



ACM Publications Update

SGB Meeting

3 November 2023



Association for
Computing Machinery

Advancing Computing as a Science & Profession

Contents

- ACM Open / Open Access Transition Update
- Publication / Research Integrity in ACM Publications
- Joint Taskforce on Workshop Publications
- SIG Newsletters – Article Types & eRights Process
- Other Topics / Discussion





Open Access Transition Update



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Why flip the Digital Library to Open Access?

Internal & External Drivers:

- ACM member-led petition & ACM Executive Council statement to transition sustainably by end of 2025
- Government and funder mandates (Plan S, OSTP memo, and various national policies)
- Beneficial to authors and the computer sciences community

Key Benefits:

- **Innovation:** OA creates greater readership and citation of research, thus furthering the field of computer science
- **Sustainability:** re-balances ACM's revenues to better align with the most engaged institutions worldwide
- **Impact & Discoverability:** Increased access -> Increased usage -> Increased citations

ACM OPEN Original Vision



- Launched January 2020 Following 18 Months of Development with Institutional Partners
- A Model to Sustainably Transition ACM Publications to Open Access Over Next 5-10 Years
- Funded by Institutions – If 100% of institutions signed on, then no APCs would be necessary
- Sustainability Means Transitioning \$21M+ in DL Income Annually + Inflation Over Time
- Major Challenge is to Rebalance \$21M+ of DL Income from ~2,600+ institutions
- Launched as Optional Model in Early Years with Intention to Transition to 100% OA over 5-10 Years.
- Principles of sustainability, transparency, fairness, & equity
- Mandatory OA When Critical Mass Achieved. This changed!!!!
- After Full Flip There will be Only 3 Ways to Publish with ACM (ACM Open, APC, or Waiver)



The ACM OPEN Model

- **Institutional Model** – Ideally, costs shared between libraries, CS Departments, and “Dean of Research” budgets
- **One Annual Price** - No APCs or Hidden Fees for Authors or Institutions. Unlimited Read + Publish. Tier-based Pricing.
- **10 Tier System** - Tiers Determined by Average of Previous 3 Years of Corresponding Author Publication History (i.e. – APC Eligible Articles)
- **Rebalancing of ACM Publication Income** as transition from “Read” to “Publish” occurs. For ACM $\frac{1}{3}$ of institutions will pay more and $\frac{2}{3}$ will pay less
- **Multi-Year Agreements** – 3-5 Years for predictability for Institutions & ACM
- **Financial Transparency.** Goal is to Cover Publication Costs, not increase “profits” or “surpluses”. Annual Accounting for Community (i.e. – CACM article)
- **Funder Mandate Compliant** – Plan S, OSTP, UKRI, JST, etc.
- **Financial Waivers to Address Equity Concerns** – 3-5% of articles annually from 100+ countries (540 articles / year)



ACM Open Model - Original Challenge

What happens to 68% of ACM DL Income When All Research Articles are OA?

Top # Inst. By Article Output	# of Articles (cumulative)	% of 2019 Published Research Articles (Expenses)	% of DL License Income (~\$20M)
Top 100	6,874	34%	5%
Top 250	11,119	55%	11%
Top 500	14,354	71%	18%
Top 1,000	17,387	86%	32%
Total	20,218	100%	100%

* Would be good to present 2022 publication and financial data to compare progress...

Ultimate Goal – More Balanced Revenues & Expenses

Basic Idea is that Most of Future Revenue Should Come from Institutions Affiliated with Authorship

Top # Inst. By Article Output 2020	# Articles (cumulative)	% of 2020 Published Research Articles (Expenses)	% of Future Revenue (~\$24M)
Top 100	6,792	32%	30.1%
Top 250	11,124	52%	56%
Top 500	14,584	68%	75%
Top 1000	17,675	83%	98%
Total	21,304	100%	100%

Usage Benefit of Publishing OA in the DL

ACM compared the average number of downloads and citations for research articles published behind ACM DL Paywall to the average number of downloads and citations for research articles published on an Open Access basis in the ACM DL.

Publication Type	Usage Multiple
Journal	2.78x
Conference	3.7x
Magazine	2.35x

* Based on articles published in the ACM DL between 2013-2022 using DL download tracking system

