



Diamond Open Access to Scholarly Journals as a Catalyst for Policy Change

International Open Access Week
21-25 October 2024

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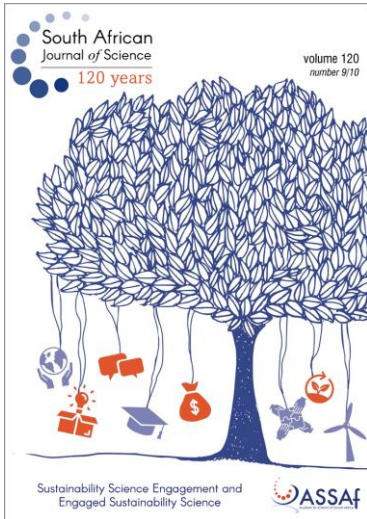


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South African Journal of Science



<https://www.sajs.co.za/>

- Oldest scholarly journal in SA (1903-)
- Multidisciplinary
- 6 issues per annum, Special Issues
- Funded by DSI (now DSTI)
- Published by ASSAf
- Editor-in-Chief (part-time)
- Managing Editor (full-time)
- 10 Associate Editors (part-time)
- Online Publishing Systems Administrator (full-time)
- Marketing & Communications Manager (part-time)
- Scholarly Publishing Intern (full-time)
- Associate Editor Mentees (6)
- Editorial Advisory Board (14)



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What is a **Diamond Open Access (DOA) journal?**

No fees charged to either authors or readers.

<https://scienceeurope.org/our-priorities/open-science/diamond-open-access/>



Free access for Readers | No Article Publishing Fees for Authors



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Significance of DOA journals for Africa/South Africa

- African scholars can **publish in, access high-quality research without cost**
 - Instrumental in promoting locally relevant knowledge
 - Encourages multilingualism and inclusivity
 - Strengthens the role and performance of research institutions (University Rankings)
- **With financial resources from research institutions, Editors will be allowed to focus on quality content.**
- Challenges the APC model, which marginalises researchers from low-resource settings
- **Reduce dependence** on Western publishers and **Journal Impact Factor (JIF)**
- Aligns with policies and funders' requirements
- Perception among some - "Paying article processing fees is a predatory practice"



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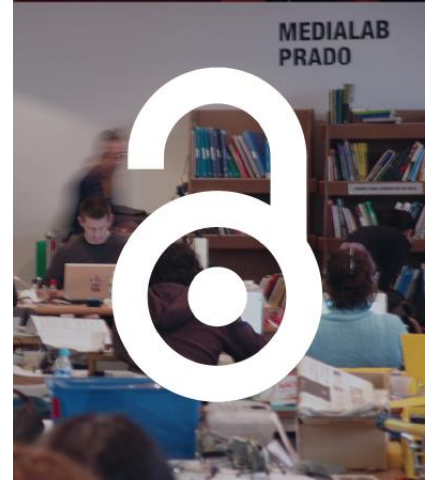
Publishing a scholarly journal **requires funding**

- Editorial and peer review management
- Technology and platform costs
- Production costs
 - Typesetting & layout design
 - Copyediting & proofreading
 - Graphic & image editing
- Publishing and dissemination
 - Print costs (if applicable)
 - Digital preservation
- Marketing and indexing
 - Search Engine Optimisation (SEO)
- Administration & overheads
- Etc.



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“ Editors are the quality assurance drivers of the entire knowledge enterprise. They collaborate with peers to produce new knowledge and facilitate exchange between authors and readers. Such exchange is facilitated by publishers who provide the necessary systems thereby empowering scholarly communities to function for public benefit. ”

Prof Keyan Tomaselli, 16 Oct 2024



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“

If we accept that editing and peer reviewing are the engine of the entire scholarly enterprise, then some of the contradictions that arise are:

- * Key performance indicators rarely recognise editorial activities. These are time-consuming and incremental in nature.
- * Yet, journals are the conduit for DHET publication incentive transfers (R3.4 billion) annually to universities.
- * Journals and publishers take the risk as they invest in evaluation and production, distribution and marketing, and hosting in perpetuity.

”

Prof Keyan Tomaselli, 16 Oct 2024



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Responsibility on Editors is huge and stressful

Editing is at the Heart of Scholarly Publishing

By ANGELA COCHRAN, KARIN WULF | APR 24, 2019 | 26 COMMENTS

Editor Responsibilities toward Authors

Editor Responsibilities toward Reviewers

Editor Responsibilities toward Readers and the Scientific Community

Editor Responsibilities toward Journal Owners/Publishers

Responsibilities of Editors toward the Public

Authorship disputes, Errata, Retractions, Misconduct, Plagiarism
Reputation of Editor & Journal & Owner Institution + University Rankings



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https://www.councilscienceeditors.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=103:2-1-editor-roles-and-responsibilities&catid=20:site-content



Diamond open access as a catalyst for policy change

It costs money to publish a journal.
Editors have huge responsibilities & lots of work but
are not necessarily paid/acknowledged.
SA HEIs (through Authors), receive monies –
DHET Research Outputs Policy.

Is it not time for a policy change?

DHET Research Outputs Policy (2015)

<https://www.dhet.gov.za/Policy%20and%20Development%20Support/Research%20Outputs%20Policy%202015.pdf>



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SA Publication Quality Framework Project (PQFP)



Second consultative meeting with the HE sector on the Publication Quality Framework Project

Johann Mouton and team (CREST, SciSTIP)
6 and 7 June 2024



Fifth project team meeting on the Publication Quality Framework Project

CREST, DHET, ASSAf and NRF
Pierneef's Kraal, Pretoria
20 August 2024



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San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment

There is a pressing need to improve the ways in which the output of scientific research is evaluated by funding agencies, academic institutions, and other parties. To address this issue, a group of editors and publishers of scholarly journals met during the Annual Meeting of The American Society for Cell Biology (ASCB) in San Francisco, CA, on December 16, 2012. The group developed a set of recommendations, referred to as the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment. We invite interested parties across all scientific disciplines to indicate their support by adding their names to this Declaration.

The outputs from scientific research are many and varied, including: research articles reporting new knowledge, data, reagents, and software; intellectual property; and highly trained young scientists. Funding agencies, institutions that employ scientists, and scientists themselves, all have a desire, and need, to assess the quality and impact of scientific outputs. It is thus imperative that scientific output is measured accurately and evaluated wisely.

The Journal Impact Factor is frequently used as the primary parameter with which to compare the scientific output of individuals and institutions. The Journal Impact Factor, as calculated by Thomson Reuters*, was originally created as a tool to help librarians identify journals to purchase, not as a measure of the scientific quality of research in an article. With that in mind, it is critical to understand that the Journal Impact Factor has a number of well-documented deficiencies as a tool for research assessment. These limitations include: A) citation distributions within journals are highly skewed [1–3]; B) the properties of the Journal Impact Factor are field-

العربية

Bahasa Indonesia

中文

Català

Čeština

Српски

Deutsch

Eesti keel

English

Español

Ελληνικά

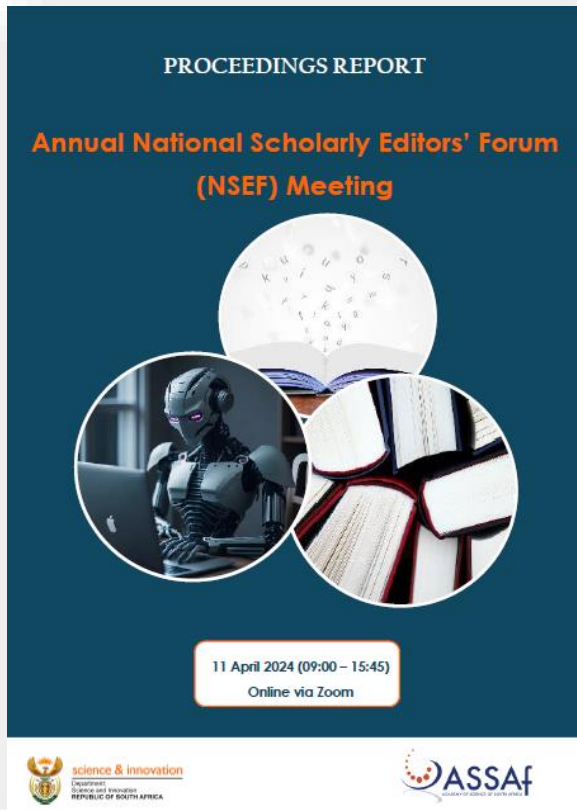
Français

हिन्दी

Italiano



ASSAf Statement on issues and struggles faced by **Editors of journals in SA**



Report back on the Statement on Issues and Struggles Faced by Editors of Journals in South Africa (Prof Philip de Jager, CSPiSA member)

The initial draft of the *Statement on Issues and Struggles Faced by Editors of Journals in South Africa* was submitted to the ASSAf Council for review. Following this submission, the Council requested a reevaluation of specific questions within the statement. Prof Philip de Jager, chairperson of the subcommittee responsible for drafting the statement, offered feedback on the document.

