of any uptake.

Between July 8, 2020, and December 31, 2022, 346 open access articles were funded, and \$1,057,370 in list price APCs were waived for Ohio State authors. For authors in the humanities and social sciences, 216 open access articles were funded, and \$656,590 in list price APCs were waived. A total of 552 eligible articles were accepted and added to the research dashboard during the pilot, with 63 percent published open access via the agreement. Significantly more articles were published open access during the pilot as compared with the previous five and one-half years of open access publishing with Taylor & Francis (see table 1).

Table 1. Open access articles by accepted date, 2015–2022

<b>Year</b>	<b>Open Access</b>	<b>Not Open Access</b>	<b>Total Accepted</b>	<b>OA (%)</b>
2015	2	175	177	1.1
2016	4	167	171	2.3
2017	10	167	177	5.6
2018	8	215	223	3.6
2019	3	197	200	1.5
2020	86	127	213	40.4
<i>2020 pre-agreement</i>	7	98	105	6.7
<i>2020 agreement period</i>	79	29	108	73.1
2021	151	74	225	67.1
2022	116	103	219	53.0

*Note:* Taylor & Francis publishing agreement implemented July 8, 2020. Open access pre-agreement (2015 through July 7, 2020) equals articles published open access. Open access during the pilot period (July 8, 2020, through December 31, 2022) equals author opt-in to open access via the agreement. Article count for 2020, 2021, and 2022 adjusted based on eligibility requirements of pilot agreement.

The publishing agreement included a per-calendar-year allotment of articles. We were subject to additional year-end invoicing if our funding approvals went over the annual cap. In the six months of the pilot period in 2020, we did not deplete our annual allotment, and we were able to roll over the “unused” articles to 2021, essentially raising the cap for 2021. We did exceed the cap in both 2021 and 2022. Article eligibility was based on a date of acceptance within the agreement period, but owing to the annual caps of the agreement, we tracked our work in the research dashboard by calendar year. The date an article entered the dashboard could vary widely. For example, articles accepted in 2021 might not enter the dashboard until 2022, and articles accepted in 2022 might not enter the dashboard until 2023—after the pilot period. The pilot data only includes accepted articles that were added to the dashboard during the agreement period.

Table 2 displays the accepted articles by the year actions were taken in the research dashboard. All University Libraries’ actions were based on opt-ins, or author requests for open access funding. If the author and the article were eligible, we approved the opt-in. If the author or the article was not eligible, we declined the opt-in. As shown in table 2, we declined a total of thirty-two opt-in requests, representing 5 percent of the accepted articles added to the dashboard. Roughly 10 percent of the articles added to the dashboard were not eligible. The ineligible articles added to the dashboard and the decline data will have an impact on future agreement workflow decisions; for example, do we auto-approve or continue to check eligibility? If we did not receive an opt-in request for an accepted article, no action was taken. Not taking action or declining an opt-in meant that if the article was published open access, the open access fees were not covered by University Libraries. Although the amount of open access publishing increased significantly with the pilot, and we exceeded our article caps in each of

our two full years of the pilot, more than 37 percent of the eligible accepted articles added to the dashboard during the agreement period were “left on the table.”

Table 2. Accepted articles by dashboard action date, July 8, 2020–December 31, 2022

Year	Entered Dashboard	Opt-in Approved	Opt-in Declined	No Opt-in	Total Eligible	Eligible (%)	Eligible Open Access (%)
2020	110	63	12	35	92	83.6	68.5
2021	252	156	16	80	230	91.3	67.8
2022	248	127	4	117	230	92.7	55.2
Total	610	346	32	232	552	90.5	62.7

Based on Ohio State’s publishing history with Taylor & Francis, we did not expect heavy publishing in fully open access journals. However, following the principles of the TSPE initiative, we wanted to support fully open access journals with our pilot agreement. Fully open access journals represent about 8 percent of Taylor & Francis’s journal portfolio. Five percent of eligible accepted articles during the pilot period were in fully open access journals. Fully open access journal articles accounted for 7 percent of our funding approvals. Further research is needed to understand the dynamics of author choice in this space, particularly the “no opt-in” to funding via the pilot agreement for fully open access journals. Potential reasons could include other funding sources or waived APCs (see table 3).

Table 3. Accepted article opt-in by journal publishing model ( $N = 552$ )

Journal Model	Opt-in ( $n = 346$ )	No Opt-in ( $n = 206$ )
Hybrid	322	202
Full open access	24	4

*Note:* Ineligible articles removed.

