

Concordia Open Access Author Fund: Final Report

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The following report summarizes the activities of the Concordia Open Access Author Fund, which ran as a pilot project in the 2011/2012 and 2012/2013 fiscal years. Funding was provided by the Office of the President and the Office of Research. The fund was managed by the Libraries.

The Concordia Open Access Author Fund was announced to the Concordia community on September 21, 2011. The last day for receipt of reimbursement requests was March 31, 2013.

In its first (short) fiscal year, the fund supported the open access publication of 11 works: 10 open access, peer-reviewed journal articles and 1 open access, peer-reviewed book chapter. The total amount paid out by the Fund was \$15,769.65. The average reimbursement was \$1433.61.

In the second year, the fund supported the open access publication of 13 works: 12 open access, peer-reviewed journal articles and 1 open access, peer-reviewed book chapter. The total amount paid out by the Fund was \$15,805.46. The average reimbursement was \$1215.80.

Pilot Project Figures	Articles Supported	Book Chapters Supported	Average reimbursement	Total reimbursements
2011 – 2012	10	1	\$ 1433.61	\$ 15,769.65
2012 – 2013	12	1	\$ 1215.80	\$ 15,805.46
Pilot Project totals	22	2	\$ 1315.63	\$ 31,575.11

In total, over the two-year period, the fund reimbursed authors of 22 peer-reviewed open access articles and 2 peer-reviewed open access book chapters. The cumulative amount paid out by the fund was **\$31,575.11**.

The fund supported authors from these Concordia departments:

Applied Human Sciences	1 article
Biology	3 articles
Building, Civil and Environmental Engineering	1 article
Computer Science and Software Engineering	2 articles
Economics	5 articles
Electrical and Computer Engineering	2 articles
Exercise Science	1 article
Geography, Planning & Environment	3 articles & 1 book chapter
Mechanical and Industrial Engineering	1 article & 1 book chapter
Political Science	1 article
Psychology	2 articles

The publishers of the open access content were:

Bentham Science	1 article
BioMed Central	8 articles
Co-Action Publishing	1 article
Copernicus	1 article
Engineering Information Institute	1 article
Frontiers	1 article
Institute of Physics	1 article
InTech	2 book chapters
MDPI Publishing	1 article
Optical Society of America	1 article
PLoS	2 articles
Springer Open	1 article
Wiley-Blackwell	2 articles
World Academic Publishing Company	1 article

Publications supported

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Author Feedback on the Concordia Open Access Author Fund

Feedback was sought from the 19 Concordia authors who participated in the fund. Answers were received from 10 of the authors.

1. In your opinion, is the Concordia Open Access Author Fund something we should offer on an ongoing basis at Concordia?

- Yes, I view it as worthwhile
- Yes. It takes a great deal of pressure off the back of the researcher and helps to insure that data is available to others in a timely fashion.
- Absolutely!
- Yes - this reinforces our competitive position (other universities are doing this), and it encourages an important new form of publication.
- absolutely, especially if you want to continue having faculty publish in open access fora
- Yes, absolutely! My alma mater (KIT, Germany) has a fund like this, and I am also aware of quite a few other universities in Canada with similar funds
- Absolutely
- ABSOLUTELY YES
- yes, absolutely
- Yes, I support the creation and use of this fund in the strongest terms.

2. Did the existence of the Fund influence your decision about where to publish your article?

- No, I had not known of the fund until after my paper was submitted
- No. Conceptually I like PLoSOne. It is the only journal I know where there is no ego involved in publishing. If the work is done in a competent fashion, it gets published.
- Yes. The Fund allows me to publish systematically in open access journals.
- We had already published two papers in open-access journals before we knew of the existence of the fund. (One was published in 2010 and was not eligible; the support we received was for a paper published in 2012.)
- Yes, without it I don't think I would have persisted with them, especially since on more than one occasion their incompetent editing standards and practices almost caused me to withdraw from the process altogether. Since the costs were being covered I stuck with it but with my money (even PDA money becomes "mine" when it has a level of discretion attached) I would have quit.
- Yes: I certainly prefer open access and I am actively involved in related activities (open science, open source, open data). However, my current grants cannot cover most of the -- rather high -- open access fees.
- Yes -- I am much more likely to publish in Open Access journals if I know there is an option to cover the open access fee.