An analysis of the minutes from the NSEF meeting in November 2021 revealed that editors expressed a need for support across several dimensions:

- Acknowledgment from the university system for the contributions to academic life and the significant work they undertake.

<https://research.assaf.org.za/assafserver/api/core/bitstreams/c30b9448-2f09-4c63-935c-9bab1ffa2059/content>



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Status of DOA in Africa/SA

- SA country report by Susan Veldsman, Ina Smith
- Survey responses from
 - 199 journals (Africa)
 - 25 country reports
- Part of 3-year “Collaboration for sustainable open access publishing in Africa” project (Nov. 2023-Oct. 2026)
- Implemented by EIFL, AJOL, WACREN
- Support from Wellcome Trust

<https://www.eifl.net/resources/eifl-landscape-study-no-fee-open-access-publishing-africa>
IRYNA KUCHMA, MILICA ŠEVKUŠIĆ, EIFL OPEN ACCESS PROGRAM



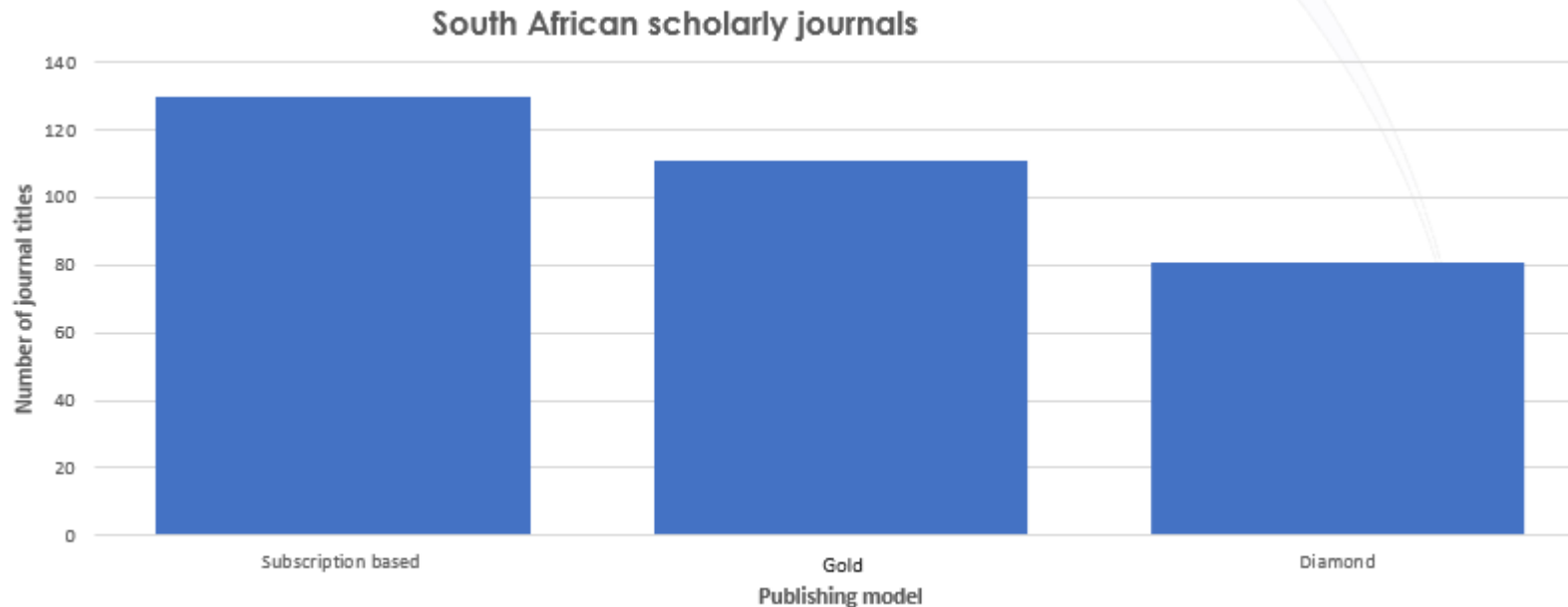
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Publishing models applied by South African journals

South Africa publishes 322 (2023) accredited scholarly journals. Of the 322 journals 192 are open accessible, with 81 diamond open access journals and 111 gold open access. The remainder of the journals (130) are subscription-based journals.



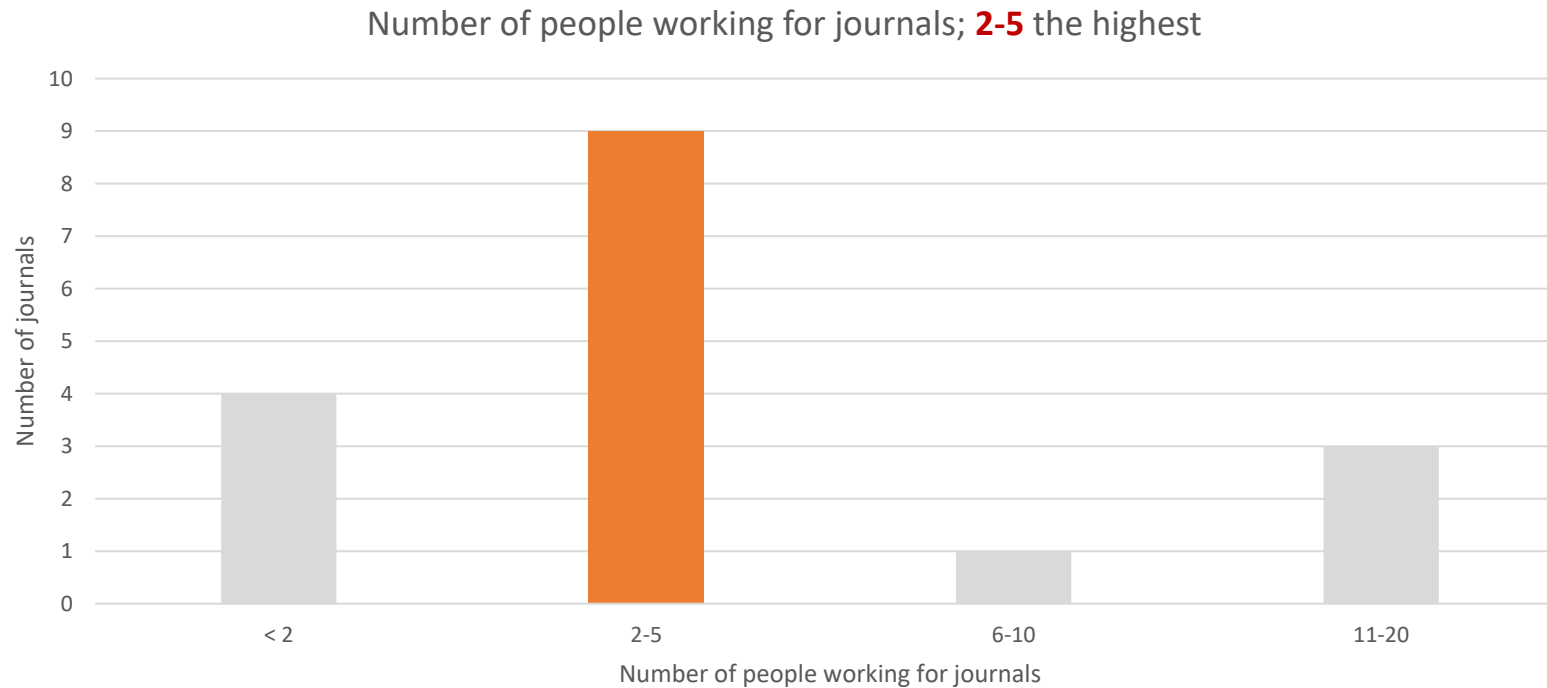
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People working for SA DOA scholarly journals

Includes key roles such as editors, assistant editors, and administrative support staff
($n=34$).