Going into the pilot, we were curious as to who, and what areas of Ohio State, would take advantage of the agreement. Table 4 shows the status of eligible accepted article authors and the breakdown of the opt-ins. Although this translated to only two articles, we were happy to see that 100 percent of undergraduate authors opted in to open access. The open access opt-in across colleges, regional campuses, and units of Ohio State is shown in table 5. Although authors can have multiple affiliations, the data presented in table 5 is limited to an author’s primary affiliation. Further study is needed to examine the effect of multiple affiliations on author choice. Authors with accepted articles during the pilot had as many as four different affiliations listed in Ohio State’s people search. Of special note for this library initiative, 100 percent of University Libraries faculty authors with eligible accepted articles (represented as either “Academic Affairs Unit” or “Health Sciences” in table 5) opted in to open access, representing nineteen articles.

Table 4. Accepted article opt-in by author status (N = 552)

Status	Opt-in (n = 346)	No Opt-in (n = 206)	Open Access (%)
Faculty	248	152	62.0
Staff	33	16	67.3
Graduate students	63	38	62.4
Undergraduate students	2	0	100

Note: Ineligible articles removed.

Table 5. Accepted article opt-in by college, regional campus, or unit affiliation (N = 552)

Primary Affiliation	Opt-in (n = 346)	No Opt-in (n = 206)	Open Access (%)
Academic Affairs Unit	21	0	100
Arts and Sciences	128	57	69.2
Business	1	1	50.0
Dentistry	0	1	0.0
Education and Human Ecology	52	45	53.6
Engineering	38	12	76.0
Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences	12	4	75.0
Health Sciences	4	2	66.7
Health System	3	1	75.0
Law	1	0	100
Lima Campus	0	7	0.0
Mansfield Campus	1	0	100
Marion Campus	2	1	66.7
Medicine	36	48	42.9
Newark Campus	5	3	62.5
Nursing	1	6	14.3
Office of Research	2	0	100
Optometry	1	1	50.0
Pharmacy	1	1	50.0
Public Affairs	6	1	85.7
Public Health	10	3	76.9
Social Work	20	12	62.5
Veterinary Medicine	1	0	100

Note: Ineligible articles removed.

The biggest unknown going into the pilot agreement was the potential uptake of open access, given Taylor & Francis's publishing portfolio and Ohio State's historical publishing output. During the pilot period, 59 percent of eligible accepted articles were by corresponding authors affiliated with the

humanities and social sciences and 67 percent of those articles were published open access via the agreement. Articles by corresponding authors in humanities and social sciences represented 62 percent of the total Ohio State open access publishing via the agreement. As shown in table 6, the percentage of open access uptake for authors with a primary affiliation in the humanities and social sciences was comparable to the percentage uptake of authors in STEM disciplines and was higher than authors in medicine and the health sciences. We did not consider Taylor & Francis to be a primary publisher for Ohio State authors in medicine and health sciences, but the lower-than-expected percentage of open access uptake was surprising. Table 7 shows the open access opt-in for authors with multiple departmental affiliations that fell into two of the three disciplinary areas used here. There were no cases of authors with affiliations that fell into all three. Further research is needed to understand the role of interdisciplinary research and collaborations on open access uptake, including the potential role of co-authors.

Table 6. Accepted article opt-in by primary departmental affiliation ( $N = 552$ )

Primary Departmental Affiliation Area	Opt-in ( $n = 346$ )	No Opt-in ( $n = 206$ )	Open Access (%)
Humanities and Social Sciences	216	109	66.5
Medicine and Health Sciences	61	67	47.7
Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math	69	30	69.7

*Note:* Ineligible articles removed.

Table 7. Accepted article opt-in by multi-area departmental affiliations ( $N = 27$ )

Multi-Area Departmental Affiliation Areas	Opt-in ( $n = 19$ )	No Opt-in ( $n = 8$ )	Open Access (%)
Humanities and Social Sciences and Medicine and Health Sciences	7	3	70.0
Humanities and Social Sciences and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math	6	1	85.7
Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math and Medicine and Health Sciences	6	4	60.0

*Note:* Ineligible articles removed.

