

FP7 Post-Grant Open Access Pilot: Eighth Progress Report – 5 months to go!

This is the eighth progress report for the FP7 Post-Grant Open Access Pilot eighteen months after its effective launch on May 30th, 2015. This means it's just five months left for the initiative to come to a close as of Apr 30th, 2017.

The collected sample for funded Open Access publications and paid APC and BPC fees is becoming quite significant and interesting findings are also gradually arising. A first dataset of APC payments for this post-grant funding initiative [has recently been shared](#) with OpenAPC (see the treemap [here](#)). The findings will be summarized in the Open Access publishing market analysis report that the initiative [has recently commissioned](#).

As of Nov 30th, 2016, the project **has already funded 700 Open Access journal articles and books** – more details below. Pre-paid fee payment [upon manuscript acceptance](#) is also becoming an increasingly important mechanism for granting the funding to completed FP7 projects and a specific analysis of its evolution is also provided in this report.

One of the consequences of these pre-payments is that the figures shown at the [live reporting module](#) in the OpenAIRE system suffer a slight decoupling while the funding requests that get processed outside the system are ingested into it. This typically happens at publication time, when a resolvable DOI is made available, which makes the data ingestion far easier.

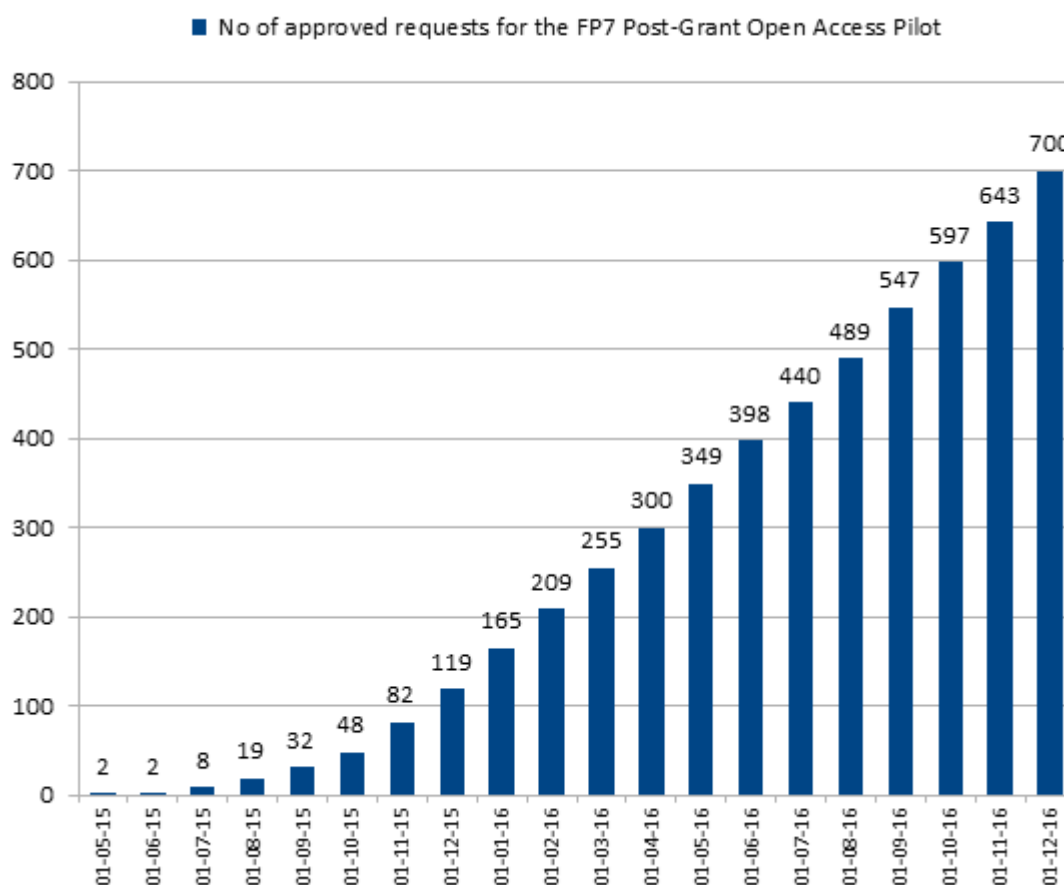


Fig 1.- Number of approved funding requests as of Nov 30th, 2016

17 months into the FP7 Post-Grant OA Pilot: some results

700 funding requests have already been approved as of Nov 30th. **658** of these (i.e. 94% of the total) have been granted to **journal articles, 31 to books, 10 to book chapters and 1 to a conference proceedings volume**. Journal articles remain the vast majority of the funded outputs, even more so as the recently started pre-payment workflow applies exclusively to this document type.