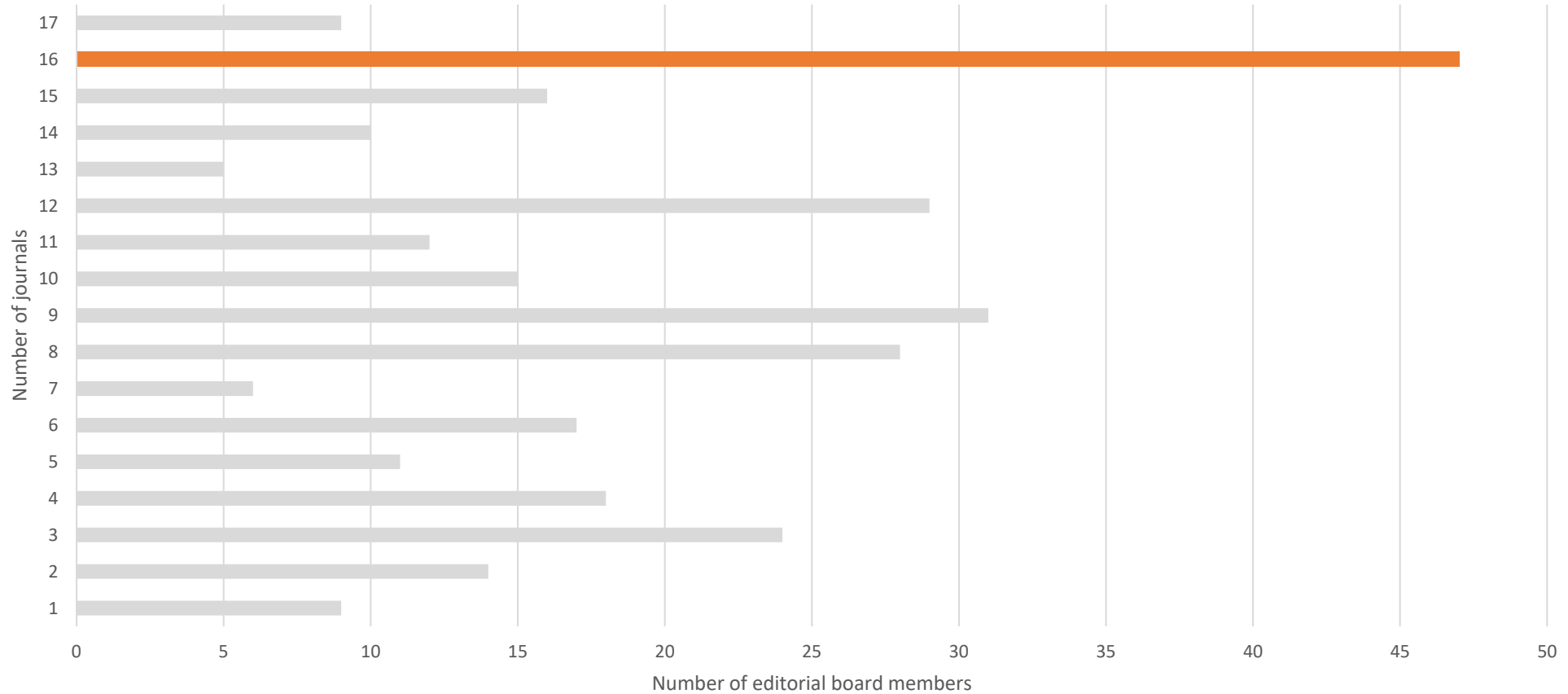
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Number of editorial board members

Number of editorial board members per journal; **47** is highest



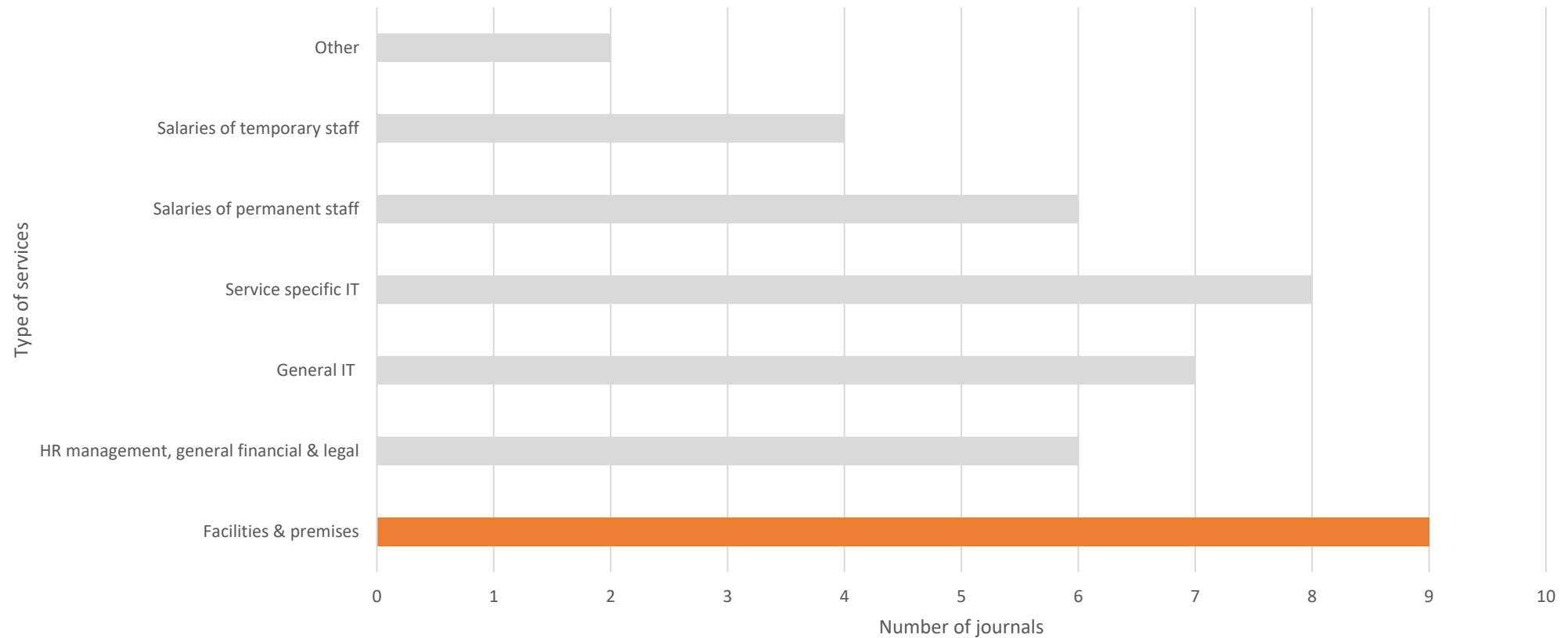
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Institutional support received by journals

In-kind support provided by host organisation; **facilities & premises** the highest



