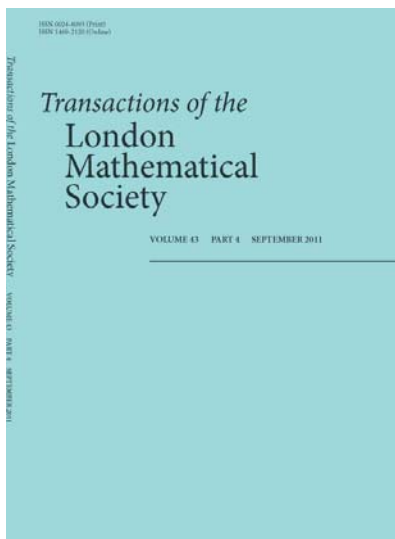


# *Transactions of the London Mathematical Society*

## An LMS open access journal



As part of its ongoing strategy for its publications, the LMS is launching an open access journal, the *Transactions of the London Mathematical Society*. The policy of the Society is to provide as wide and varied a service as possible to the whole mathematics community and we believe that open access is here to stay and we must work with it in all its forms.

The journal will be on an exact par with the *Bulletin, Journal and Proceedings of the LMS*, and the process of peer review will be exactly the same for all four journals. In the past we have used the acronym *BJPLMS* for the three journals and we will extend this to *BJPTLMS* to emphasise the close connections and the fact that all the journals will share the same Editorial Advisory Board.

By launching this journal, the LMS is not promoting any particular cause and we do not advocate one publishing payment model over another. The aim in setting up the *Transactions of the LMS* is to complete a comprehensive range of options to all mathematicians: in particular to provide a service to those whose funders are requiring them to publish in open access journals.

### **BACKGROUND**

The Society provides the following access options beyond the traditional subscriber model:

a) Free universal online access to the society-owned journals for *the first six months* of the publication of content, thereafter moving behind the subscription wall. This is known as a 'reverse moving wall'.

b) Through our publishing distributors, we agree to provide free access or access at a greatly reduced fee to *low income countries*. Currently, the offer is available to not-for-profit educational institutions from qualifying countries, and over 900 institutions now have free access.

c) Since 2008 we have offered a *paid open access* option for all our journals, where an author can opt to have the Article Processing Charge (APC) paid by his or her funder in return for free universal online access to their paper.

d) Since the launch of the *Math ArXiv*<sup>1</sup>, we have permitted authors to upload one or more versions of their paper up to the version accepted for publication by the Society. This is not a condition imposed on our authors, it is their choice.

e) The new, purely open access journal will provide a place for authors whose funders, such as those institutions who have signed the ‘Compact for Open Access Equity’, insist that the papers they fund may only be published in purely open access journals, which would exclude being published in our hybrid journals.

During 2012, the Finch group reported on open access to the UK government and RCUK (Research Councils UK) was asked to implement their major findings and develop a policy<sup>2</sup> on open access. Although the government policy development was coincidental to the timing of our project (fewer than 18% of our authors are based in the UK), it focused the minds of those developing the journal and it has become apparent that, as a British Society, we should ensure that the launch fits in with the timing and policies of RCUK and UK universities. Our statement on complying with their policy is made here:

<http://www.lms.ac.uk/sites/lms.ac.uk/files/Publications/NoteToAuthors-RCUK.pdf>.

At the heart of RCUK’s policy is the ‘decision tree’, recommended in the Finch report and endorsed by the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills:



<sup>1</sup> <http://arxiv.org/new/math.html>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/documents/documents/RCUKOpenAccessPolicyandRevisedguidance.pdf>

Following RCUK, EPSRC-funded authors will be required to follow the decision tree towards the gold route if possible.

Although we are a British Society, the UK is not the only government that we need to consider when thinking about providing the widest possible range of alternatives for our authors and readers. Another open access act has recently been introduced to the US Houses of Congress and the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy has released a Memorandum<sup>3</sup> on open access. There are many other initiatives around the world. For further information on these, and news on a recent AMS proposal regarding open access, see <http://www.ams.org/notices/201303/rnoti-p347.pdf>. It is notable that the AMS also recognizes the changes to government policy and the need to broaden the range of options available for authors.

## **JOURNAL DESCRIPTION**

*The Transactions of the LMS* will be fully open access and funded by Article Processing Charges ‘APCs’, payable by the authors with money from their institution or funder. It is not expected that authors will pay the fees themselves and LMS policy is that anyone without funds is asked to submit instead to the other three journals. All authors to all our journals will still be able to place preprint versions of their papers on the arXiv. The aim of this journal is to provide a new service to authors whose funders are promoting the move to paid open access through their policies. By offering a range of open access options, we hope to cover all possible policies with which the majority of our authors will have to deal.

The journal will be purely electronic although we will use a ‘virtual’ front cover and colour for branding and advertising the journal as indicated above.

### ***Editorial:***

The Editorial Advisory Board will now act for all four journals: the *Bulletin, Journal, Proceedings and Transactions of the LMS* and they will apply the same standards. The decision-making structure for the Advisory Board to handle the refereeing process and Main Editors to decide on acceptance of papers to an individual journal will be identical for all four journals. A key feature of the new journal is that we will be able to establish its standard through comparison with papers already published in the other journals as examples.