1.1. Funding request distribution by countries and institutions

The funding request distribution by countries shows the regular four countries at the top, which tend to also have the largest growing rates (the figure in brackets shows the number of new requests since the last report was issued). Besides these, some countries have grown quicker than usual due to the implementation of the pre-payment agreements and block grants, plus occasional specific dissemination activities. Only four EU countries (Estonia, Latvia, Malta and Romania) have submitted no funding requests thus far. Three of these belong to the Central/Eastern European region where the uptake of the initiative is being much weaker since its very start.

Country	Approved funding requests
Spain	114 (+28)
UK	103 (+20)
Germany	81 (+20)
Italy	73 (+14)
Netherlands	48 (+17)
France	35 (+8)
Switzerland	32 (+2)
Greece	25 (+11)
Sweden	22 (+4)
Austria	21 (+6)
Ireland	19 (+7)
Belgium	17 (+4)
Finland	16 (+2)
Portugal	13
Hungary	12 (+4)
Denmark	11 (+5)
Israel	9 (+1)
Turkey	8 (+1)
Norway	6
Poland	5 (+1)
Slovenia	4
Cyprus, Lithuania, Russia, S. Africa	3
Australia, Czech Republic, Serbia, US	2
Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Croatia, Luxembourg, Mexico, Slovakia	1
Estonia, Latvia, Malta, Romania (EU only)	0

Table 1.- Distribution of approved funding requests by [requestor's] country as of Nov 30th, 2016

The distribution of funding requests by institution below shows a mix of universities and research centres (usually large ones in the latter case). The list includes only the institutions with the highest number of submitted funding requests, and quite a large number of countries are represented in it.

Institution	Funded requests
CSIC	32
Radboud University/RUMC	15
Universidad Politécnica de Madrid	14
CNR	13
Max Planck Gesellschaft	12
Karolinska Institutet Università degli Studi di Milano University of Oxford	11
University of Helsinki	10
ETH Zürich Universität Bern Université Pierre et Marie Curie University College Dublin	9
University College London University of Bristol	8
KU Leuven Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya Universiteit Leiden/LUMC	7

Table 2.- Approved funding requests by institution (Nov 30th, 2016)

1.2. Funding request analysis by status

The [live stats module](#) at the OpenAIRE system provides an up-to-date classification by funding request status, including those that have been conditionally approved, formally approved and paid, those that have been put on hold and those for which payment is being processed. The table below shows the evolution of the number of requests in the main statuses since the Pilot was launched.

	Approved/Paid Requests	Rejected Requests	Incomplete Requests
8 th Pilot report – Nov 30 th	582	274	226
7 th Pilot report – Aug 31 st	440	241	198
6 th Pilot report – Jun 15 th	316	218	176
5 th Pilot report – Mar 31 st	240	173	162
4 th Pilot report – Jan 31 st	210	137	130
3 rd Pilot report – Nov 30 th	116	57	124
2 nd Pilot report – Sep 30 th	43	20	34
1 st Pilot Report – Jul 31 st	11	14	24

Table 3.- Evolution in the total number of requests by request status (data as of Nov 30th)

The figures in the system show a lack of updating due to the fact that most pre-paid requests have not yet been ingested, but they show that approximately one in three requests submitted to the system gets rejected. Also, the number of requests left incomplete in the system has gradually diminished its rate of growth, meaning that system users have gradually got used to its workflow.

1.3. Rejected funding requests

While still significant, the number of funding requests received for manuscripts accepted at hybrid journals is decreasing, partly thanks to the wide dissemination of the [list of over 200 fully Open Access journals that have been funded so far](#). Nevertheless, publication in hybrid journals is still the most frequent cause for rejection as shown in the table below.

Total number of rejected requests	241
– manuscripts accepted in hybrid journals	186
– previously published articles	50
– ongoing project (not post-grant)	15
– unpublished (repository) paper	6
– refused by project coordinator	4
– non-existing journals	3
– not Open Access	3
– project no longer eligible	3
– other	4

Table 4.- Total number of rejected requests by cause (data as of Nov 30th)

A list of the hybrid titles that have caused a funding request to be rejected is being kept by the project coordination. As opposite to the list of funded fully Open Access titles, this list of hybrid journals is not being made available, as it represents just a small subset of the whole number of available hybrid journals in the market, and is subsequently not too useful for authors. A table is provided below with the distribution of such hybrid titles by publisher for the rejected request received. The five top publishers in this table make up 60% of the total number of rejected requests for manuscripts accepted in hybrid journals.