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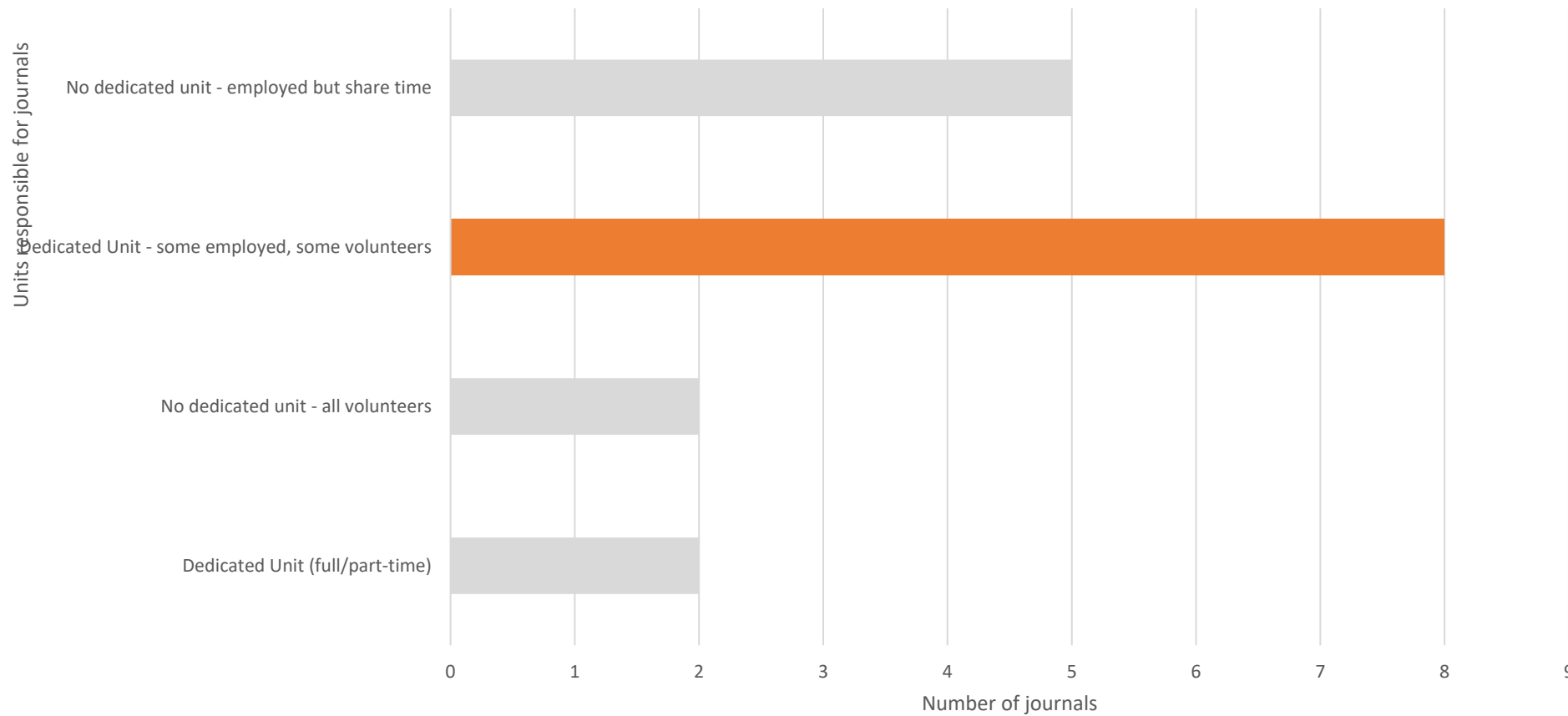
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Number of journals



Units responsible for journals

Units responsible for journals; **dedicated unit - some employed, some volunteers** the highest

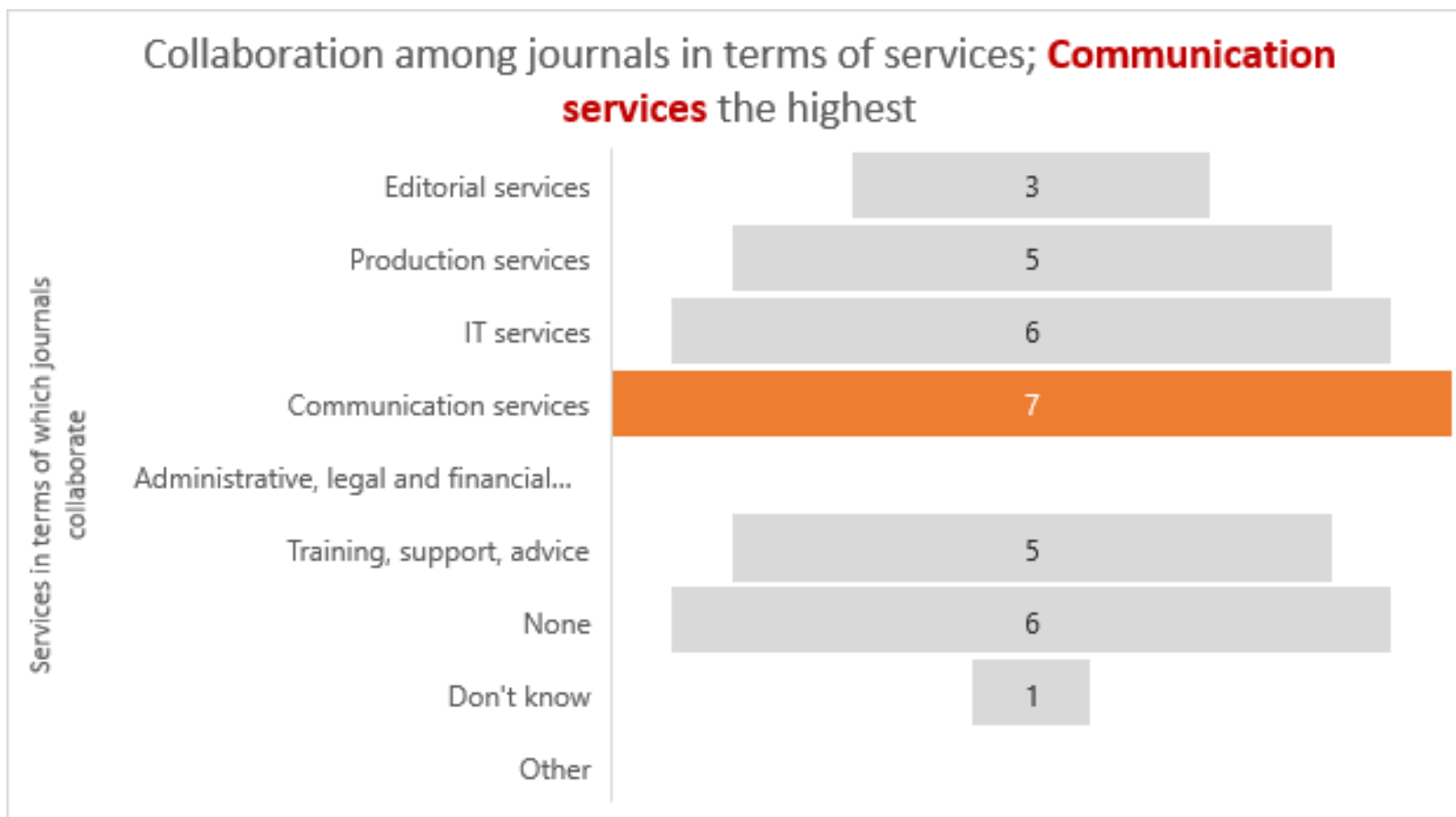


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Collaboration amongst journals