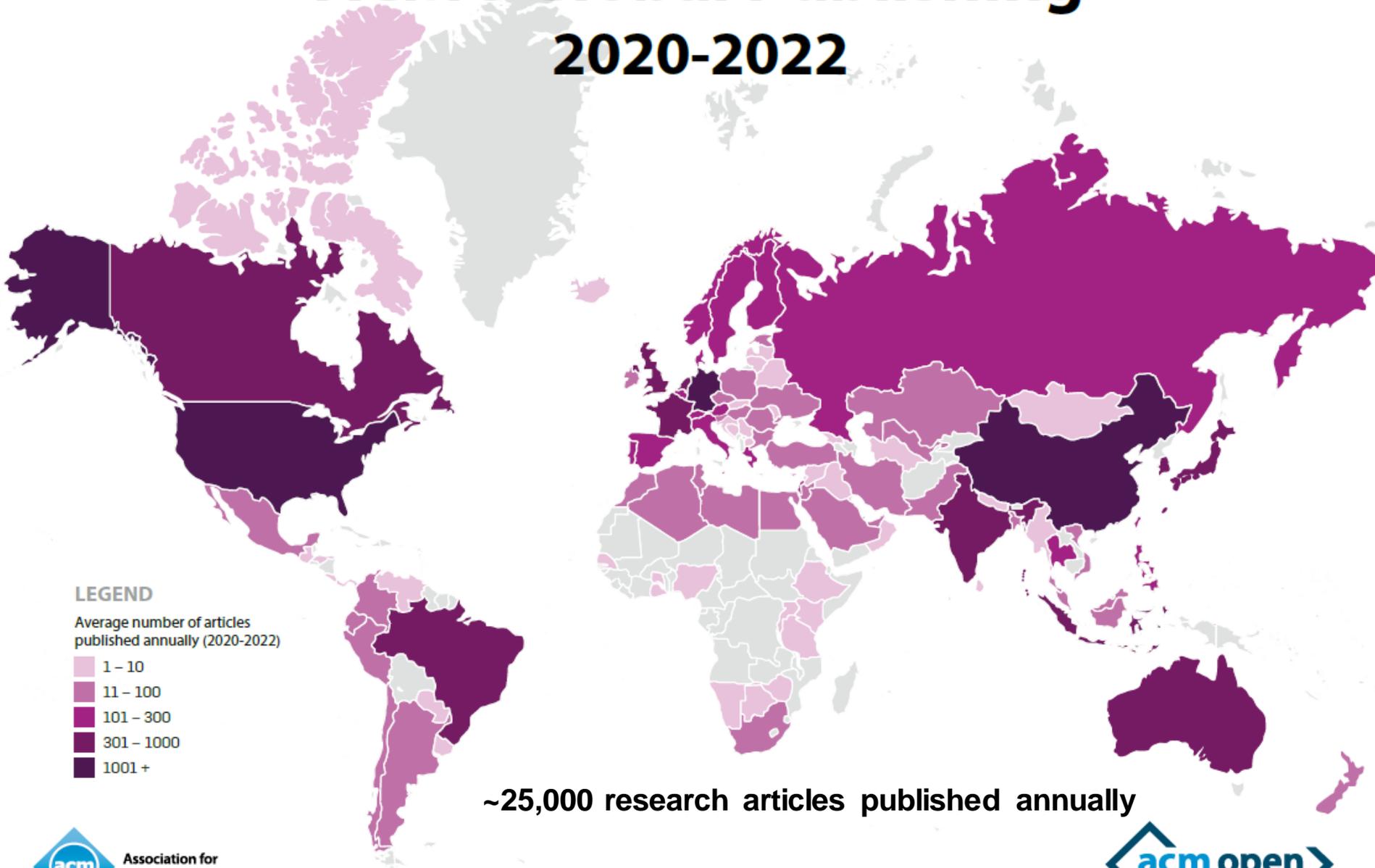
Citation Benefit of Publishing OA in DL

Access Type	Total Publications	Total Citations	Average Citations per Article
Closed	432,067	6,577,158	15.22
OA	147,428	3,806,341	25.82

* Based on data from Dimensions taken May 8, spanning from 2013-2022



ACM's Global Publishing 2020-2022



LEGEND

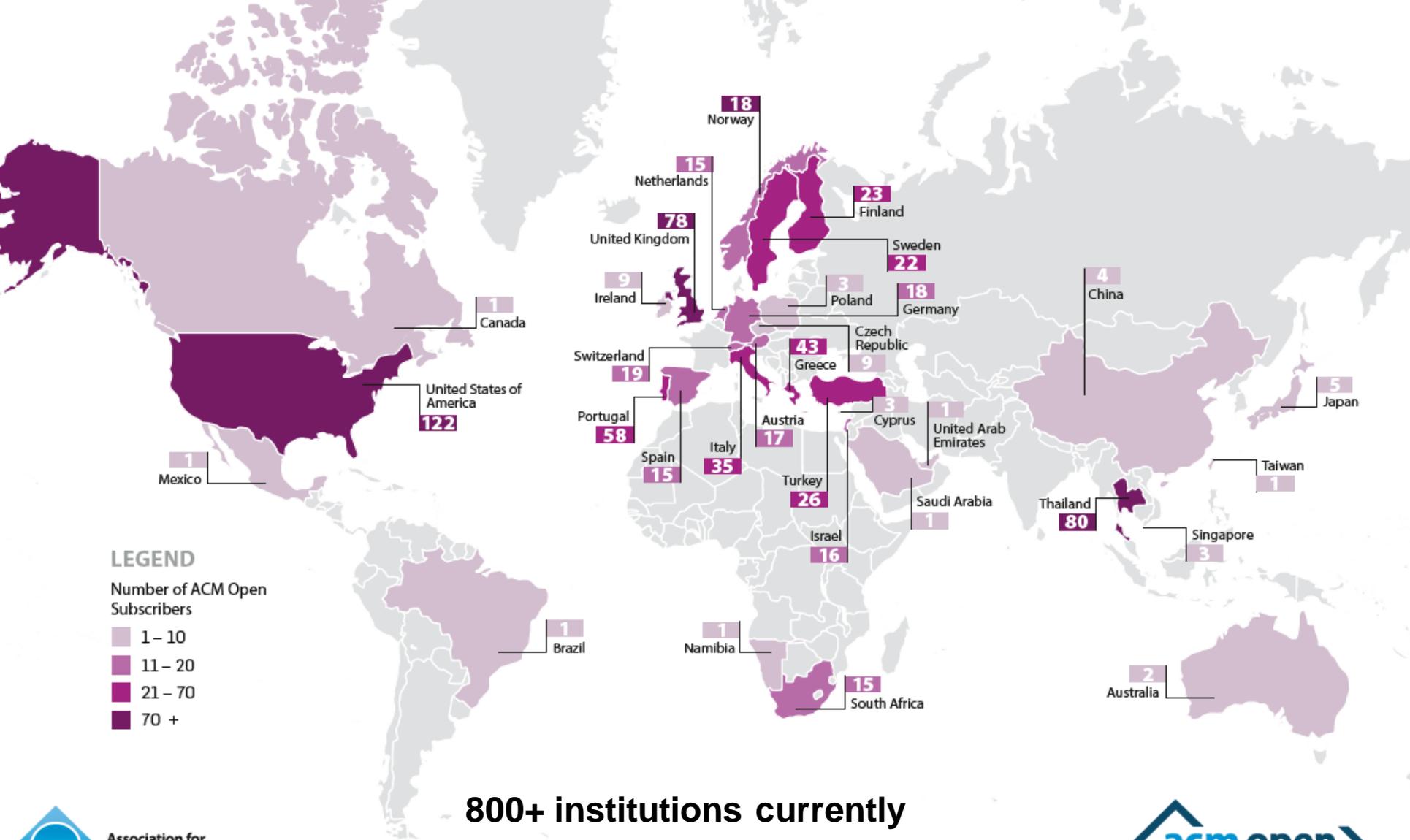
Average number of articles published annually (2020-2022)

