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BACKGROUND

Eurac Research is an independent research centre in northern Italy, pursuing applied research in various topical areas of environmental science, biology, medicine, engineering, humanities and social sciences.

Much of our research is third-party funded, which means researchers often must abide by very specific and strict OA requirements on scientific publications. The need for OA funds is set to grow further with the Horizon Europe policies kicking in.

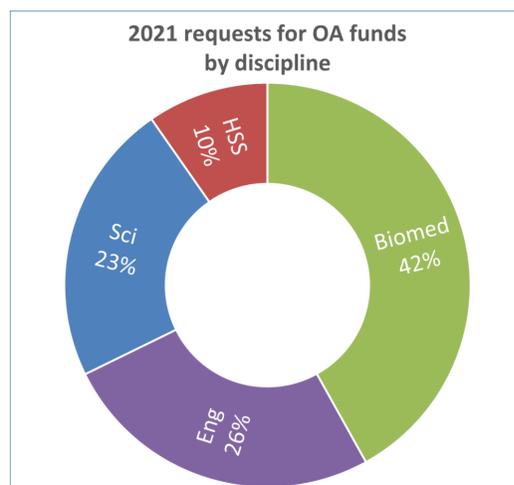
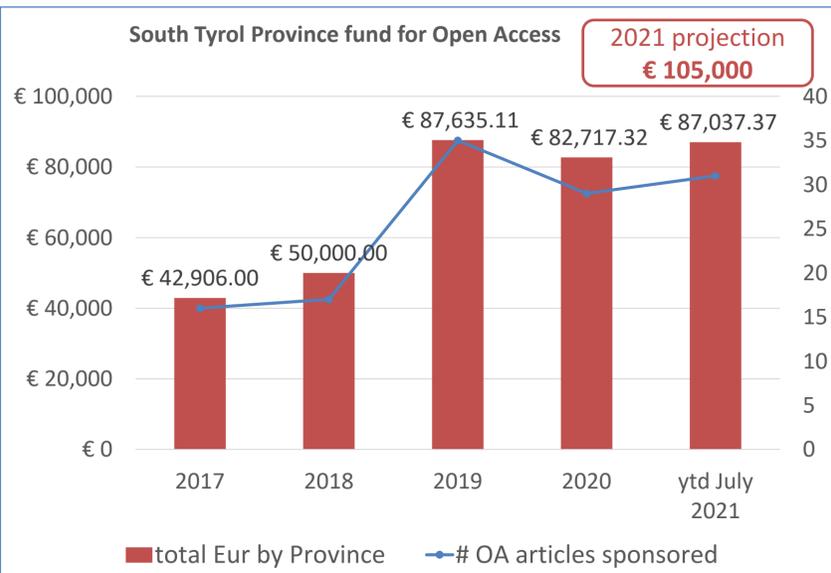
Since January 2019 Eurac Research has an **OA policy** in place that encourages OA publications and mandates self-archiving of at least the author-accepted-manuscript in the institutional repository BIA (Bolzano Institutional Archive).

550 Eurac staff
89 Projects funded by EC
4 Joint projects South Tyrol-Austria(FWF)
1 Joint project South Tyrol-Switzerland (SNSF)
318 Journals and book publications in 2020

