'Transforming decision-making in the library' – The University of Nottingham perspective on Read and Publish agreements

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What is a Transformative Agreement (TA)?

UoN Libraries summary

- **Transformative agreements**, also referred to as **transitional** or **"read and publish"** agreements, are contracts negotiated between institutions and publishers that transform the business model underlying scholarly publishing towards a fully open access model.

- They represent a further shift away from a subscription-only model to one which covers both subscription payments (the "read" element of the agreement) and Article Processing Charges (the "publish" element).

- In the UK, negotiations with publishers are led by Jisc Collections, acting on behalf of higher education institutions.

https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/library/research/open-access/transformative-agreements.aspx

Key facts and figures: 2021-2022

- Transformative Agreements (TAs) funded from Periodicals budget

- Pool of REF research outputs: ~30,750

- Numbers of REF eligible researcher staff: ~1804

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Live TAs

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In Review

3 x Resource Acquisitions Team

8 x Research Support Team

2 x Research & Innovation

TA Spend Figures redacted

February 2020: Read & Publish Group scoping statement

- Monthly meeting to discuss the read and publish options, with standing members
- Disseminating information around R&P deals
- Establishing VFM indicators
- Co-ordinating responses and questions for publishers
- Final decision making

TAs paid from Periodicals budget:
"(there's a) strand around **managing funding,** but I think it's a **higher-level strategic conversation outside of the deals.**"

"We've had several smaller read and publish deals announced recently, alongside reviewing the larger deals. I'm finding it **challenging to review and share feedback in a timely manner**, mainly due to either the complexity of the deal or short timescales for feedback (or both)."

"I don't think members need to attend every meeting, but there might be something which is relevant around a particular deal which needs to be shared or reviewed... help us to prepare and co-ordinate responses, and **if there's no deals we can skip the meeting for that month."** 😆

R&P Group: Key stakeholders and responsibilities

Resource Acquisitions, Content & Discovery	Research Support Team (RST)
• Subscriptions budget • Purchasing • Resource management (access, content & licensing) • Review (costs, content, usage)	• Publishing information and data • Researcher guidance • Funder requirements: rights retention etc. • Funder Block Grant approval (APCs) • OA Dashboard and discounts
Research & Innovation (R&I)	**University Groups / stakeholders**
• Block Grant (Budgetary oversight) • Reporting • OA Dashboards and discounts	• Libraries / UoN Open Research Group • Faculty Research Boards • Copyright Working Group

Does the TA...

- Benefit the greatest number of researchers / authors?
- Create unequal publishing tiers for authors?
- Meet REF / UKRI / Plan S requirements?
- Meet funder requirements: rights retention etc.?

Is it a true TA, or is a "good enough" agreement acceptable?

Read

- Total cost – R&P, VAT, Year on Year
- Agreement opt out, Read only option
- Content – backfile access, new content
- Licence Permissions / Restrictions

Publish

- Publishing levels for UoN Authors
- Author requirements
- APC numbers / allowances / charges / caps