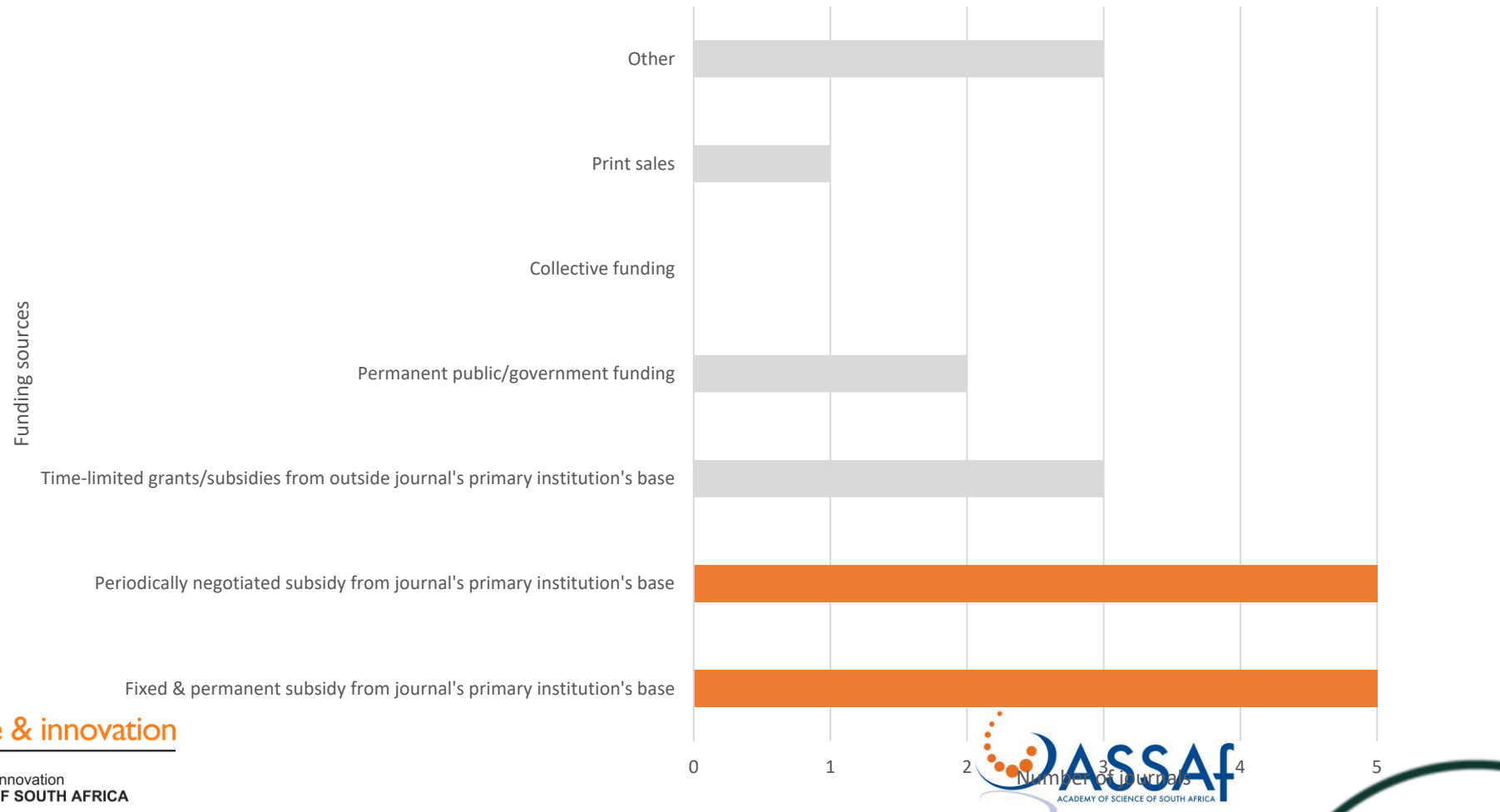
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Funding and sustainability of journals

Periodically negotiated subsidy & fixed & permanent subsidy from journal's primary institution's base the highest