Publisher	Rejected funding requests
Elsevier	43
Wiley	28
Springer	17
IEEE	14
OUP	10
Taylor & Francis	8
NPG	5
RSC	
ACS	3
Am Met Soc	
Am Soc Microbiol	
JoVE	
Institute of Physics	

Table 5.- Rejected funding requests for hybrid journals by publisher (Nov 30th, 2016)

1.4. Reimbursements

Even when the preferred workflow for the FP7 Post-Grant OA Pilot is to directly pay the APC fee to the publisher at manuscript acceptance time, reimbursements to institutions are also being offered for already paid APC fees. The percentage of funding requests paid via reimbursements to institutions has dropped to 16% of the total as a result of the increasing predominance of the pre-paid funding route in the last few months.

Total number of reimbursements	114
ES	21
DE, NL	17
CH	13
UK	8
IT	7
FR	6
FI, SE	4
BE, IE	3
AT, HU, PL, TR	2
DK, IL, NO	1

Table 6.- Total number of reimbursed APC payments by country (data as of Nov 30th)

1.5. Funding request distribution by publishers and journals

The approved funding request distribution by publishers keeps showing an increasing distance between the six most popular publishers and the rest of them. BioMed Central and Copernicus, the two publishers operating the most successful pre-payment agreements with OpenAIRE, have experienced the largest rates of growth (publishers with agreements are shown in red on the table) together with NPG/Macmillan.

The top two entries on the list *are actually part of the same publisher SpringerNature* now, but they're being kept as independent entities here since BMC is a fully Open Access publisher. When they are merged – such as for instance at the [OpenAPC treemap for the OpenAIRE dataset](#) – the resulting picture shows the hegemony of this publisher.

Publisher	Number of funded requests	Previous position (Aug 31st)
Journals		
NPG/Macmillan	126 (+26)	1
BioMed Central	105 (+37)	2
PLoS	76 (+9)	3
Copernicus	65 (+21)	5
Frontiers	60 (+14)	4
MDPI	49 (+10)	6
Wiley	19 (+4)	8
Institute of Physics	16 (+1)	7
Optical Society of America	16 (+3)	9
Elsevier	15 (+3)	10
Hindawi	15 (+4)	11
Books + book chapters		
River Publishers	9 (+2)	2
InTech	7 (0)	1
Springer	5 (+1)	4
Ubiquity Press	5 (0)	3

Table 7.- Distribution of approved funding requests by publisher as of Nov 30th, 2016.

In brackets, the number of new approved funding requests since the last report on Aug 31st, 2016.

The list of the most frequently requested journals as of Nov 30th below also shows the increasing impact of the pre-payment agreements. While the usual multidisciplinary titles remain on top (PLoS ONE, Scientific Reports, Nature Comms), other journals (in red) are rapidly growing. The fact that the two most frequently demanded titles have reasonable low APC fees (€1,165 for Sci Rep and \$1,495 for PLoS ONE) is the main reason why the average APC fees paid by the FP7 Post-Grant OA Pilot are keeping stable (see evolution below).

Journal title	Publisher	Number of funded requests
Scientific Reports	NPG	82 (+19)
PLoS ONE	PLoS	57 (+8)
Nature Communications	NPG	36 (+7)
Atmospheric Chemistry and Physics	Copernicus	23 (+6)
Sensors	MDPI	19 (+2)
Biogeosciences	Copernicus	16 (+4)
Optics Express	OSA	14 (+3)
Frontiers in Microbiology	Frontiers	11 (+1)
Cell Reports	Cell Press/Elsevier	10 (+3)
Frontiers in Plant Science	Frontiers	10 (+4)
Environmental Research Letters	IoP	9 (+1)
BMC Genomics	BioMed Central	7 (+1)
BMC Bioinformatics	BioMed Central	6 (+1)
BMJ Open	BMJ	6 (+1)
Frontiers in Psychology	Frontiers	6 (+2)
PLoS Computational Biology	PLoS	6 (+1)

Table 8.- Distribution of approved funding requests by journal title as of Nov 30th (n>5)

1.6. Funding request distribution by FP7 project type

The classification of funding request by FP7 project discipline (CORDIS field) is provided below as of Nov 30th, 2016. A quarter of the funded projects are Marie-Curie Actions.

