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When Budget Cuts Strike: Responding to Reduced Resources in Open Access Funding Support

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When Budget Cuts Strike: Responding to Reduced Resources in Open Access Funding Support

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Introduction: The Challenge of Sustainability

Academic libraries have been pivotal in advancing Open Access (OA) through APC funds, transformative agreements, and institutional repositories. Tightening budgets and rising publishing costs challenge the sustainability of these initiatives. This poster highlights strategic, operational, and advocacy-based responses to sustain OA support in the face of financial constraints.

Context: When Budget Cuts Strike

Institutional funding reductions limit OA support. Libraries must balance competing priorities: collections, teaching support, and research advancement. Vendor pricing models and inflation heighten inequities in global OA participation.

Guiding Question: How can libraries continue advancing OA publishing and infrastructure amid budget constraints?

Operational & Workflow Adaptations

- Tiered Funding Models: Transition from full APC coverage to partial subsidies or capped reimbursements.
- Green OA Promotion: Strengthen repository infrastructure and faculty engagement.
- Impact Tracking: Measure OA usage, downloads, and citation impact to demonstrate return on investment

Case Examples & Success Stories

- UCSB Library: Paused OA funds and continued supporting UC Transformative Agreements, while promoting Green Open Access publishing through eScholarship.
- Consortium-Based Models: California Digital Library and Big Ten Academic Alliance illustrate cost-sharing success.
- Membership to support individual publishers and community infrastructure.

Conclusion

Despite fiscal challenges, libraries remain key drivers of innovation and access. By combining strategy, transparency, and collaboration, they can sustain Open Access as both a fiscal responsibility and a moral

Institutional & Strategic Responses

- Prioritize Equity: Allocate limited resources to early-career researchers and underfunded disciplines.
- Transparent Policies: Clearly communicate OA support guidelines and eligibility.
- Regional Collaboration: Build consortia for shared APC funds and negotiation leverage.
- Policy Realignment: Integrate OA goals into broader institutional research and DEI frameworks.
- Data-Informed Decisions: Use publishing analytics to identify cost-efficient OA pathways, such as Subscribe-to-Open models.

Advocacy & Communication Strategies

- Educate Stakeholders: Demonstrate OA's institutional value in visibility, impact, and equity.
- Empower Faculty Champions: Partner with advocates to foster OA culture across departments.
- Reframe the Narrative: Emphasize OA as mission-aligned rather than budget-dependent.
- Transparency: Communicate openly about funding shifts and alternative pathways.

Building Resilience in OA Support

- Diversify funding streams: grants, endowments, institutional cost-sharing.
- Advocate for sustainable publisher pricing and open infrastructure.
- Foster a culture of collaboration and equity-driven OA support.