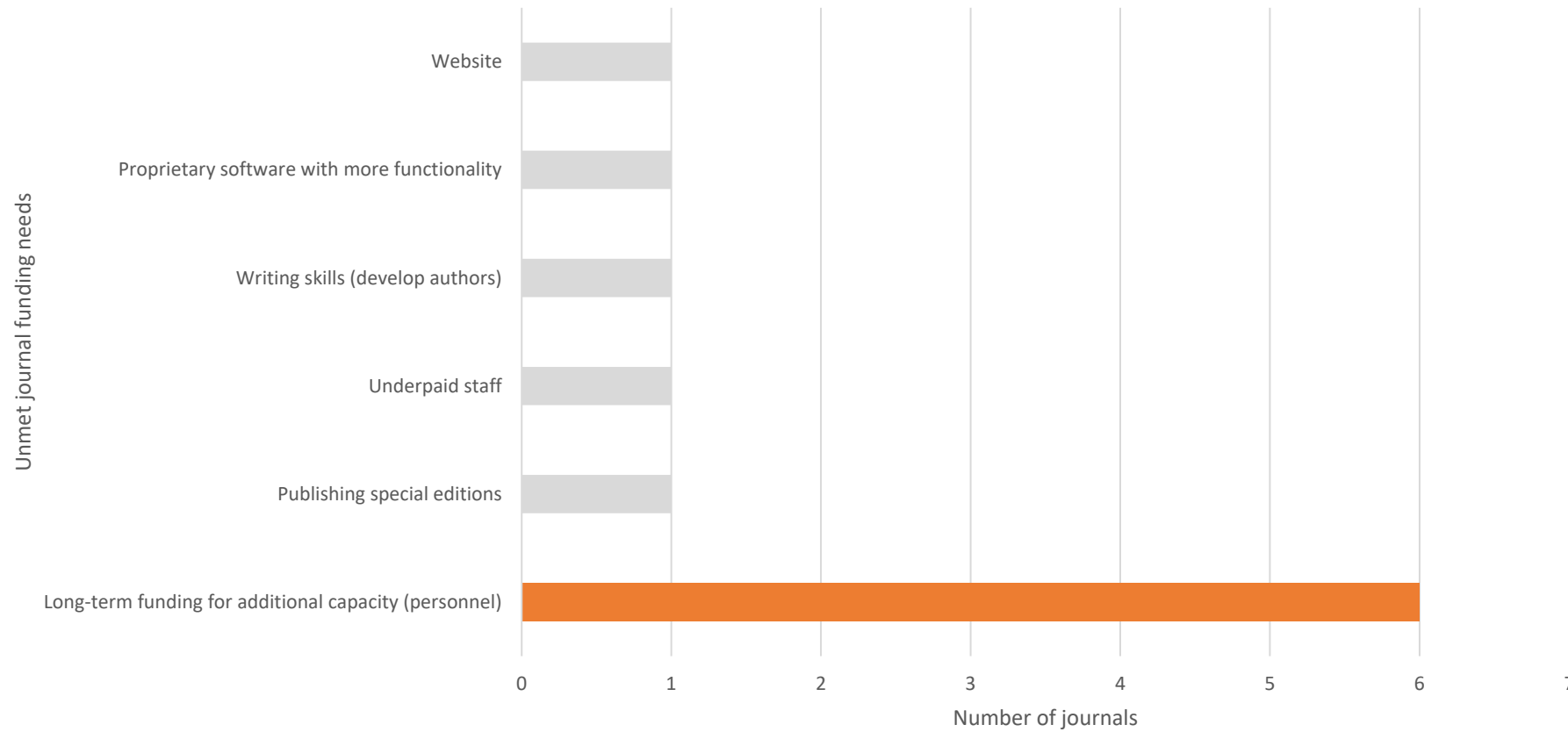


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Unmet funding needs

Funding for capacity (personnel) the highest



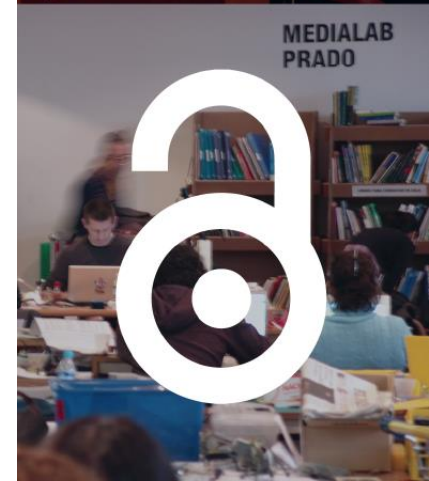
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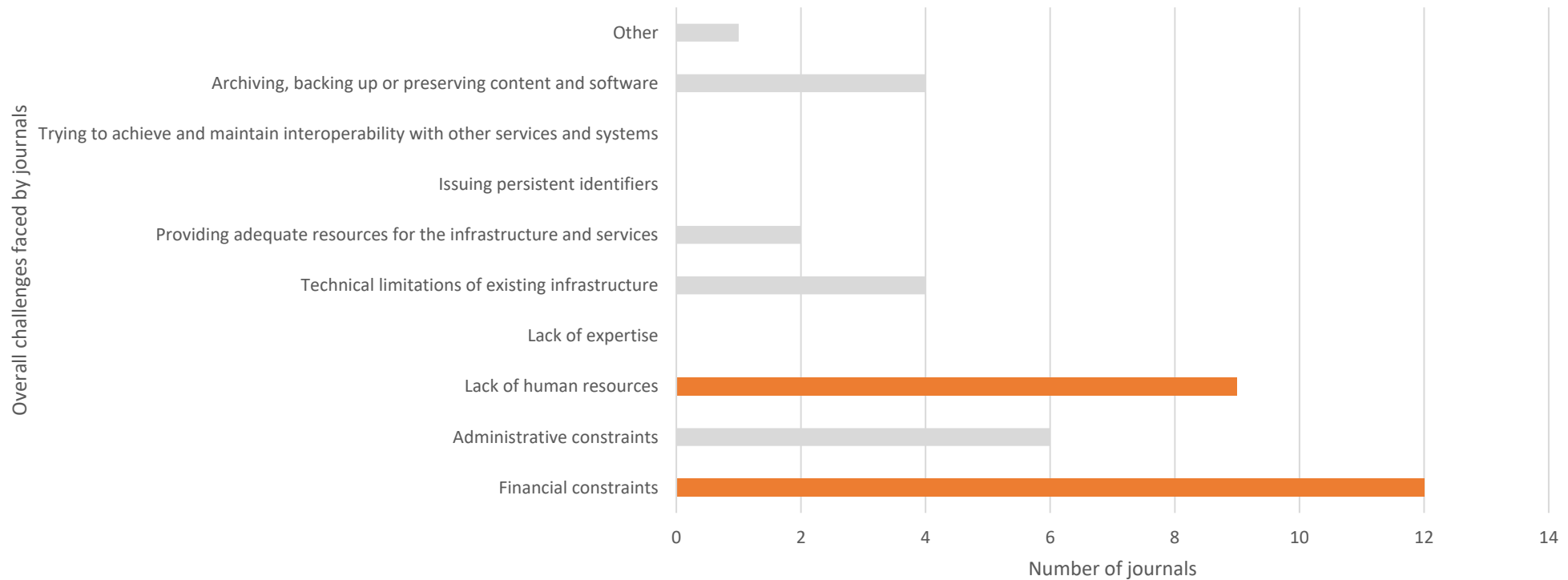
Journal technical infrastructure

- IT support services fully outsourced (8 out of 17)
- 12 out of 17 use online workflows, with 5 partially using online workflows
 - Most journals have editorial policy guidelines (15 out of 17)
 - Double-blind peer review (14 of 17)
- 15 have implemented Crossref DOIs
- 15 embrace Open Researcher and Contributor ID (ORCID)
- 15 use Public Knowledge Project (PKP) Open Journal Systems (OJS)



Overall challenges faced by journals

Overall challenges faced by journals; **Financial constraints** the highest



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Background to journal **portals/platforms**

- When the Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf) was approached by EIFL for assistance in researching the diamond open-access publishing landscape in South Africa, it initially lacked comprehensive knowledge of the existing open-access portals in the country.
- ASSAf conducted a thorough desktop study to identify such portals.
- Identified 25 portals in South Africa hosting Open Access journals, although not exclusively limited to diamond Open Access journals.
- The URLs of these portals along with their respective managers were pinpointed,
- EIFL project questionnaire was dispatched to the portal managers for completion.



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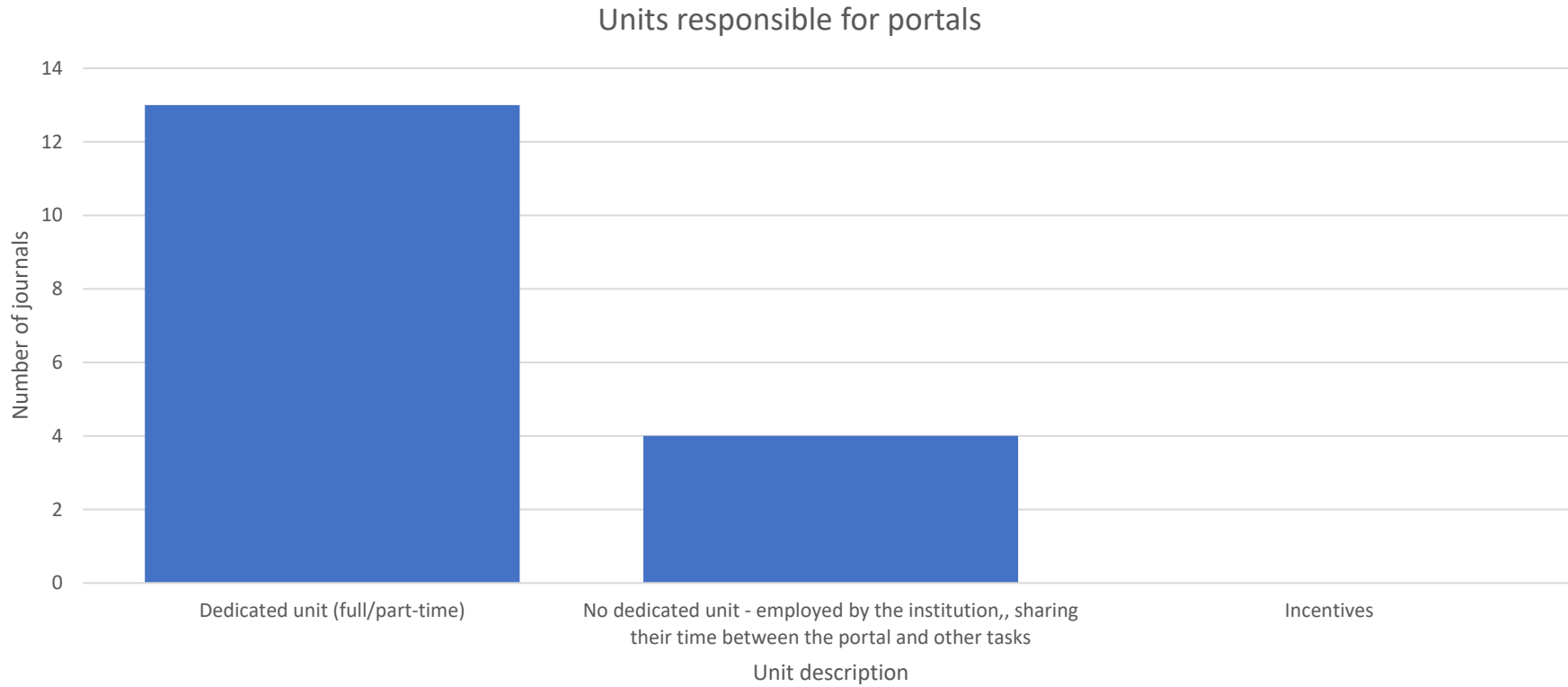