Feedback via consultation Surveys

Consultation documents received

Licence Agreement Proposal

Feedback to Jisc

Publishing data, Costs, Content

R&PG review

APC publishing, Cost per APC

Cost and content comparison
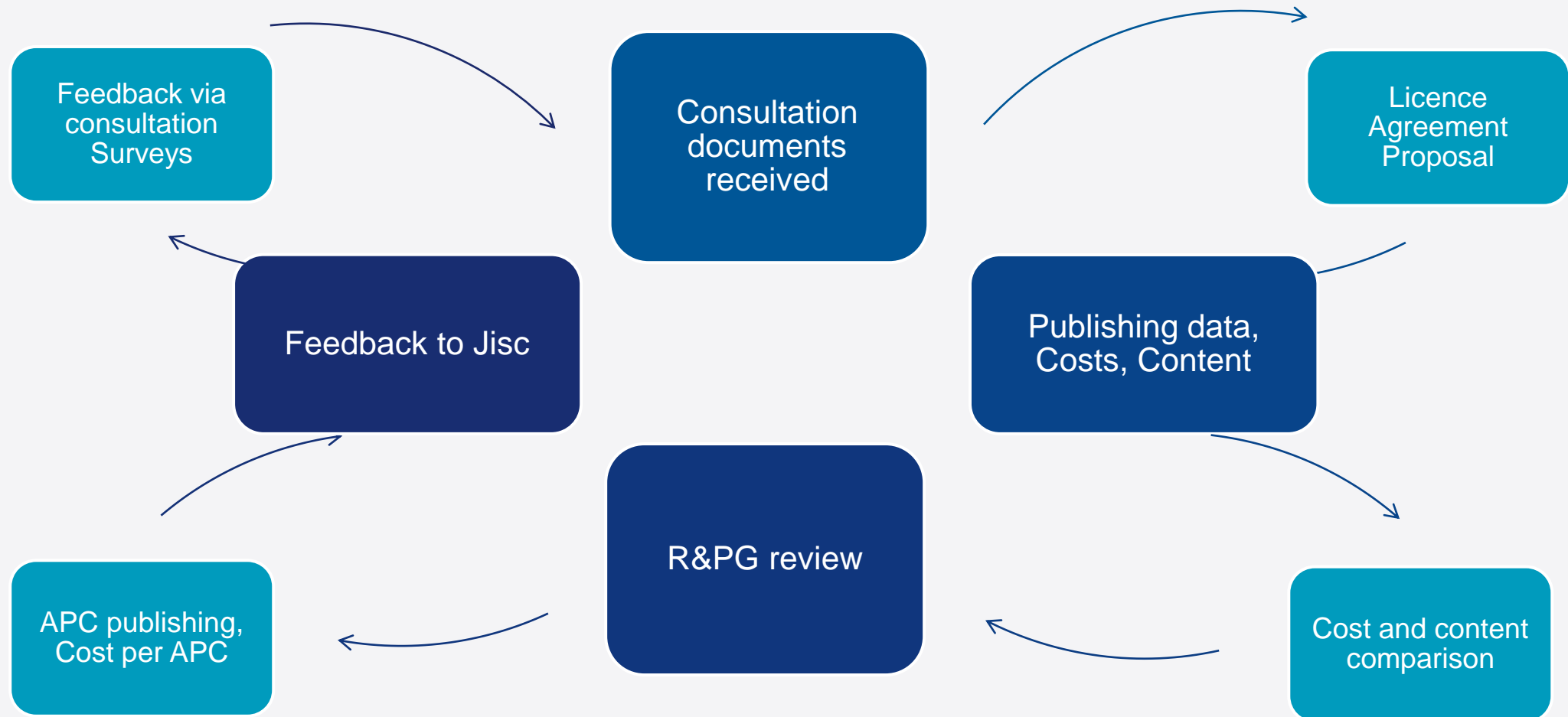
Managing TA documentation

Everything in its right place / We're gonna need folders...