- 1 - 10
- 11 - 100
- 101 - 300
- 301 - 1000
- 1001 +

~25,000 research articles published annually

ACM Open Global Participation

Institutions Subscribing to ACM Open (June 2023)



800+ institutions currently

Snapshot of 2022 Publications – by Region



Corresponding Author Region	% of Total
East Asia & Pacific	44%
Europe & Central Asia	26%
North America	23%
South Asia	3%
Latin America & Caribbean	2%
Middle East & North Africa	2%
Sub-Saharan Africa	0%



2023 ACM Open Progress by Tier

Tier Levels	Article Range	Tier Pricing (\$)	2020 # Institutions	2023 # Institutions	Institutions Transitioned
1	75+	\$95,000	28	31	11
2	60-74	\$70,000	14	23	7
3	40-59	\$50,000	54	62	18
4	30-39	\$35,000	50	50	13
5	20-29	\$25,000	91	106	39
6	16-19	\$20,000	62	66	18
7	12-15	\$15,000	96	112	34
8	8-11	\$12,000	197	205	67
9	4-7	\$9,500	425	484	114
10	0-3	\$6,000* (\$2,500)	1683	1561	480
Totals			2,700	2,700	801

Assumptions:

- All Tier 10 institutions will gradually be reduced to ~\$2,500 level as certain OA thresholds are met to mitigate the risk of short-term cancellations.
- Longer term cancellations of Tier 10 institutions remains the single largest risk for the ACM Open model

Transition / Sustainability Risks

1. Lack of Progress in China, India, Canada, France, Japan = 41% of articles
2. ICPS – Quality / Quantity Related Risks. Closely Related to China Risk. Proposal to Address Risks in 2024 & 2025 Before Full-Flip
3. Library Budgets Continue to Feel Pressure from Global Economy
4. Holdouts from Large and Mid-sized Research-Intensive Institutions – Will Join “When They Have To”
5. Long-Tail ACM Open Cancellations After Full Flip. Entire Model Intended to Mitigate This Risk
6. If ACM Delays Full-Flip Decision and Implementation, Risks from ACM Open Customers Not Supporting Model. Risks from Community.
7. Financial Impact on SIGs if Full Flip Too Early and Too Many Conference Authors Decide Not to Publish with ACM
8. Financial Impact on SIGs if Full Flip Too Late and Authors Decide to Stop Supporting ACM
9. Chicken or Egg Problem with Timing of Decision / Announcement of Full Flip



Strategic Risks

Pre-Flip Risks

- Lack of Progress in China (30% of Articles, including ICPS)
- ICPS – Quality / Quantity Risks. Closely Related to China Risk. (50% of ICPS from China)
- Lack of Progress in India, Canada, France, Japan (11% of Articles, including ICPS)
- Library Budgets Continue to Feel Pressure from Global Economy / COVID-19 – Cost Issue
- Holdouts From Large Research-Intensive Institutions – Will Join “When They Have To”? Will They?

Post-Flip Risks

- Level of Above Risks Will be Clearer, but Most Are Likely to Remain at Some Level
- Mandatory APCs For Authors Not Affiliated with ACM Open Institutions May Have an Impact on ACM’s Publishing Program, including Conference Publication & Registrations
- Will Long-Tail of Non-Publishing Institutions Cancel After All Content in the DL is OA?
- Will Smaller Institutions with Less Publishing Activity Cancel After All Content in the DL is OA?



ICPS: The 'Early Flip'

In **January 2024**, [International Conference Proceeding Series](#) (ICPS) will transition to **Gold Open Access**

- All articles in this series will transition to Open Access
- Authors will need to pay an article processing charge (APC) or be affiliated with an institution participating in ACM Open
- 9,500 ICPS articles published in 2022

Communications are underway

- [FAQs](#) for authors and conference organizers
- This is a big step towards transitioning our portfolio, and more is to come

ACM will be the first major computer sciences publisher to transition to 100% Open Access; we believe this will benefit authors and the community, but risks exist



ACM Publications Finance Article

Published Open Access in Communications of the ACM

acm publications finances

DOI:10.1145/3668184

BY WENDY HALL, DIVESH SRIVASTAVA, AND SCOTT E. DELMAN

ACM Publications Finances for 2021

IN THE SPRING of 2020, ACM began a multi-year transition to become a fully Open Access (OA) Publisher. One of the publicly stated requirements for that transition was to develop and implement a sustainability plan to ensure that ACM Publications could continue to operate at a high-level with the quality of its publications and the

services it provides to the community, including the ability to continue making investments in the ACM Digital Library platform and our Publications Program and to continue investing in important initiatives for the scientific community such as Research Integrity, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), Public Policy, Education, and Professional Development programs for researchers, practitioners, and students around the world.

As a non-profit and mission-based organization that impacts approximately 2.5 million individuals annually, ACM Publications and the ACM Digital Library are a core part of ACM's past and future success. As a publisher, we are committed to providing trusted information resources in the form of journals, conference

proceedings, magazines, books, and newsletters delivered through what has become one of the computing communities' most vital resources for research, practice, and education.