17 out of 25 portals/platforms responded to survey

Portal name	Journals indexed
Sabinet African Journals	630
SciELO SA	111
Unisa Press Journals	31
SUNJournals	26
UJ Press Journals	17
Khulisa Journals	17
MedPharm Publications	13
UWC Scholar - Online Publishing Support Service	12
African Platform for Open Scholarship (APOS)	10
Kovisejournals	9
SAMA	8
UCT Open Access Journals	7
Open Journals	6
Rhodes Hosted Journals	5
PULP Pretoria University Law Press	4
CPUT Open Journal System	3
Durban University of Technology	1
Grand Total	923



Units responsible for portals/platforms



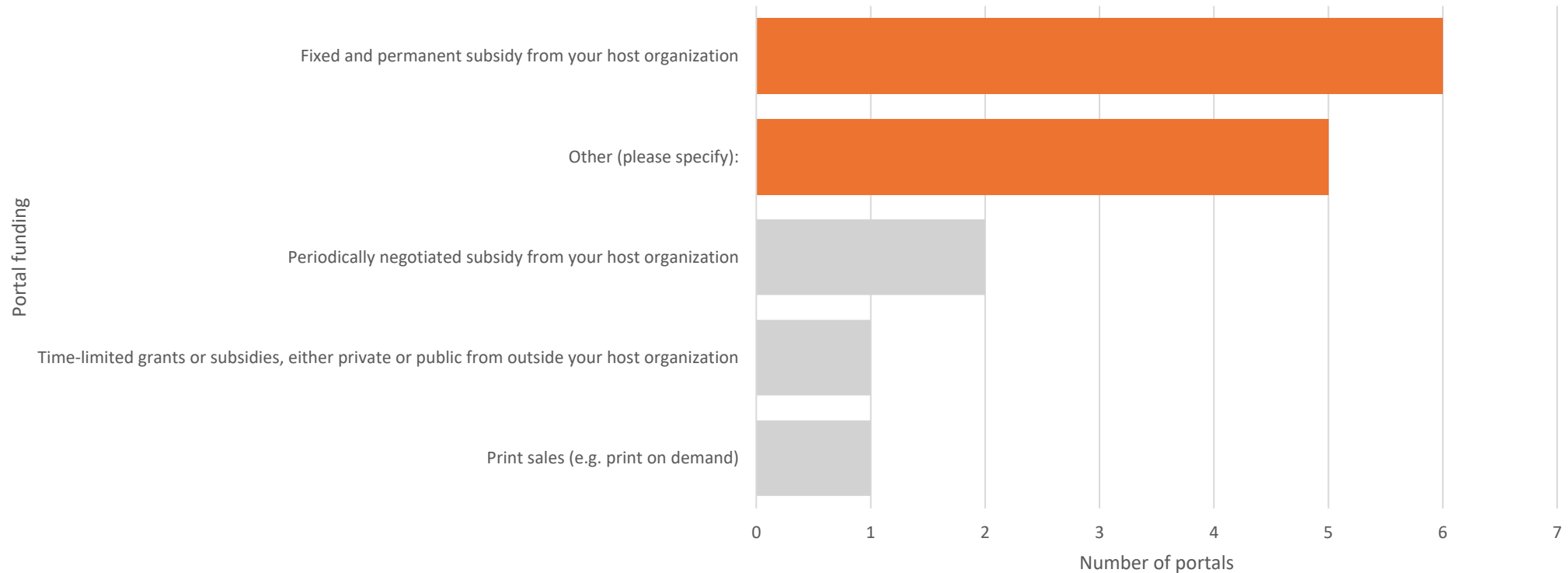
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Funding of portals/platforms

Fixed and permanent subsidy from your host organization and Other (please specify): is noticeably higher than others



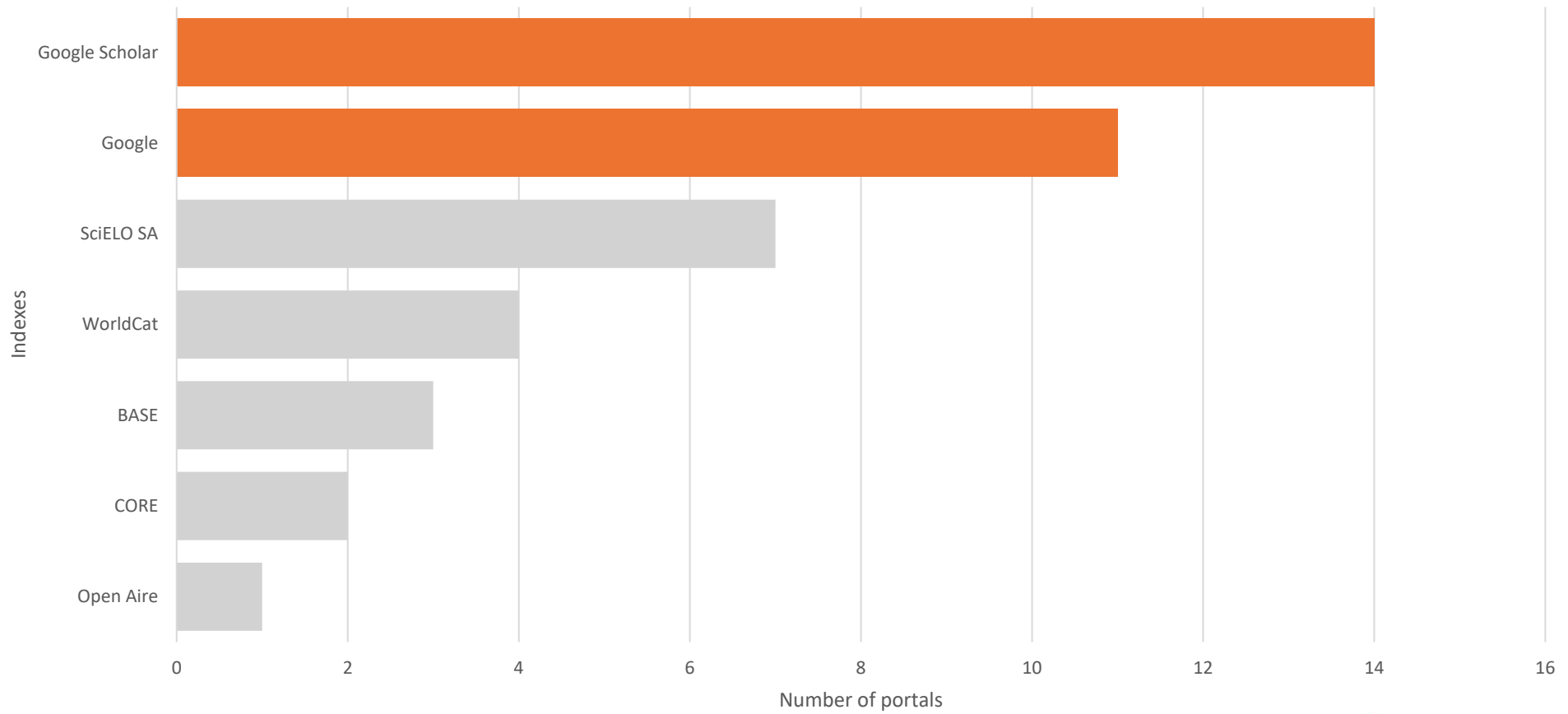
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Indexing of portals/platforms