- Review criteria Matrix – costs, APC details, authors, open access…
- Shared Notebook – meetings notes, feedback, TA decisions, actions
- Shared folder at Publisher level; subfolders for each TA (Licence, Agreement document, Feedback)
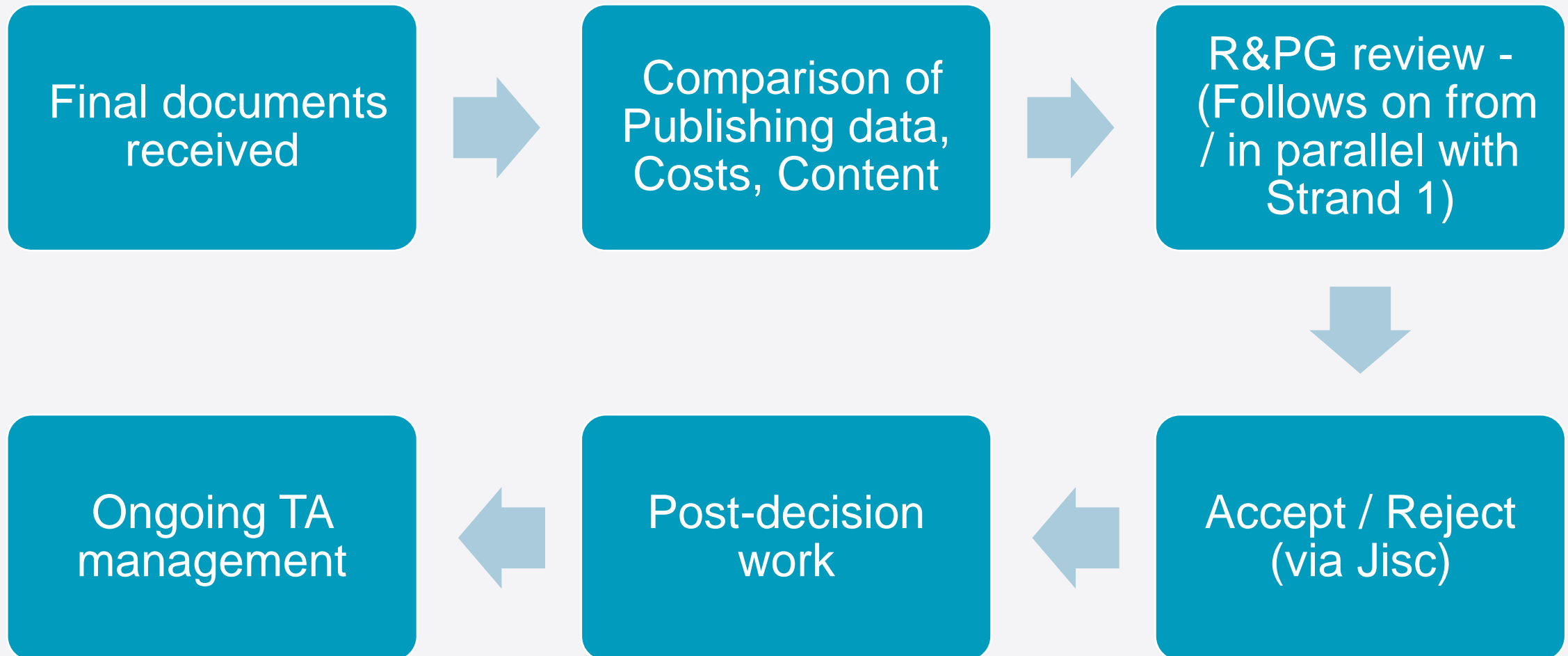
B	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U
(All costs excl VAT)	Inflation over last year (%)	Is the inflation less than 3% (Y/N)	Is there an annual opt out? (Y/N)	Number of UoN corresponding author articles published on average over last three years (request from publisher?)	APC allowances/charges	Is there a consortium level cap? (Y/N)	Which types of publications are in-scope?	Does the deal include page and colour charges?	What are the arrangements for green OA?	What is the value of our published articles based on individual APCs?	Does the publishing element of the deal represent vfm? (Y/N)	Do the publishing arrangements meet the JISC definition of a Transformative Agreement? (Y/N)	Do the publishing arrangements meet REF requirements (Y/N)
ACS			N	28 total 2016 - 2019		N							
ACS 2022			Yes permitted but exact terms to be finalised	45 average of UoN publications 2018-2020. Taken from publisher's data. 135 articles in total.	100% discount for APCs on hybrid journals. Maximum $5k APC on fully OA journals with 20% discount.	N	Unclear	Unclear	12 month embargo. Jisc Router pilotstarting for Gold articles, planned for embargoed green going forward.	$675,000 / 3 = $225,000 per year based on VFM calculation $100,750 / 2 = $50,375 actual spend per year according to publisher data. No 2018 APC spend provided from publisher	Y, based on publisher data of UoN output	Y	Y

R&P Group makes final decision

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┌─────────────────┐      ┌─────────────────┐      ┌─────────────────┐
│ Final documents │  →   │  Comparison of  │  →   │  R&PG review -  │
│    received     │      │ Publishing data,│      │ (Follows on from│
│                 │      │  Costs, Content │      │ / in parallel   │
│                 │      │                 │      │  with Strand 1) │
└─────────────────┘      └─────────────────┘      └─────────────────┘
                                                           ↓
┌─────────────────┐      ┌─────────────────┐      ┌─────────────────┐
│   Ongoing TA    │  ←   │  Post-decision  │  ←   │ Accept / Reject │
│   management    │      │      work       │      │   (via Jisc)    │
└─────────────────┘      └─────────────────┘      └─────────────────┘
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Post-decision work – operationalising a TA

Accept or Reject: The work doesn't stop there!

Accept	Reject	Ongoing
• Initial set up/training • Retrospective post-acceptance 'backwork', • Invoicing / Payments • Author guidance and comms	• Read Only • Publish and Read • No agreement	• Documentation • Awareness • Managing new / existing agreements • Renewals cycle • Trouble shooting TA

Challenges

More TAs / More Work / Less Time

R&P Group	Sustainability	Managing TAs	Organisational
• Agreements cycle • Consultation and institutional review	• Cost increases • Increased / additional workload • Block grant recharging • Reinvesting funds into new TAs	• Terms changing mid-agreement • APC charges / caps etc • Agreements not working as intended	• Input from stakeholders outside library • Research and teaching needs • Research ethics and EDI implications

