

## RESPONSE FROM THE LONDON MATHEMATICAL SOCIETY:

The London Mathematical Society<sup>1</sup> is the leading learned society for research mathematicians in the UK. The major source of revenue to the Society (70%!) comes from the sale of its distinguished collection of journals, peer reviewed journals. Any change to the current publishing model of subscription sales will directly affect the income to the Society and its work.

We have long been concerned about the threat to our Society from the implementation of open access policies which seek to reduce the level of library sales by making the content of journals available to readers through alternative routes.

Our publishing income is used to support a wide range of grant schemes including conferences, joint research activities, collaborative meetings and visits. The Society is particularly concerned with providing help for mathematicians (including research students) at an early stage in their careers. At a time when other funding agencies are cutting back on their contributions it is imperative that the LMS remains able to provide support.

What the Society already does in order to provide access:

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providing this green access) are aware that it poses a long term threat to the financial health of the journals. Where a journal has been freely available on the arXiv for some months prior to publication) we have some tentative evidence that the published version is less frequently downloaded than a journal that is not available on the arXiv. Libraries do not have access to individual journal download metrics and they consider the price/cost/download when choosing which journals to cancel) seeing this metric as an indication of how widely the journal is read by the users of the library. Because downloads of the arXiv version of journals are free) they do not recognise the value of counting the number of downloads from the arXiv. (Our highest quality journals are those with most journals available to be read on the arXiv and these are most vulnerable to cancellation by librarians using the price/cost/download metric.

We are considering the launch of a purely open access journal) a decision to be made this year.

## Addressing the risks of a decision to make this year:

### 1. The major risk to us as a learned society is that the implementation of a UK policy will unbalance our mixed economy of the options described above) and hence damage our ability to support UK mathematics.

The major risk to us as a learned society is that the implementation of a UK policy will unbalance our mixed economy of the options described above) and hence damage our ability to support UK mathematics. A UK policy as stated in July) promoted gold open access as the preferred option and in the event it was not available) then the second option would be to accept publication in journals under their green open access criterion. This was in line with the .inch report and the green content with this policy to the extent that it gave us a basis on which to transition our existing journals from library sales to £70 funds. We have heard reports since that a UK no want to make both options equally viable and that authors need not apply for £70 funds if the journals permit green open access. While our UK members would have had to engage with their nearest university fund distributors) it provides no long term transition to an economically viable open access model for our journals.

Furthermore) setting the green and gold options to be equivalent will encourage UK mathematicians not to apply for funds because they come from a subject in which many journals already adopt a liberal (green) access policies. Mathematics has found to its cost that where there is no need for extensive equipment and little funds available to it from the research councils) there is less regard for the importance of the subject. This position will be further exacerbated by a misconception that mathematics publishing is costless because you can find freely/available preprint versions on the math arXiv) and therefore mathematics journals are less important in comparison with more costly journal publishing in the other sciences which do not already offer free access policies.

### 4. Some years ago a study showed Mathematics was second only to the earth/and/space sciences in the number of international collaborations) we believe the number of international collaborations has) if anything) grown since then. We do not want to advise a UK-based author on the question of how they deal with international co-authors who have different criteria for the value of publishing) or in a journal that does not comply with a UK policy. Worse) there is no clear guidance to authors at different universities (within the UK) or working under the same grant) who have to apply to their own university for funds. Which university foots the bill? These questions have been raised several times by our authors and members as a UK policy has developed) but no answer has been provided. By devolving responsibility for payment to individual universities it exacerbates the problem rather than alleviates it because universities will have their own interpretation of the policy. We already have a journal policy for multi-authored journals which is to make the corresponding author solely

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providing high quality peer review and support for the editors and authors inevitably incurs costs. Rather than pay our editors) we provide administrative and secretarial support and we also provide a high quality copy/editing and proofing service which is particularly appreciated by authors for whom English is not their first language.

responsible for handling all matters with his co/authors and university. As a publisher this is the only practical solution but it does not help mathematicians who have been given no useful guidance by UK.

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(our view is that we have gone far enough in our free access policy and we do not and should not permit reuse of post-acceptance versions of the article) even after a long embargo period of several years.

that #e agree #ith it) %ut this is not the case. \*f our mem%ers had ever %een consulted during the setting u" of the "olicy) they #ould certainly have said that there is no call for the move to the version of o"en access "u%lishing dictated %y 3 0UK.

Mathematicians have develo"ed their o#n) fully international solution to the access 1uestion #ith the math ar : iv. 7osting on the ar : iv is a voluntary "rocess and more in &ee"ing #ith the "rinci"le that it is the authors< choice #hat to do #ith their "a"er.

' hat is valued in our journals is the "eer revie# "rocess and the validation of research that) in many cases) has already %een read on the ar : iv. .ree and immediate access on the ar : iv to early versions of the #or& does nothing to hel" our society's financial model %ut it is a voluntary) international) com"romise #hich #e are ha""y to ta&e "art in "rovided the rest of the structure is not destroyed through misguided evangelical "olicies.