When ACM launched the ACM Open model in January 2020, we made a commitment to the computing community and to our institutional digital library customers that we would be completely transparent about the financial impacts of the transition to OA, before, during, and after the transition is complete. This transparency first manifested itself in the form of an article published in the May 2020 issue of *Communications of the ACM* that provided significant details about ACM's 2019 calendar year publications-related income and publications-related expenses, in ad-

dition to a narrative explaining the nuances behind the numbers. In December 2021, we published a similar article focusing on 2020 calendar year figures. This article now reports the 2021 figures and includes additional information about how the transition to OA is progressing. Over the past few years, there has been significant lag in the time we received financial information and were able to report on those figures and provide a narrative in this format. ACM normally reports financials on a July through June fiscal calendar, so converting to calendar year takes time. Going forward, it is our intention to reduce this lag and also report on calendar year 2022 publication finances in the early fall of this year or sooner, which will bring our reporting completely up-to-date.

Looking at the 2021 figures, several key themes emerge:

- **ACM Publication-related income is accelerating, but expenses are growing faster.** 2021 calendar year income grew approximately 3.5% over calendar year 2020 as compared to 1.0% income growth over the 2019-2020 time period. Nevertheless, expenses grew faster resulting in a net margin of 2.3% in 2021 compared to 2.5% for 2020 and 2.8% for 2019. The transition to ACM Open was still in an early stage so the impact of ACM Open income was limited. Over the past year, growth of ACM Open has accelerated, but so have our expenses (such as, production expenses, digital library expenses, ethics and plagiarism related expenses, and staffing expenses are all on the rise). Inflation relating to the economic impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic were also a major factor in rising expenses.

- **Article Submissions and the Number of Published Articles increased significantly in 2021 resulting in increased expenses.** In 2020, ACM published just under 2,000 articles across its portfolio of 60+ journals. In 2021, that figure increased to nearly 2,900, an increase of approximately 30%. As a result, article submission and production related expenses skyrocketed. Many of ACM's journal-related expenses are based on the number of articles we publish, including services such as peer review software, copyediting, composition and typesetting,

metadata tagging, and long-term digital preservation expenses.

In addition, ACM has become more proactive about launching journals in important and emerging research areas in the Computing community and these launches have started to kick in over the past few years supporting the article trends we experienced in 2021.

It is our sense that ACM conference submissions and published conference articles also increased significantly during this same time period, although it is harder to quantify since the hundreds of ACM conferences and ICPS conferences utilize dozens of different third-party submission systems, so obtaining aggregated data from these systems is difficult. What we do know is that since many ACM and ICPS conferences temporarily removed the requirement to register and attend conferences in person during the pandemic lock down, this likely favorably impacted the growth of submissions and published articles in 2021 and our expenses related to the use of these various submission systems rose significantly from 2020 levels.

These factors, coupled with above average inflation and expenses from our third-party service providers (such as, software providers, production vendors, and print distribution) ac-

2021 Revenue Breakdown

Income	2021	2020	2019
Digital Library: Consortia, Corporates, & Govt Licenses	18,816,140	23,569,075	23,992,725
Digital Library: Open Access Licenses	1,287,471	516,000	N/A
Digital Library: Articles Pay Per View	80,020		
Institutional Membership Dues	367,366		
Subscription Revenue (Including SIGS); a la Carte Subscriptions	808,008		
SIG Hardcopy Magazine Subscriptions (Interactions/Inroads)	130,770		
Digital SIG Master Package	155,312		
Advertising, Including SIGS	1,076,250		
ICPS Proceedings: Non-ACM Conference Publication Fees	464,864		
Open Access Revenue (APCs)	347,200		
All Other Publications Revenue: ACM Books, etc.	400,969		
Total Income	24,934,370	24,085,075	23,992,725

2021 vs. 2020, 2019 High-Level ACM Publications Financials

Income	2021	2020	2019
Subscriptions & Advertising	23,646,899	23,569,075	23,992,725
Digital Library: Open Access Licenses	1,287,471	516,000	N/A
Total Income	24,934,370	24,085,075	23,992,725
Expenses			
Journals	4,402,061	3,896,143	4,081,846
Magazines	5,444,898	5,313,187	5,519,977
Proceedings	5,820,381	5,468,671	5,631,759
Digital Library	5,764,836	5,988,960	5,098,667
Agents/Sales	2,907,170	2,948,053	2,747,357
Publications Board	11,079	60,025	211,615
Total Expense	24,350,425	23,475,039	23,301,221
Publishing Program, net	583,845	610,038	691,505

count for the expense increases we experienced in 2021.

- **Digital Library "Read Only" income declined for the first time in its history, but this was offset by an increase in ACM Open related income resulting in sufficient growth to overcome the expense increases.** ACM Open income increased from \$516,000 in 2020 to \$1,287,471 in 2021, but this still only represented a very small percentage (5%) of the overall ACM Publications income. In future years, this growth percentage will be one of the key metrics to determine whether we are on track with our transition to "sustainable" Open Access.

- **Author Paid Article Processing Charges (APCs) increased significantly from 2020 to 2021.** Net income from APCs increased from \$88,400 in 2020 to \$347,200 in 2021. This is not the total annual "gross" income from APCs, but rather the net income that ACM reports as income after deducting APC income returned to institutional customers as part of ACM's commitment to not "double dip" through the transition to full Open Access in the ACM Digital Library. APC income will likely become a more significant income stream for ACM in future years as we transition to an Open Access publisher, as we expect authors from institutions not participating in ACM Open to be required to pay APCs to publish with ACM.