Project research area	Number of approved funding requests
Marie-Curie Actions	180
Health	113
ERC	88
Information and Communication Technologies	84
Environment (including Climate Change)	67
Food, Agriculture and Fisheries, and Biotechnology	46
Nanosciences, Nanotechnologies, Materials and new Production Technologies	34
Research Infrastructures	15
Transport (including Aeronautics)	13
Research for the benefit of SMEs	12
JTI	10
Energy	9
Research Potential	9
Space	8
Socio-economic sciences and Humanities	7
Security	4
Science in Society	2
Regions of Knowledge	1
TOTAL	700

Table 9.- Distribution of approved funding requests by project research area as of Nov 30th, 2016

It's also worth looking at the specific distribution by research project type for book requests – the project profile looks rather different from the general one shown above.

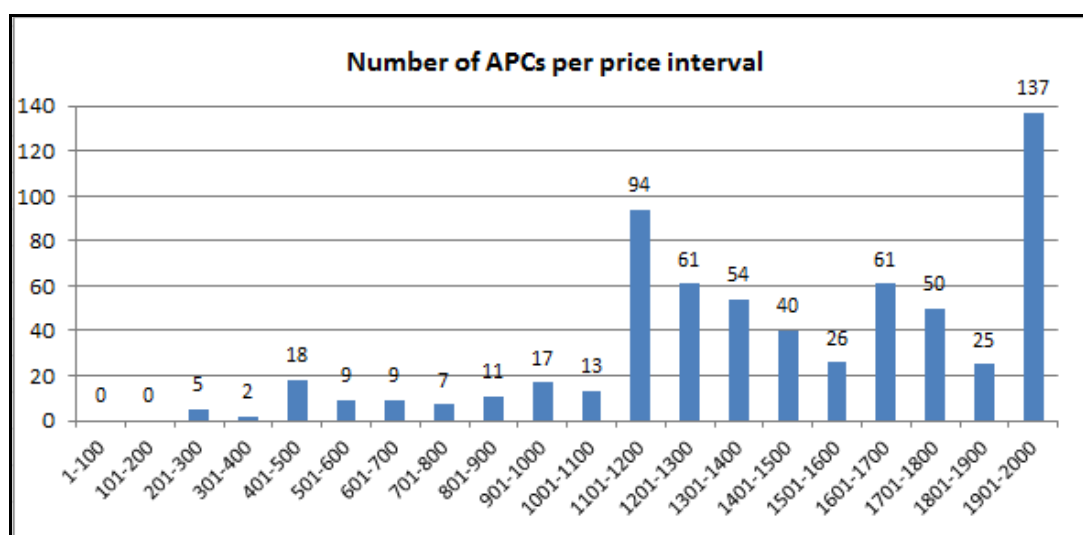
Project research area	Approved funding requests (books)
Information and Communication Technologies	8
Marie-Curie Actions	7
ERC	3
Environment (including Climate Change)	2
JTI	2
Socio-economic sciences and Humanities	2
Energy	1
Research Infrastructures	1
Research Potential	1
Science in Society	1
Security	1
Transport (including Aeronautics)	1
TOTAL	31

Table 10.- Distribution of approved funding requests for books by project type as of Nov 30th, 2016

An analysis has also been done for the first time of the number of funded FP7 projects thus far under the FP7 Post-Grant Open Access Pilot. As of Nov 30th, 2016, **534** projects have received funding for at least one post-grant publication. **39 of these are already fully funded**, i.e. for the maximum of three publications, while **87** additional projects have received funding for two post-grant publications. When considering that there are over 8,000 eligible FP7 projects, these figures may not look too impressive, but the new and short-termed character of this funding initiative are factors to be kept in mind too.

In the next progress report a deeper analysis will be provided for the subset of fully funded projects, with details like project end-date, project type and coordinating institution.