During the pilot period, there were eighty-nine authors with more than one eligible accepted article. Multi-article corresponding authors accounted for 238 eligible accepted articles or 43 percent of the total articles. As shown in table 8, there are multi-article authors who chose to opt in for all their articles, authors who chose to not opt in for any of their articles, and authors who chose to opt in for some of their articles and not opt in for others. An author in medicine and health sciences who did not opt in to open access had eleven eligible articles accepted during the pilot period. For humanities and the social sciences, an author with ten articles opted in for all, an author with eight opted in for half, and an author with six did not opt in to open access. Table 9 summarizes the overall multi-article author patterns by primary departmental affiliation area. Multi-article authors and their decisions for each article would make an interesting case study. Many potential factors could be at play, including when

the article was accepted relative to different iterations of Taylor & Francis's author workflow, personal beliefs about open access, and knowledge of the agreement. Further research is needed to understand the motivations of authors and any barriers to choosing open access they may have encountered.

Table 8. Accepted article opt-in by multi-article authors ( $N = 238$ )

Articles per Author	No. of Authors	Total Accepted	Opt-in ( $n = 119$ )	No Opt-in ( $n = 63$ )	Mixed ( $n = 56$ ), No. (yes-no)
2	58	116	60	30	26 (13-13)
3	21	63	33	12	18 (9-9)
4	6	24	16	4	4 (3-1)
6	1 <sup>a</sup>	6	0	6	0 (0-0)
8	1 <sup>a</sup>	8	0	0	8 (4-4)
10	1 <sup>a</sup>	10	10	0	0 (0-0)
11	1 <sup>b</sup>	11	0	11	0 (0-0)

Note: Ineligible articles removed.

<sup>a</sup> Primary departmental affiliation area is humanities and social sciences.

<sup>b</sup> Primary departmental affiliation area is medicine and health sciences.

Table 9. Accepted article opt-in by primary departmental affiliation of multi-article authors ( $N = 238$ )

Primary Departmental Affiliation Area	No. of Authors	Total Accepted	Opt-in ( $n = 119$ )	No Opt-in ( $n = 63$ )	Mixed ( $n = 56$ ), No. (yes-no)
Humanities and Social Sciences	52	139	77	26	36 (18-18)
Medicine and Health Sciences	21	61	18	27	16 (9-7)
Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math	16	38	24	10	4 (2-2)

Note: Ineligible articles removed.

To expand our view of the “who” of author uptake, we examined “where” authors were publishing by journal subject category areas and journal frequency. Table 10 shows the accepted article opt-in by the journal subject category assigned by Taylor & Francis. As compared with the accepted article opt-in by primary departmental affiliation area shown in table 6, the open access opt-in for a humanities and social sciences journal subject area is about 2.5 percent higher, medicine and health sciences is less than 1 percent higher, and STEM is 11 percent lower. It was not unexpected that an author's primary departmental affiliation area is not a one-to-one-match with the subject category of where they chose to publish. Eleven percent of eligible articles by authors with a primary departmental affiliation in humanities and social sciences were accepted in medicine and health sciences or STEM journals. For authors in medicine and health sciences, 26 percent of eligible articles were accepted in other journal subject categories, and for STEM authors, it was 30 percent. Taking a more granular look at where authors choose to publish from a disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspective could yield interesting

results with further study. Exploring the potential impact read and publish agreements might have on the publishing venue choices for Ohio State authors is a question we plan to investigate.

Finally, for the publishing outcomes, we looked at the most popular journals for Ohio State authors during the pilot period. There were 247 (including fifteen fully open access) journals with one accepted article, sixty-one (including two fully open access) journals with two accepted articles, and twenty-two (including three fully open access) journals with three articles. The accepted article opt-in for journals with four or more articles (all hybrid) is shown in table 11. The most popular journal, with twelve accepted articles, was *Early Education and Development*, a humanities and social sciences title with an open access uptake of 58 percent. *Current Eye Research*, a medicine and health sciences journal with seven accepted articles and 100 percent pilot agreement uptake, was the open access opt-in leader.

Table 10. Accepted article opt-in by journal subject category (N = 552)

<b>Journal Subject Category</b>	<b>Opt-in (n = 346)</b>	<b>No Opt-in (n = 206)</b>	<b>Open Access (%)</b>
Humanities and Social Sciences	228	102	69.1
Medicine and Health Sciences	57	61	48.3
Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math	61	43	58.7

*Note:* Ineligible articles removed.