Improvements

Block grant charging

- Reviewing published outputs to identify eligible block grant eligible articles

- Liaising with R&I colleagues to finalise APC costs

- Direct charging to block grants = Mitigate costs

- More publishing opportunities

Process review

- Identified workflows
- Completed process mapping
- Improved work distribution

Transnational Education   (TNE)

- Read Access for China and Malaysia campuses

- Some agreements include Publish elements for authors

- Periodicals budget:
- Read:
- Publish:
- VAT:
- Block Grant reclaimed:
- Total:

    Figures redacted

33

Live TAs

4

In Review

3 x Resource Acquisitions Team

9 x Research Support Team
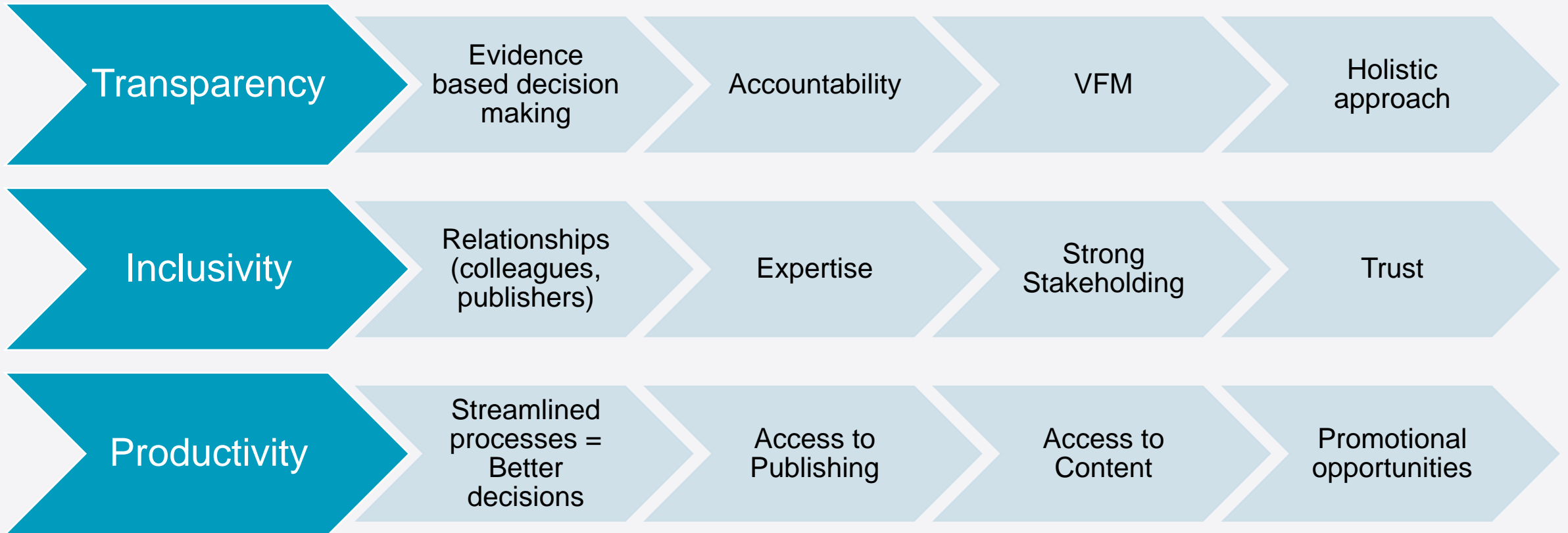
2 x Research & Innovation

Pool of REF research outputs: ~30750

No. of REF eligible research staff: ~1804

Benefits of collaborative, collective approach

Or Reasons to be Cheerful, Parts 1, 2 & 3

Transparency	Evidence based decision making	Accountability	VFM	Holistic approach
Inclusivity	Relationships (colleagues, publishers)	Expertise	Strong Stakeholding	Trust
Productivity	Streamlined processes = Better decisions	Access to Publishing	Access to Content	Promotional opportunities

What's next?

R&PG

- Analytics and reviewing the success of TAs (VFM)
- Exploitation of licences and licensing
- Sharing sectoral best practice

Sustainability

- Managing existing and new TAs!
- Other agreements: Non-Jisc, Fully OA
- Long term OA funding
- Looking beyond TAs?

Improving TAs

- Feedback – improving publisher dashboards and data
- Wide disciplinary range
- Sectoral and institutional input e.g. Elsevier
- True TAs
- Open monographs

Thank you for listening!

Any questions?

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Thank you to everyone on the Read and Publish group!

UoN transformative agreements:
https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/library/research/open-access/transformative-agreements.aspx