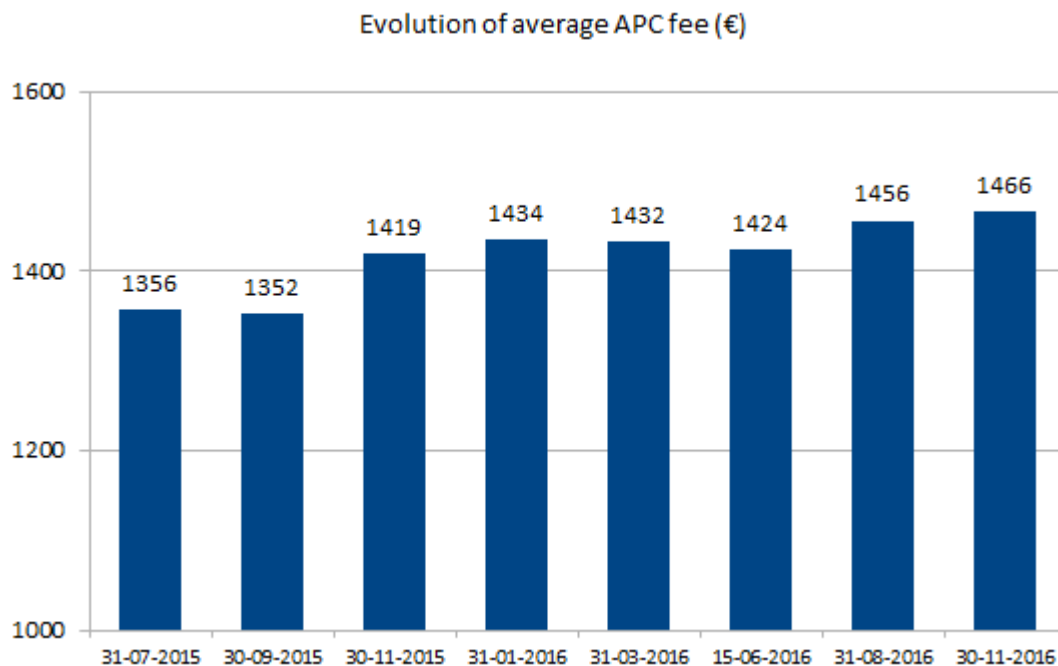
1.7. APC fees paid: average and distribution



The average APC fee paid by the FP7 Post-Grant Open Access Pilot as of Nov 30th displayed here is calculated on the basis of the 636 APC fees currently coded into the system as approved funding requests for journal articles and book chapters. On this basis, **the present average APC fee is € 1466, with a standard deviation of € 425.**

The steady growth of the above-the-funding-cap requests that only get partially funded and especially the implementation of the pre-payment agreements cause a slight increase in the average APC payment as the initiative progresses, even if the average APC payment remains well below the €2,000 funding cap.

Pre-paid APC fees for BioMed Central titles are in the high-end of the spectrum (typically around €1,700), and the increasingly higher weight of these requests in this report vs lower-priced titles like Scientific Reports and PLoS ONE also drive the average APC fee up. A specific analysis of the results of the pre-payment agreements is shown below.



1.8. An insight on pre-payment agreement implementation

OpenAIRE has signed pre-payment agreements with four publishers (BioMed Central, Copernicus, Wiley and BMJ) for this FP7 Post-Grant Open Access Pilot. So far the first two ones have been the most successful ones thanks to the ability of these publishers to provide reports for submitted manuscripts that have acknowledged FP7 funding. For the other two publishers the strategy is to [directly collect the information from the corresponding author](#) at manuscript submission time, which results in a slower uptake.

Besides the agreements with these publishers, there is also progress with the implementation of the block grant transferred to Radboud University/St Radboud Medical Centre in Nijmegen (Netherlands) to test a decentralized implementation of the pilot where payments and reimbursements [are made directly from the institution](#). A second block grant has recently been transferred to the University of Bielefeld in Germany and will soon start being locally managed.

The results of these decentralized funding mechanisms so far are **92 pre-paid journal articles** with the four abovementioned publishers plus **12 locally paid journal articles** via the block grant transfer to RU/RUMC.

Pre-paid journal articles and average APC fees (data as of Nov 30th, 2016):

BioMed Central	55	€ 1685
Copernicus	33	€ 1282.5
Wiley	3	€ 1362
BMJ	1	€ 2000
RU/RUMC	12	

Most popular journals for pre-paid articles so far:

Atmospheric Chemistry and Physics (Copernicus)	17
BMC Genomics (BioMed Central)	4
Biogeosciences (Copernicus)	4
Atmospheric Measurement Techniques (Copernicus)	3
BMC Complementary and Alternative Medicine (BMC)	3
Geoscientific Model Development (Copernicus)	3
Journal of NeuroEngineering and Rehabilitation (BMC)	3

The percentage of pre-paid requests during the last few months remains close to 40% of the total number of processed funding requests. Keeping in mind the average APC payments shown above, it's not hard to realize that the implementation of these pre-payment agreements will result in a drive towards a higher average APC fee even if the agreements include discounts on the charged fees. At the same time, these agreements offer authors the opportunity to get funding for their manuscripts accepted in top-of-the-class fully Open Access journals in their discipline.