- YES
- sometimes, if our budget is tough, we need the funds to publish some in open access journals
- Yes. In fact, the most significant and highest impact journal for my discipline is now an open-access journal, with a publishing fee of about \$2000. It is extremely useful for me to have access to this fund.

3. Did the Open Access Fund allow you to publish in an open access journal you were previously reluctant to publish in because of author processing charges?

- I had actually not realized how expensive it was to publish in PLOS ONE before submitting to that journal. Now, however, I would be reluctant to publish in an open access journal unless the Author Fund was available.
- No
- Yes
- (please see previous answer)
- Yes, see above
- Yes: not just reluctant, I simply would not have been able to afford it (my main funding source is an NSERC DG with currently \$15k/year, so I simply cannot justify spending \$1k-\$1.5k of this on open access charges for a single paper).
- Yes -- the cost of publication is (unfortunately) always a consideration when deciding where to submit an article.
- YES
- Yes
- Not so much that I was reluctant to publish in the journal, but rather was unable to publish anything except when I had research funds allocated to this purpose. However, for conceptual papers, debates, and so on, this is not helpful. To participate in the ongoing dialogue among the leading scientists in my field, the open access fund is very important.

4. Do you think you would continue to publish in open access journal regardless of the Fund's existence?

- I would be a bit reluctant to publish in the open access journals, particularly those with very high fees, but I would probably publish occasionally in them (depending on the appropriateness of the journal for the content of a particular paper) even if the fund were not available.
- Yes
- Yes but I will probably submit/publish less articles.
- Yes, but I would be at least somewhat more reticent to do so, particularly when grant funding is tight.
- I don't think so. They need to establish themselves as equivalent to the traditional journals, which I don't think they are quite yet in the imagination of my colleagues. I would certainly not willingly put up with the nonsense I put up with this past 5 months for a dubious career payoff.
- See 3: currently, I would not be able to afford it, so no.
- Yes, because some of these are now well-respected journals in my field. But I would not favour these journals to the same extent as I would if I knew that I could access funds to pay the fee.
- PROBABLY NOT, NOT WITH THE STATE OF FUNDING FROM NSERC. I WOULD TRY TO AVOID IT MORE.
- difficult to say, if funds are available, we may publish more papers in open access journals
- Yes, but not as often.

5. If the Fund were to continue, do you have suggestions for improving it in the future?

- I would advertise it a bit more to faculty.
- No. It worked quite well as originally conceived. Do not fix (tamper with) that which is not broken.
- Thanks to Annie, the Fund was very easy to access and I really hope it will be to continue.
- The process seemed smooth and straightforward to me. I have no suggestions to offer at this time.
- I get a lot of unsolicited requests to publish in these journals. I don't have the time to research their relative standing in the marketplace (or even if they're legitimate. A list of approved and vetted journals would go a long way to soothing my anxieties about putting my toe in that water again.
- If I remember correctly, there were some rules regarding reimbursement and first authorship (or corresponding authorship). This should be somewhat relaxed, as decisions who is first/corresponding author varies across disciplines and is therefore not a good indicator on whether the charges can be reimbursed. I can see that we do not want to "cross-finance" other institutions, but I'd prefer to see a more general rule, e.g.: either the first author or the corresponding must be from Concordia. I also don't quite remember if MSc and PhD students were eligible; if not, these should be allowed to be reimbursed as well (again an issue with corresponding authorship: in case the student is first and corresponding author, I believe it was not possible for me to pay the fees and get reimbursed under the fund). Please keep us up-to-date on any decisions for a new fund; I know money is tight these days, but for us it definitely made a difference.
- Expanding the scope of the funds to include open-access fees for traditional journals with an open access option?
- WORKS GREAT AS IS.
- it is good
- I found that the existing way the fund was administered was just fine.