LOCAL OA FUNDS

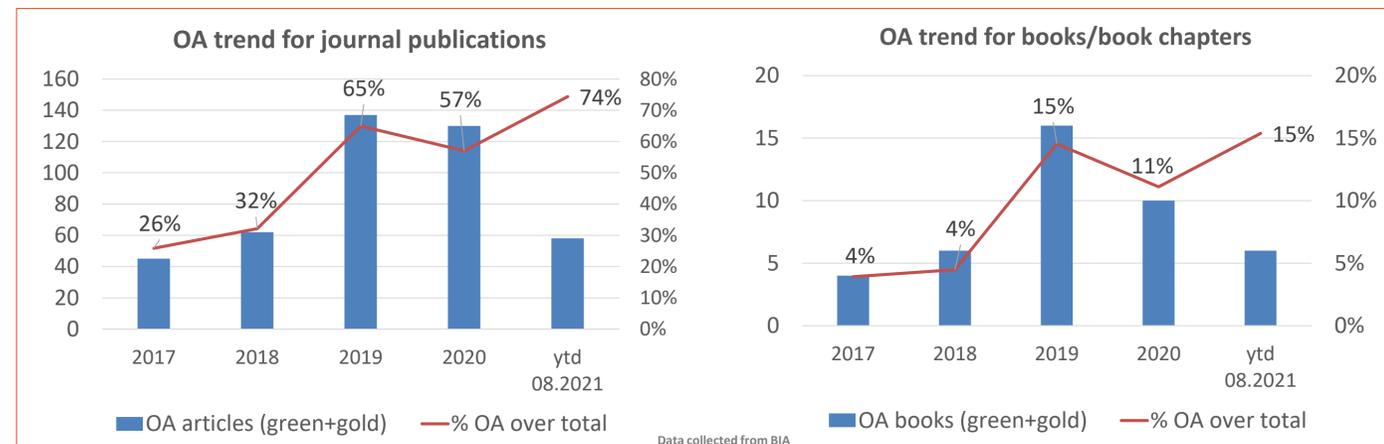
Beyond using their project budgets to pay for APCs, Eurac researchers have been requesting and receiving OA funds from the Department of Innovation, Research, University and Museums of the Autonomous Province of Bozen-Bolzano. The availability of this fund has given a big boost to the portion of **gold OA** articles. The doubling of applications to the Province fund between 2018 and 2019 is a clear sign that the Open Access policy and awareness-raising activities found fertile ground among like-minded researchers. Researchers' demand for OA funds is set to grow further as a result of the more stringent requirements set by the EC.

Unfortunately, the chances for HSS researchers have been limited, due to the Q1 or Q2 WoS ranking required by the Province. Few HSS journals are indexed in WoS and fewer still have an IF. Moreover, the Province does not cater for book publications.



OA TRENDS @ EURAC

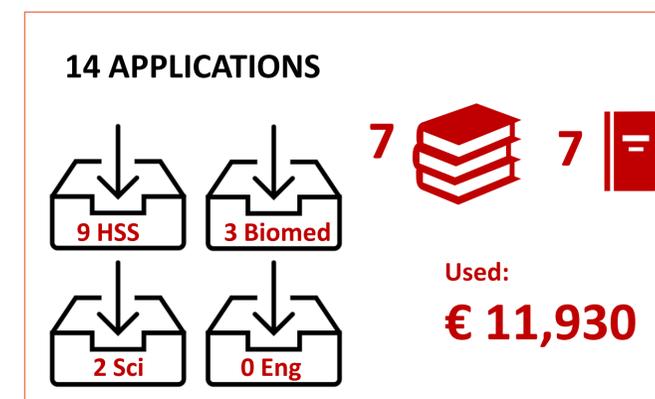
Following the launch of the OA policy, the overall volume of publications rose and so did requests to find funds for Open Access. The percentage of OA (green plus gold) more than doubled, jumping from 32 to 65% for journal articles between 2018 and 2019. OA for books is always more challenging. Nevertheless, we saw a jump from 4 to 15% following the OA policy.



A EURAC OA FUND TAILORED FOR OUR RESEARCHERS



The **Eurac Open Access Fund** has been designed to fill a funding gap between APCs that could not be charged to a project grant and those that do not fulfill the WoS ranking criteria of the South Tyrol Province scheme. The majority of researcher falling through this gap are in HSS. A notable feature of the fund is the eligibility of books and book chapter processing charges. For journal eligibility, we deliberately avoided a ranking criterion and decided to be inclusive in basing eligibility on being indexed in DOAJ, Scopus and ANVUR-list A. Since our researchers continue to value hybrid journals, the latter were not excluded. For books we based eligibility on being listed in DOAB. Caps were set to ensure a wide distribution of funds. As expected, the fund has been effective in attracting researchers from HSS and requests to sponsor books/book chapters are on par with journal articles.



Eight months in, the Eurac OA fund has spent just over a fifth of its budget. The lag time is likely due to the novelty. More outreach is planned to inform researchers across all research groups. We expect the spending limit of the Province fund will be reached earlier in 2021, at which point the Eurac OA fund will jump in for help. For 2021 we expect a sizable increment in OA outputs from HSS and a general increase in OA books.