- **Conference Proceedings related expenses increased significantly due**

to higher submission and peer review software expenses and the continued expansion of ACM's XMI-based production system (aka TAPS). As with journals, an increase in the number of conference submissions and articles published accounts for some of these expenses, while much of the increase can be attributed to the increased costs associated with delivering HTML versions of all conference articles in the ACM Digital Library. Put simply, the combination of article inflation, economic inflation, and the need to provide more flexible article formats to the DL, which aid with discovery and use of ACM Publications in the ACM DL, explain these increased costs.

- **Increased investment in Research Integrity initiatives continues to rise.** Over the past five years, we have experienced a steady increase in the number of credible allegations of publishing-related misconduct. To manage the increasing load while maintaining a lean organization, ACM has increasingly turned to third-party professionals experienced with investigating allegations of wrongdoing. We report high-level data about the number and types of allegations and investigations we receive (see <http://bit.ly/y6is0n> for details).

Wendy Hall and Divesh Srivastava are co-authors of the ACM Publications Board. Scott Delman is ACM Director of Publications.

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2022 Calendar Year Financials Article Under Development



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2021 Revenue Breakdown

Income

Digital Library: Consortia, Corporates, & Govt Licenses	18,816,140
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2022 Calendar Year Pubs Finances



Revenue Type	\$
DL "Read-Only" Consortia, Govt, Corporate Licenses	\$18,600,195
ACM Open Institutional Licenses	\$4,391,615
DL Article Pay Per View	\$62,940
Institutional Membership Dues	\$316,769
A La Carte Subscription Revenues (inc. SIGs)	\$864,273
SIG Hardcopy Magazine Subscriptions (Interactions/InRoads)	\$123,759
Digital SIG Packages	\$135,023
Advertising	\$1,024,839
ICPS Proceedings Fees	\$366,410
APC Revenue	\$227,400
All Other Pubs Revenue (ACM Books, etc.)	\$291,233
Total Revenues	\$26,404,456



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2022 Calendar Year Pubs Finances

Expenses	\$
Journals	\$4,502,039
Magazines	\$5,915,594
Proceedings	\$6,597,559
Digital Library	\$6,404,779
Agents / Cost of Sales	\$3,106,888
Publications / DL Boards	\$166,325
Total Expenses	\$26,693,184
Publishing Program Net	(\$288,728) or -1%



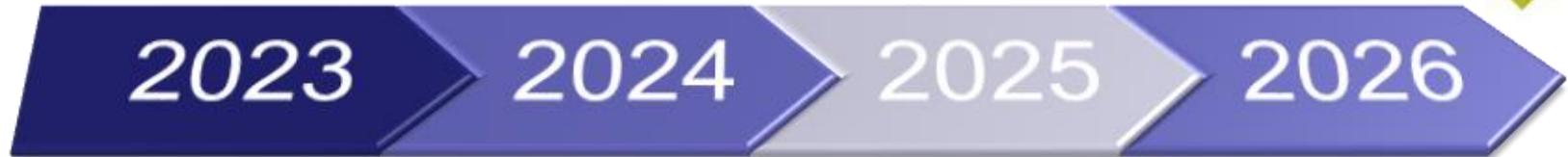
2022 Calendar Year Pubs Finances



2022 Article-Level Expenses	Magazines	Journals	Proceedings	DL, Cost of Sales, & Volunteer Boards
2022 Cost	\$5,915,594	\$4,502,039	\$6,597,559	\$9,677,992
# of APC-eligible articles	256	3,246	21,394	24,896
Publishing cost per article	\$23,107.79	\$1,386.95	\$308.38	\$388.74
DL cost per article	\$388.00	\$388.00	\$388.00	N/A
Total cost per article	\$23,495.79	\$1,774.95	\$696.38	N/A



Timeline to Full-Flip



- (1) 2020-2023 Progress to 35%
- (2) China, India, Canada, France Risks (41%)
- (3) ICPS 10K Risk
- (4) CACM flipping to 100% OA in 2023
- (5) New Staff Hired
- (6) Technical Infrastructure / Reporting Systems etc.

- (1) ICPS early flip: 9.5k / 25k articles annually flipping to mandatory OA
- (2) 18 Months to Announce & Prepare for Full-Flip
- (3) Community Outreach
- (4) Continued China Engagement

- (1) 60-70% of articles will be OA
- (2) % of DL Income Transitioned Becomes Most Important Metric
- (3) Positive Impact of APC Income from ICPS TBD?
- (4) GO / NO GO decision by ACM Council June 2025

- (1) 100% articles OA
- (2) What Happens After Full-Flip?
- (3) Impacts All Authors Submitting Articles to ACM Publications after 1/1/23
- (4) Impact of Mandatory APC Policy on ACM Conferences & SIGs?
- (5) How to Fund Potential Shortfall?



ICPS: The 'Early Flip'

- In **January 2024**, [International Conference Proceeding Series](#) (ICPS) will transition to **Gold Open Access**
 - All articles in this series will transition to Open Access
 - Authors will need to pay an article processing charge (APC) or be affiliated with an institution participating in ACM Open
 - 9,500 published articles in 2022
- Communications are underway
 - [FAQs](#) for authors and conference organizers
 - This is a big step towards transitioning our portfolio, and more is to come

ACM will be the first major computer sciences publisher to transition to Open Access; we believe this will benefit authors and the community



Considerations for SIGs



- By 12/31/25 it is expected that 60-70% of ACM Conference and ACM Journal articles will be published as part of ACM Open multi-year licenses.
- Remaining 30-40% of articles will require an APC of \$700 / \$1,000 in 2026 if not eligible for economic / financial waivers.
- What is less certain is the % of DL revenue will be transitioned and secure by that time.
- Best way to reduce the % of authors impacted by this full-flip being required to pay APCs is writing to department heads and university librarians urging them to sign ACM Open licenses with ACM.
- What will happen with Joint ACM / IEEE Conferences? Need Community engagement!
- What will be the impact on ACM Conferences? Concerns raised about authors not feeling like they are "double-charged" for registration, conference presentation, and APC fees.
- What is impact on SIGs that depend on \$3.5-\$4.0 DL allocation?



