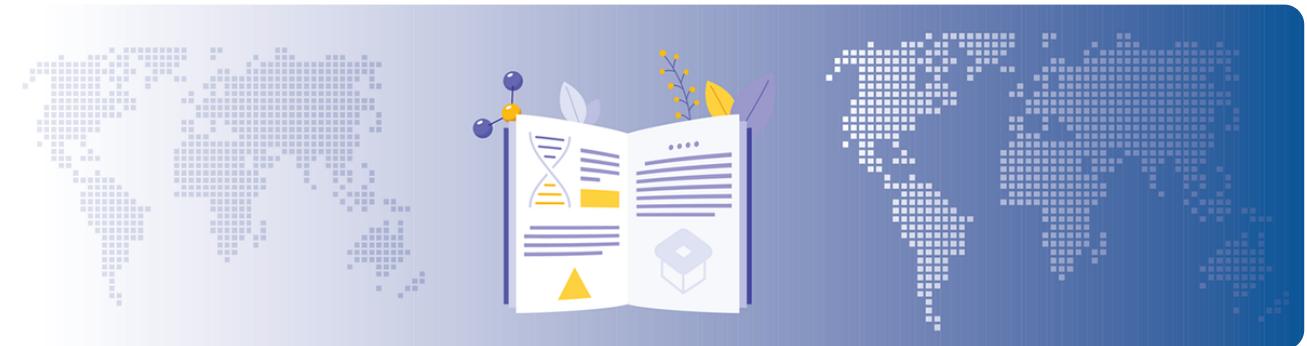


Publications update

Programs Provide Opportunities for Low- and No-Cost Publishing for Authors

By Matt Wascavage

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Source: *Adobe Stock/AKrasov and puckillustrations*.

Continuing changes to the scholarly publishing landscape increase the need for collaboration and conversation among publishers, funders, and open science stakeholders worldwide. And our Society publications are already a part of that collaboration.

The 13 journals published by ASA, CSSA, and SSSA in partnership with Wiley take advantage of domestic and international agreements developed by Wiley to manage the transformation of the marketplace and journal business model timeline to support the goals of open science. Additionally, Wiley participates in programs that provide discounts and waivers of publication fees to eligible authors, making our journals attainable outlets for more researchers. Philanthropic programs have also expanded the reach of our Society journals to thousands of institutions in developing nations worldwide.

Transformational Agreements

The continuing move to embrace open science, most notably through open access initiatives, has been intensified by the development of transformational agreements with countries, consortia, and institutions worldwide. Under these contracts, researchers often receive free access to journal content as well as the opportunity to publish their work with an open access license in subscription (hybrid) journals at no additional charge. Transformational agreements can also cover article-processing charges (APCs) for work published in gold (fully) open access journals, allowing researchers to publish for free. These complicated and customized deals vary greatly, depending on the needs of researchers and related funder mandates. ASA, CSSA, and SSSA journals benefit from timely agreements developed by Wiley that support our scientific community and provide a foundation for publication sustainability. Researchers served by these agreements, as a benefit of our publishing partnership, can publish in our journals without incurring personal or research-funding budget expense.

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Projekt DEAL in Germany was Wiley's first transformational deal and the most prolific to date. The agreement between more than 700 Projekt DEAL institutions and Wiley is part of a wide strategy to enable a large-scale transition to open access. Projekt DEAL provides researchers at these institutions access to online subscription content, including our 13 journals, and allows authors to publish articles open access at no cost.

Additional deals have been made with several groups throughout Europe. An open access agreement was recently signed between Wiley and 59 Spanish universities and CSIC, the largest research institution in Spain, representing nearly 200,000 researchers across Spain. This read-and-publish agreement will allow about 70% of articles published by participating institutions in 2021 to be published open access, enabling more research from leading Spanish institutions to be read and cited. And domestic U.S. multi-year deals have been finalized in Iowa, Ohio, and Virginia, which will directly benefit authors submitting manuscripts to our journals.

Waivers and Discounts

Authors located in low- and middle-income countries may qualify for a discount or APC waiver when their original research or review manuscript is accepted for

publication in any of the six gold open access journals published by ASA, CSSA, and SSSA through Research4Life (www.research4life.org), a program managed by Wiley. Participating countries are concentrated in Asia, Africa, and Latin America; a complete list of qualifying countries can be found at <https://bit.ly/3yXfJWp>.

To ensure compliance with publishing ethics, during the review process, our journal editorial board members are not aware of any potential discount or waiver available to an author. The automatic system controlling discounts and waivers is managed by administrative staff at Wiley, who are not involved in decisions regarding manuscript acceptance. Additionally, authors are reminded to not discuss issues concerning payment of open access licensing APCs with journal editors.

Our journals also take advantage of Wiley's partnership with Research4Life to offer institutions at these same low- and middle-income countries free and low-cost access to the seven ASA, CSSA, and SSSA hybrid subscription journals on the Wiley Online Library platform (<https://acsess.onlinelibrary.wiley.com>). In 2020, close to 6,700 institutions in 87 countries had free or very-low-cost online access to the Wiley Online Library via philanthropic initiatives around the world. This was a 13% increase over 2019.

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Making our content available to diverse researchers in developing nations directly fulfills our strategic goals of disseminating scientific information to ensure a healthy and sustainable world. Incentivizing authors to publish in ASA, CSSA, and SSSA journals reinforces our goals to advance knowledge and to improve agriculture and the environment. In addition to these service-focused initiatives, certain ASA, CSSA, and SSSA journals at times offer additional discount and waiver opportunities managed by the journal editor and managing editor to preserve the current missions of our Societies.

Reaching Beyond Traditional Boundaries

Over time, the effect of large international transformational deals will lead to further publication assessment. A significant rise in the proportion of original research published as open access will no doubt trigger more revisions to the publishing model. Metrics and goals will be updated, adjusting to changes in the scholarly publishing community. Publishers will develop and refine their framework to assess and evaluate journal titles for conversion to gold open access while ensuring sustainability. In the end, success will be measured by meeting the needs of Society members, researchers, and institutions.

Maintaining our history of high quality and reputation for excellence remains a focus of our work on behalf of the research community. Reaching successful publication outcomes while growing will require open and transparent communication between all parties. Engaging and supporting a diverse pool of researchers, reviewers, and editors will expand the impact of our journals. Ultimately, providing journal authors and users with a positive experience while expanding our services and reach beyond traditional boundaries will provide stability and a foundation for continued service into the future.

Hybrid Subscription Journals

Publishing society(ies) in parentheses.

Agronomy Journal (ASA)

Crop Science (CSSA)

Crop, Forage & Turfgrass Management (ASA, CSSA)

Journal of Environmental Quality (ASA, CSSA, SSSA)

Journal of Plant Registrations (CSSA)

Natural Sciences Education (ASA)

Soil Science Society of America Journal (SSSA)

Gold Open Access Journals

Publishing society(ies) in parentheses.

Agricultural & Environmental Letters (ASA, CSSA, SSSA)

Agrosystems, Geosciences & Environment (ASA, CSSA)

The Plant Genome (CSSA)

The Plant Phenome Journal (ASA, CSSA)

Urban Agriculture & Regional Food Systems (ASA, CSSA)

Vadose Zone Journal (SSSA)

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