

Understanding Costs and Transparency in Diamond Open Access Publishing

Thursday 19 March 2026 12:00 (30 minutes)

Diamond Open Access is often perceived as a particularly fair and cost-efficient mode of scholarly publishing - free of article processing charges and therefore seemingly “free of charge.” However, Diamond Open Access publications also entail costs, which are covered through a variety of funding models. In the presentation, we look at this topic from the perspective of the DFG-funded project Servicestelle Diamond Open Access (SeDOA), the German Diamond Capacity Centre. We explain the objectives and services of SeDOA, as well as the working definition of Diamond Open Access. Building on the results of a SeDOA survey and other relevant studies, we address the question of the costs that arise in Diamond Open Access publishing. We also examine the issue of transparency: which information on ownership structures, funding pathways, and in-kind contributions is necessary to ensure transparency - and where do gaps still exist today. Using consortial funding models as an example, we discuss the degree of transparency that is currently achievable and what could be improved. Finally, we reflect on the criteria applied to Diamond Open Access and whether costs should be considered the ultimate benchmark.

Biographies:

Juliane Finger is an Open Access advocate at ZBW –Leibniz Information Centre for Economics. She coordinates the work package “Community Support Services” of the SeDOA project. Juliane is also project lead of the Open Library Economics (OLEcon), an initiative to support Diamond Open Access for journals from business and economics. She holds a PhD in communication science and has been working in the field of Open Access for over eight years.

Helene Strauß holds a degree in Information Science and has been actively involved in Open Science initiatives since 2017. After five years working on the open-access.network project, Helene joined the ZBW –Leibniz Information Centre for Economics in 2025 as part of the SeDOA-project. Within the Community Support Services team, Helene focuses on community engagement through the organization of events and workshops and the creation of informational resources.

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Session Classification: Diamond Open Access