Actions for ACM Staff, SIG Leaders, Community



- Address potential confusion around APCs, Sheridan conference paper fees, presentation fees for authors, and conference registration fees
- Engage Membership, Authorship, SIGs to actively lobby institutions to join ACM Open as soon as possible before full-flip
- Staff to conduct SIG / Conference focused Webinars on OA / ACM Open in November. More to come...
- ACM/IEEE Co-sponsored conferences and journals is an important question. IEEE approach to OA is very different than ACM's. ACM leadership is engaging with IEEE leadership about how to address. Need Community Support!!!!
- Staff and Volunteers to Engage with China and Other High Risk Countries
- Council and SIGs to Start Considering Impacts of Potential Shortfall
- Actively develop DL Value Proposition to mitigate the risks of non-publishing institutions canceling over longer-term post flip
- Regular Quarterly Progress Updates to the Executive Committee
- Other actions? – suggestions welcome



Research Integrity in ACM Publications



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Introduction

- E+P Committee established in 2012 by Publications Board to investigate and adjudicate allegations of ethical misconduct in the Publications process.
- 2017 Committee started reporting high-level statistics on the types of cases it has investigated
- Since 2017 Committee has investigated ~225 cases
- 40-50 active cases under investigation currently
- 50-55% of these cases result in proven violations with range of penalties
- Over last 3-4 years there has been a noticeable increase in allegations
 - Related to ACM Conferences
 - Related to ICPS Conferences
 - Better tools exist to support investigations
 - ACM has invested more resources for investigations – systems, legal, etc.
 - Community sees more action and claimants appear more willing to come forward



Oversight / Governance – Pubs Cases

- Publications Board
 - Wendy Hall, co-Chair
 - Divesh Srivastava, co-Chair
- Ethics & Publications Committee –
 - Michael Kirkpatrick, Chair
 - Shan Lu, Vice Chair
- Program Committee Chairs for pre-publication cases
- HQ Staff
 - Scott Delman, Director of Publications
 - Barbara Ryan, Intellectual Property & Rights Manager
- ACM COPE for cases that overlap or get referred
- Investigations and Decision Making is governed by established ACM Publications Policies and ACM-wide Policies



ACM Publications Policies

<https://www.acm.org/publications/policies>



- Policy on Publication Rights & Licensing (formerly Copyright Policy)
- Policy on Authors
- Policy on Readership
- Policy on Inappropriate Content
- Policy on Peer Review
- Policy on Plagiarism, Misrepresentation, and Falsification
- Policy on Research Involving Human Participants and Subjects
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Policy on Coercion and Abuse in the ACM Publications Process
- Policy on the Withdrawal, Correction, Retraction, and Removal of Works from ACM Publications and the ACM Digital Library
- Penalties for Publication Violations
- Software Copyright Notice
- Etc.

- At any given moment, ACM is investigating ~40-50 cases of potential misconduct
- <https://www.acm.org/publications/policies/ethics-and-plagiarism-update>



Investigations

- Starting point for all investigations is Report a Violation web form
- All allegations must be accompanied by evidence for action to be taken
- All allegations reviewed by co-chairs of E+P and HQ Staff to determine if initial evidence provided is credible and substantive. If so, investigation is launched. Also decided what will be the Decision Making Authority (DMA)
- ACM joined international Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) in 2019, which provides guidance and best practices for investigating allegations of publishing-related misconduct across entire scholarly publishing world
- Investigations take between 3-12 months on average, which is far too long, but is largely a function of volume of cases and bandwidth of staff and volunteers
- The results of all investigations are subject to ACM Disclosure Policy....what information can and can not be disclosed publicly and to employers



Types of Cases

- Plagiarism
- Paper Mills
- Collusion Rings
- Peer Review Misconduct
- Undeclared Conflicts of Interest
- Gift Authorship
- Simultaneous Submissions
- Machine Generated Papers
- Falsification of Research Data / Fraudulent Publication
- Coercion, Abuse, Harassment – often involve advisers and graduate students



Investigations / Tools / Process

- ACM currently utilizes various types of tools / systems for investigations
 - **iThenticate** for plagiarism related allegations
 - Guillaume Cabanac "**Problematic Paper Screener**" for detecting tortured phrases that are trust indicators of fraudulent publication
 - Experimenting with suite of **Trust Marker identification tools** to identify various types of misconduct, including citation-related irregularities, AI generated text, plagiarism, tortured phrases, etc.
 - **Retraction Watch** to identify previous retractions of authors under investigation
- Will be experimenting with **STM Integrity Hub**, which identifies Paper Mills and New Integrity related services being developed in industry
- ACM is building a **Conflict of Interest Service** to identify relationships between participants in peer review process (i.e.- authors, reviewers, PC members, etc.)
- Retracted Papers as a result of decisions are public in the DL and registered in the **Crossref CrossMark service**.
- Depending on nature and complexity of case, ACM may involve legal counsel and private investigators to conduct interviews of confidential witnesses, gather evidence, translate non-English documents and evidence, etc.
- Depending on nature, complexity, and seriousness of allegations, DMA may involve E+P Chair and Vice Chair with Staff, full E+P Committee, or full Pubs Board
- Accused and Claimants are notified of decisions with limited information about penalties shared with claimants, but they are informed of decision
- Serious violations result in bans, which include authorship, peer reviewing, PC participation, editorial board participation, etc. Bans stored in a confidential Violations DB.