Table 11. Accepted article opt-in by journals with four or more articles (N = 117)

Journal Name	Journal Subject Category	Articles per Journal	Opt-in (n = 63)	No Opt-in (n = 54)
<i>Early Education and Development</i>	HSS	12	7	5
<i>Current Eye Research</i>	MED	7	7	0
<i>Expert Review of Anticancer Therapy</i>	MED	7	1	6
<i>Quest</i>	STEM	7	4	3
<i>Traffic Injury Prevention</i>	STEM	7	4	3
<i>Atmosphere-Ocean</i>	STEM	6	0	6
<i>Communications in Algebra</i>	STEM	6	2	4
<i>Journal of Health Communication</i>	HSS	6	4	2
<i>Prehospital Emergency Care</i>	MED	6	4	2
<i>Annals of the American Association of Geographers</i>	HSS	5	5	0
<i>Inquiry: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Philosophy</i>	HSS	5	4	1
<i>Media Psychology</i>	HSS	5	4	1
<i>Molecular Physics</i>	STEM	5	2	3
<i>Theory Into Practice</i>	HSS	5	1	4
<i>Art Education</i>	HSS	4	4	0
<i>Brain Injury</i>	MED	4	3	1
<i>Educational Studies</i>	HSS	4	1	3
<i>Expert Opinion on Investigational Drugs</i>	MED	4	0	4
<i>Journal of Gerontological Social Work</i>	HSS	4	1	3
<i>Mass Communication and Society</i>	HSS	4	2	2
<i>Physiotherapy Theory and Practice</i>	MED	4	3	1

Note: Ineligible articles removed. Journal subject categories are as follows: (HSS) humanities and social sciences; (MED) medicine and health sciences; and (STEM) science, technology, engineering, and math.

## Discussion

Although we anticipated some learning would be necessary in developing, negotiating, implementing, and assessing University Libraries' first read and publish agreement, we could not have predicted just how much we would undertake during the pilot period. These learning opportunities can be broadly categorized into the following four categories: working with each other differently, learning how to best support our authors, seeing partially under the hood of a commercial publisher, and interpreting this learning for our consortial partners.

Before the creation of the TSPE strategic initiative, the collections strategist and scholarly sharing strategist did not have much overlapping functional work. We primarily worked together as program area heads in the same organizational division of University Libraries and broadly on the University Libraries management team. Working closely on this agreement allowed learning opportunities for us

both. The collections strategist had to be immersed in open access principles, shifting overarching priorities away from providing access with the greatest cost savings to additionally prioritizing author experience and choice. The scholarly sharing strategist became more directly involved in collections work, particularly in learning about fiscal priorities with the materials budget and participating in negotiating conversations with commercial publishers. The pilot agreement did not fundamentally change how the collections strategist and electronic resources officer worked together, but it did allow for a new working relationship between the electronic resources officer and scholarly sharing strategist, particularly in capturing desired open access principles and objectives in the license agreement.

Before the implementation of the pilot agreement, the collections strategist had mostly indirect relationships with Ohio State constituents. Working with subject librarians, the collections strategist—among other responsibilities—oversees the selection of University Libraries electronic journal collections and works closely with the electronic resources officer on the fiscal management of and access to these collections. While the scholarly sharing strategist had routinely engaged directly with editors and authors through the University Libraries publishing program, institutional repository program, and copyright services program, this agreement afforded a different scale and scope of direct communication and support for researcher authors at Ohio State. In particular, the collections strategist and scholarly sharing strategist became acutely aware of the author experience in a commercial publisher’s workflow, frequently fielding questions from authors about what they were seeing in the author services system and why. We learned there was a need to provide additional targeted outreach, engagement, and education opportunities for our diverse pool of authors and to not assume comfort or expertise with author services workflows simply because an author frequently publishes scholarly articles.

Working closely with Taylor & Francis on the implementation of the pilot agreement provided numerous learning opportunities for both the collections strategist and the scholarly sharing strategist. As part of the agreement, Ohio State and Taylor & Francis agreed to regular meetings to discuss the pilot in real time. This provided the opportunity for us to communicate direct feedback to the publisher gleaned from our support of authors, which was valuable for Taylor & Francis in the iteration of their author services workflows. Meanwhile, we were provided a close-up look at the internal workflows and processes of a large commercial publisher, in addition to how their desire to center the author experience translated to impactful support that the collections strategist and scholarly sharing strategist could provide authors throughout the process of selecting open access for their articles.

Beyond Ohio State, the learning opportunities created due to this agreement allowed the collections strategist, scholarly sharing strategist, and electronic resources officer to engage differently in our working relationships within our consortia partners. This experience positioned each of us as early adopters to lead in consortial conversations regarding transformative agreements and open access publishing. In particular, we leveraged this knowledge to support similar agreements pursued by OhioLINK and the BTAA, which amplifies the scale of impact on the scholarly publishing marketplace.