There will be a Main Editor of *TLMS*: Keith Ball, University of Warwick and Director of ICMS, who has agreed to take on the role of supporting the launch of the open access journal.

We are fortunate to have an excellent, world class Advisory Board who will treat all papers equally, regardless of the journal chosen by the author. We will use the same article management system that is used for the other journals so that advisers will find it straightforward to handle all their papers on an equal footing. Similarly, authors and referees who have submitted to the other LMS journals in the past will be familiar with the mechanics of using the system..

It is important to note that the Main Editor(s) of a journal that handles a paper will always have final say in whether to accept the paper for their journal, based solely on the quality of the paper and regardless of whether a paper has previously been submitted to another journal in the group. A paper rejected by one journal will not be considered by another of the *BJPTLMS* journals unless there are very exceptional circumstances. For example, an author may submit a paper to

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<sup>3</sup> [http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/microsites/ostp/ostp\\_public\\_access\\_memo\\_2013.pdf](http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/microsites/ostp/ostp_public_access_memo_2013.pdf)

*TLMS*, and then find that their university will not pay the APC. If the author chooses to submit the paper to another LMS journal, it is up to the Adviser whether to upload existing referee reports and pass on the history of the paper to the Main Editors of the new journal.

***Production:***

The new journal will have the same virtual design and the four *BJPTLMS* journals will all be typeset and copy-edited to the same high standard. They will be hosted by OUP on the same platform.

Although we recognise that most online mathematics journals are published in traditional formats and look remarkably similar to their print counterparts, we are investigating whether further functionality can be added to the journal content, and we encourage authors to provide additional material and links. For example, it should be possible to provide additional links to online video (perhaps with the author giving some background to the paper). This journal will be our first journal to be available in MathJax as well as the standard PDF format.

***On matters of payment and the Article Processing Charges (APC):***

The only difference between the *Transactions* and the *Bulletin, Journal and Proceedings*, which already offer a hybrid open access option at £1925 per article, is that the new journal will be purely open access. To encourage authors to submit their open access papers to the new journal, the initial fee will be £500 per article as a special introductory offer, well below the costs of administration and production and it is therefore expected that the journal will lose money during the first few years. These costs include the long-term storage and archiving of the papers, ensuring perpetual access.

Of course, mathematicians who do not have access to funds to cover the APC are not obliged to publish in open access journals and they still have the other three journals, offering an identical peer review service. Authors will still be able to post pre-acceptance versions of their paper on the math arXiv.

***Impact on the other journals:***

Why not just advertise and encourage people to use the hybrid option on the other journals? Because we are not doing this to encourage the existing journals to move from a ‘reader pays’ model to an ‘author pays’ model. We believe the LMS journals provide a very useful and valuable service to the community, particularly those who do not have the opportunity to apply for open access funds. If the journals move too far in the direction of open access via the hybrid model, there will be pressure to cancel the subscription model, reducing the options for all mathematicians. It should be noted we already provide free access to several hundred institutions through the developing countries initiative.

Uptake of the open access hybrid option in the journals will be slow to grow and the small amount of evidence at present suggests that some demand will come from authors in transition, i.e. those authors whose funders have just announced a change of policy and who are taking up the hybrid option on papers in the pipeline. We want to maintain a price difference between the APC for the other journals and the *Transactions* in order to balance providing a service of open access wherever possible with encouraging people to take the less expensive option and submit to *TLMS*. It is less expensive because, in the first years, the author takes some risk in submitting to a new journal; however our intention is to establish the reputation of *TLMS* on an equal footing with the other journals as soon as possible.

In the very long run, the divisions may become blurred and we do not want to wed ourselves to one particular model forever; we are confident that we will need to adapt further in the future. However, we make a commitment that any paper that is published under an open access licence will remain open access permanently. The pressures on space in all other LMS journals are enough in themselves to warrant launching another journal of some form so the long term intention is that *BJPTLMS* will form one continuous spectrum of mathematics and working mathematicians who already have library or free developing country access should not notice the difference between the journals.<sup>4</sup>

## **NEXT STEPS**

We plan to put a lot of effort into the early explanation of what the journal is for and why we are doing this; we are therefore looking to make a ‘soft launch’ rather than grand announcements.

We will place the new journal in the context of the many things we already do to support widening access and providing authors with a diverse range of healthy journals. This project is all about opening up choice to both authors and readers.

The journal’s home page is <http://www.lms.ac.uk/content/tlms>. Authors seeking advice can email LMS staff at [lmsjournals@lms.ac.uk](mailto:lmsjournals@lms.ac.uk), which is the new email for the four core journals, or contact the main Editor, Keith Ball, at [tlms@lms.ac.uk](mailto:tlms@lms.ac.uk).

The web page for submitting a paper to the journal is <http://www.lms.ac.uk/content/tlms-submit>.

LMS Publications Committee

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<sup>4</sup> We will be using the creative commons licence, CC-BY or CC-BY-NC according to the choice of the author, informed by their funder’s requirements.