Observations

- Collusion Networks do exist and it does appear different communities are aware of some of them
- Large power dynamic differences between faculty and students publishing papers
- Some misconduct is a result of bad actors with unethical motivations
- Some misconduct is a result of cultural differences and lack of education of what is considered acceptable standards of good behavior
- Goal is to protect integrity of scholarly record, correct breaches of integrity, prevent future violations, educate community (one by one if necessary)



Recommendations to SGB

- ACM has developed an infrastructure for investigating and adjudicating allegations of misconduct, but the CS community has a responsibility to educate global community about acceptable standards of good behavior for ACM Conference publication.
- Program Committee Chairs should utilize violations database before PC invitations go out to ensure they are not inviting violators to participate.
- PCs need to clearly communicate policies and acceptable standards of behavior in Calls for Papers and PC and Reviewer Instructions
- ACM will launch a Peer Review Portal with an “online course” to educate PC members and reviewers about acceptable practice for conducting peer review
- Encourage, but not pressure or coerce, community to act. (i.e.- claimants, witnesses, etc.).





Interim Report Highlights of the Joint Task Force on Workshop Publications

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Association for
Computing Machinery

Advancing Computing as a Science & Profession

Background

- Should ACM Publish Workshop Proceedings? And if so, how?
 - This question was raised during a year in which the interim EiCs of ACM's International Conference Proceedings Series noted that a substantial number of workshops were being submitted to ICPS for publication, including:
 - Independent workshops and workshops associated with independent conferences
 - Workshops associated with ACM conferences that don't directly publish the workshop proceedings
 - Independent entities that call themselves conferences, but in fact run more like workshops
 - This is an evolving situation – at one time most workshops would not consider publishing proceedings; today publishing a paper at a workshop confers some status and may be the ticket to funding to attend the associated conference.

Task Force Charge

- For obvious reasons, Joint Task Force Created!
- TF Charge:
 - “Explore both the need and strategy for developing an ACM publication channel to publish high quality workshops in computing, to complement our existing publication channels for ACM journals, ACM conference proceedings, and ICPS”
 - Answer key questions such as:
 - how do we define a workshop and distinguish it from a conference?
 - How do we deal with ACM workshops currently published in ICPS?
 - How do we want to deal with non-ACM workshops?
 - What are the minimum peer review standards for ACM published workshop proceedings?
- This Interim Report being distributed to SGB and Publications Board. Request for feedback no later than December 1, 2023
- Publications Board will also receive Interim Report
- Final Report to be distributed with proposed action items to both Boards by 12/31/23



Joint Task Force Composition

The Board chairs appointed members representing the two boards:

- Pubs Board Co-Chairs Appointed the following members:
 - Joe Konstan, chair (Publications Board)
 - Beng Chin Ooi (Publications Board)
 - Lin Uhrmacher (Publication Board)
- SGB Liaison to Pubs Board:
 - Jonathan Aldrich (SGB and Publications Board)
- SGB Chair Appointed the following members:
 - Sayan Ranu (SGB)
 - Saket Saurabh (SGB)
 - Johanne Trippas (SGB)
 - Dakuo Wang (SGB)

Findings

On the distinction between conferences and workshops

- **Line Between Conference & Workshop is thin** - The term “workshop” is applied very broadly. It includes events with papers, review processes, and selectivity comparable to high-quality conferences. It also includes events where most papers are short, review seems to be very light, and all or nearly all submissions are accepted.
- The same is true for events that use the term “conference.” While most ACM conferences maintain high selectivity and a strong review process, computing conferences outside ACM have widely varying review processes.
- Many ICPS conference submissions have papers that are only 4-5 pages and seem to accept nearly all of them, not very different than many ACM workshop papers that are presented but not published by ACM.



Findings

On the purpose of workshops at conferences, cont.

- Several reasons were identified that contribute to the interest in publishing papers in workshop proceedings:
 - The increased pressure for publication (and expectations of increased numbers of peer-reviewed publications)
 - The difficulty of getting funding to attend conferences without having a work to present at the conference
 - Indeed, some (non-ACM) conferences organize workshops specifically to fit the rejected papers of the conference program
- The nature and scale of workshops at conferences varies widely, but many conferences have vibrant workshop programs with multiple days, large numbers of workshops, and workshops with keynotes, panels, and papers.
- Some conferences include them in proceedings.....many do not....



Findings

On the archival nature of workshop papers

- While workshop papers were once intentionally non-archival in CS (so authors could later publish the work when it was complete), most authors today seem more interested in getting their work archivally published.
- There are open questions about the re-publish-ability of work published at workshops. The general practice seems to be that workshop papers can be turned into conference or journal papers later with sufficient new content. In the case of submitting an extended workshop paper to a conference, there is often no formal process for annotating submissions to indicate the prior publication (and double-anonymous peer review may preclude citation).

Findings

On the value of workshop papers being in the ACM DL

- Task force members were divided on the value of workshop papers being in the ACM DL
 - Some members felt the most important role of the DL is to be comprehensive; any relevant literature in the field should be found through the DL
 - Other members felt the most important role of the DL is curation; only work that has been properly vetted (e.g., through a rigorous peer review process) should be found in the DL
- Task force members agreed that both authors and workshop organizers valued having workshop proceedings published in the DL
- Note that today many ACM workshops publish outside the DL (e.g., in C-EUR).