The read and publish pilot agreement demonstrated the need to prioritize partnerships. This work included modifying relationships with current partners and redefining working relationships as partnerships. To successfully launch the pilot, we partnered extensively with the Health Sciences Library. Although we have numerous agreements and arrangements on which we had collaborated, the read and publish pilot agreement allowed us to more deeply engage, find common priorities, and discuss fiscal sustainability. Similarly, meeting regularly with the vice provost and dean of University Libraries as a sponsor of the TSPE strategic initiative allowed for learning on all sides. The vice provost and dean was able to ground discussions with university administration peers about open access publishing in the experience of our pilot agreement.

For the pilot to be viable, we had to redefine our working relationship with Taylor & Francis. Previously we had a fairly typical customer relationship with Taylor & Francis; we purchased or licensed subscriptions to their content. And although the essential business relationship remains, it was necessary for us and Taylor & Francis to evolve our working relationship into a collaborative partnership. As this was their first read and publish agreement in the United States, they had as much to learn from us as we did from them.

This partnership required shared risk. For Ohio State, we were reallocating funds to support a read and publish agreement with a publisher through which our corresponding authors had previously published very few open access articles. And for Taylor & Francis, they were creating a new business model in the United States to potentially support the increasing demand for open access agreements. We were both invested in the success of the pilot agreement, even though we were defining success from different positions, perspectives, and bottom lines.

### **Further Research**

Several paths for potential future research were identified after the review of the available publishing data. Developing a study to examine the “why” of author uptake and the motivations behind authors’ choice of open access publication would allow us to better understand the demand and impact of this and other agreements. Specifically, a mixed methods study incorporating both quantitative analysis of author and publisher data alongside a qualitative component comprising focus groups and/or survey data would enrich and deepen our understanding.

Further exploring author uptake and author choice by academic discipline would be very helpful, both as a contribution to the literature as well as for practical outreach and engagement at Ohio State. Given the publishing portfolio of Taylor & Francis, with wide and deep coverage in the humanities and social sciences, we could broaden our understanding of the impact of no-fee open access publishing on subject disciplines that tend not to have sizable grant funding. Interdisciplinarity is a focus of both Taylor & Francis and Ohio State researchers, so further analysis of the author data to more fully understand disciplinary use would be an enlightening endeavor.

With the addition of new agreements since first starting one with Taylor & Francis, analyzing this pilot agreement alongside other pilot or initial read and publish agreements could aid in understanding the impact of these kinds of open access agreements at scale. How are funds maximized over time? Can we determine any formulas or rubrics that can aid in both high-level and specific assessment of read and publish agreements? During our pilot implementation and analysis, our realization grew that author payment models can be an equity challenge, with effects beyond our institution. Importantly then, how can we address, measure, and reckon with the equity challenges of open access agreements that rely on author-side payment models, and their global effect?

## Conclusion

The pilot read and publish agreement between Ohio State and Taylor & Francis enabled us to meet several goals established in the TSPE strategic initiative. First, we successfully developed, negotiated, implemented, and assessed a transformative agreement, the first of its kind in the Americas for Taylor & Francis. Second, we negotiated a single agreement inclusive of both reading and publishing components. Third, we greatly expanded our access to Taylor & Francis journals, meeting evolving research and learning needs of our constituents. Fourth, we provided an option for our corresponding authors to publish their articles open access and retain copyright to their intellectual output. Fifth, we enabled the publication of 346 open access articles at no expense to our authors, waiving a total of \$1,057,370 of list price APCs. Lastly, we learned how to work together differently and were able to share lessons learned with our institution and with our consortial partners.

The knowledge and experience we gained through the pilot agreement and shared in this article can provide others considering pursuing a transformative agreement for their institution with a blueprint to demystify the process. For Ohio State, Taylor & Francis made sense as a partner on this pilot due to the demand for increased reading access, the depth of disciplinary coverage, and the fact that we could pursue it independently as an institution, outside our consortia. Factors that may lead a library to explore a transformative agreement may vary, but from the experience documented here, access to entirely new datasets of publishing data, in addition to several hundred articles authored by Ohio State researchers that are now free to read across the world, has been a valuable return on investment.

Before the end of the pilot agreement period on December 31, 2022, we came to terms on a new three-year read and publish agreement with Taylor & Francis with very similar conditions as in the pilot agreement. Both parties committed to developing shared goals and creating a structure of reporting and accountability around those goals and outcomes, and we intend to align this shared work toward addressing equity issues in author-side payment publishing models. We look forward to facilitating continuing opportunities for Ohio State authors to choose open access publication as the scholarly publishing landscape continues to evolve. We will continue to partner with Taylor & Francis to optimize the agreement and look forward to future iterations.

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