Findings

On the peer review of workshop papers

- Workshops (and particularly workshops at conference) often have much looser standards for those in charge of carrying out the peer review process.
 - It is common for graduate students (even at times those who've never published in the field) to propose and chair workshops
 - There are rarely standards imposed by the sponsoring conference on the minimum criteria for being a program chair, program committee member, or reviewer for a workshop
- The task force recognizes that this flexibility has developmental value, but also may undermine the confidence one should have in the published works

Findings

On the changes likely in view of ACM Open

- Task force members felt that treating all workshop papers the same as conference papers under ACM Open could cause significant problems:
 - Few authors at non-ACM Open institutions would consider publishing a workshop paper worth the ACM Open APC charges associated with a conference paper
 - Even authors at ACM Open institutions may be concerned about the institutional cost of moving up in subscription tiers due to workshop papers
 - Workshop organizers, realizing this, would likely choose to publish elsewhere rather than continue publishing through ACM
- Task force members did not want to drive workshops away
- But perhaps putting the cart before the horse.....ACM Open business models for Workshops can be addressed

Findings

On the publication of workshop proceedings from ACM conferences in ICPS

- The task force did not feel that the process under which workshops at ACM-sponsored conferences are published through ICPS makes sense.
 - It creates duplicate effort, with the conference leadership deciding whether to accept the workshop into the conference and ICPS editors having to perform a separate evaluation for publication
 - The ICPS editors lack the proximity to the community and expertise to evaluate the workshop in the way conference leadership could
 - It moves the decision from the SIG to Publications, which seems inappropriate for conference activities
- Current vision of ICPS is to be independent / non-ACM sponsored events
- Though we did not examine this case in detail, the same argument could apply to ACM chapter conferences.

Principles Driving Recommendations

- Provide a variety of options to workshop organizers and sponsoring SIGs – no one size fits all solutions.
- Keep the locus of authority where it currently lies. The Publications Board should set standards for publication types; the SGB should oversee events and ensure that their publication products comply with policy.
- Accept a wide range of quality publications into the ACM DL but ensure that the markers of quality are readily identifiable and usable as search criteria.



Recommendations



Each recommendation is framed in terms of the Board to which it would be made. If the Boards are generally in support of these recommendations, the task force is willing to provide guidance on suggested details (or is happy to allow the Board to address the recommendations within its own processes).



Recommendations

Recommendations to the Publications Board (which will require cooperation with the DL Board and SGB)

- Define an explicit article type for a workshop paper. In particular, be explicit about the number of reviews, the qualifications of peer reviewers and program chairs, and the length of papers.
- Evaluate whether conference paper and journal paper should also be different article types.
- Extend ACM's policy covering self-plagiarism to be explicit about how workshop papers can be extended into research articles (conference and journal papers).
- Revise the ICPS charter to include non-ACM workshops, not just conferences.
- Determine whether ACM wants to publish non-ACM workshop paper abstracts (e.g., where there are no full-length papers or where full-length papers are published in arXiv, etc.); if so, this specific case might warrant a sub-brand of ICPS known as ICPS Abstracts. Pubs Board needs to decide, but would like feedback from SGB
- Publicize these decisions and mechanisms once made.



Recommendations

Recommendations to the SGB (which will require cooperation with the Publications Board and staff)

- Assume ownership for publications decisions associated with workshops associated with ACM-sponsored conferences.
 - The SGB collectively should set guidelines for minimum standards and procedures.
 - Individual SIGs may choose to set more restrictive guidelines.
 - Determine options for workshop publication (e.g., part of conference publications, separate ACM publication, etc.).
 - Determine whether ACM workshops should be able to publish outside of ACM DL (currently allowable but should be reconsidered).
- Develop workflow for ACM conference workshop approval and publication.
- Regularly review the compliance of SIG publications with standards for their publication types.



Recommendations

Recommendations to the Publications Board and Business Working Group

- Develop an OA pricing model for workshop proceedings that can support ACM's continued publication of such proceedings. Suggestions include:
 - offering an option of publishing workshops with abstracts-only (which would not be an APC-eligible publication)
 - providing a discounted APC appropriate for workshop papers that fit within a target length (perhaps 6 pages or fewer); evaluating whether those would be applied to institutional subscriptions on the same or different basis
 - publishing fully peer-reviewed research articles (which would be treated the same as conference papers)



Recommendations

Recommendations to the SGB and Business Working Group

- Assess impacts of ACM Open conversion to conference publication and attendance (in particular workshop attendance) to inform both BWG discussions on pricing and SIG planning for ACM Open.



Recommendations

Recommendations to the DL Board (which will require cooperation with the Publications Board and staff)

- Implement an article type for workshop papers (may want a different term) in conjunction with Pubs definition.
- Implement clear identification of article types on article landing pages and on rendered publication displays.
- Implement clear identification of venue types (including ICPS, ACM conference, ACM journal, ACM workshop) on article landing pages and rendered publication displays
- Implement (and disseminate training on) search features to allow searchers to search for / exclude workshop papers.
- Implement interface to allow workshops (and ICPS volumes) to specify article types for each article. Conferences have this interface.
- Ensure that reviewing statistics are displayed within an article type.

Recommendations

Recommendations to ACM EC and/or Council

- Formally adopt guidelines and standards for workshop publication to apply to all non-SIG ACM-sponsored events with publications (e.g., Board and Council-sponsored conferences and workshops).
- Determine whether ACM chapter events should continue to be published through ICPS or should have a different “direct path” to publication through an ACM entity authorized to vet and oversee publications from those events.
- Decide the broader policy question of what ACM unit content must be published by ACM, which may be published by ACM or outside, and which (if any) can only be published outside. This becomes increasingly important in the context of ACM Open. Can ACM India / China publish their content with Elsevier?

Newsletters

- Newsletters have historically operated outside the range of “Centralized Services” that conferences, journals, and magazines operate within, such as production and rights assignment.
- Due to the relationship between production, article tagging, funding data, rights assignment, OA, funder mandates, and DL platform services, it is becoming more important that Newsletters that are publishing research articles flow through some of the same production and eRights workflows that conferences and journals flow through.
- There are currently 14 ACM Newsletters that regularly publish peer reviewed research articles (hundreds annually), but the peer review process is not transparent, article type tags are often inaccurate, and these papers do not flow through the regular eRights workflow, so they will not be counted as part of ACM Open or have the appropriate rights assigned.
- Rights Management staff and ACM Production staff will be working on these issues over the coming months.