Google Scholar and Google noticeably higher



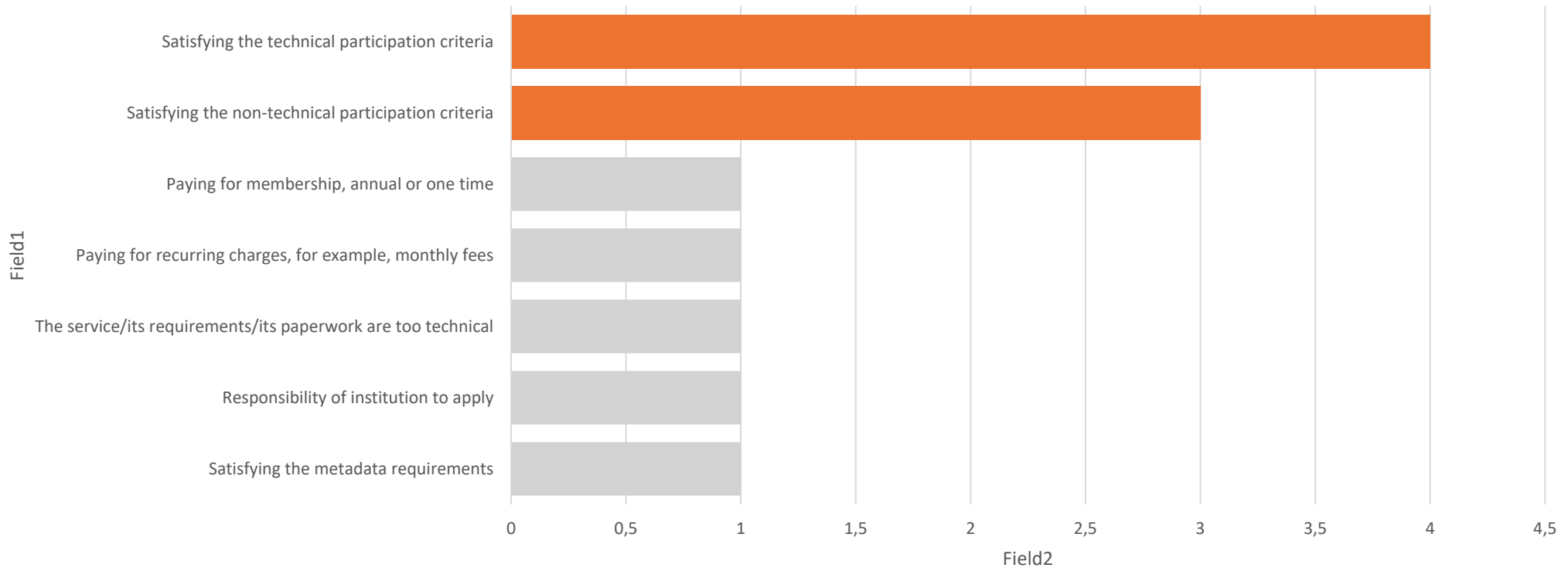
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Challenges to get indexed

Satisfying the technical participation criteria and Satisfying the non-technical participation criteria have noticeably higher counts

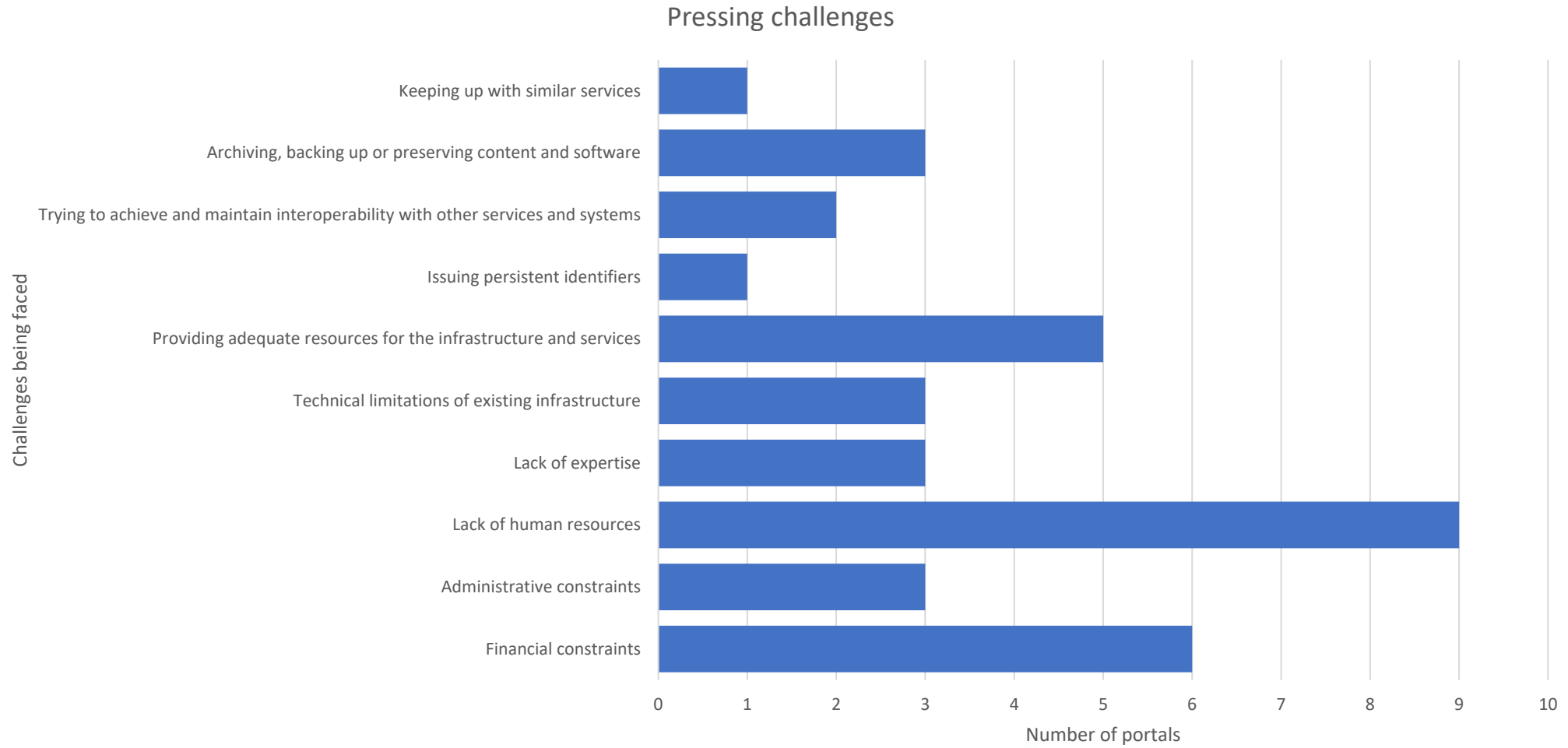


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Pressing challenges



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What continues to be challenges for these DOA journals & portals/platforms?

- Financial constraints
- Lack of human resources
- Administrative constraints (journals)
- Infrastructure and technical support: lack of technical infrastructure and expertise; limited utilisation of OJS (portals/platforms)
- Quality assurance: maintaining high editorial services; rigorous peer review
- Visibility and discoverability: struggle to achieve sufficient visibility and discoverability
- Advocacy and policy support: advocacy and supportive policies on all levels are necessary; open access mandates and institutional repositories



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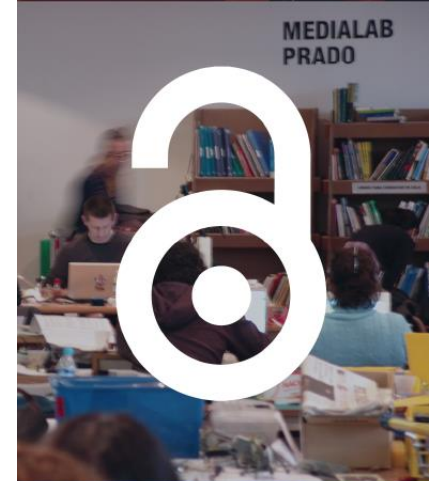
What needs to change for journals to become DOA?

- Strategic allocation of **dedicated resources (Editors, Reviewers)** – need for additional **time** and freedom from undergraduate and postgraduate workload
- **Acknowledge work done by Editors** (and others e.g. Reviewers) – performance evaluation
- Capacity building: support to new and emerging editors
- Transitioning from subscription to OA models: financial implications requires careful planning
- **Journal sustainability plans for journals**
- **Change in how journals are evaluated** (DHET Research Outputs Policy; PQFP) – move away from narrow metrics such as JIF. Recognise value of research based on its quality, relevance, accessibility – not because of where it was published.



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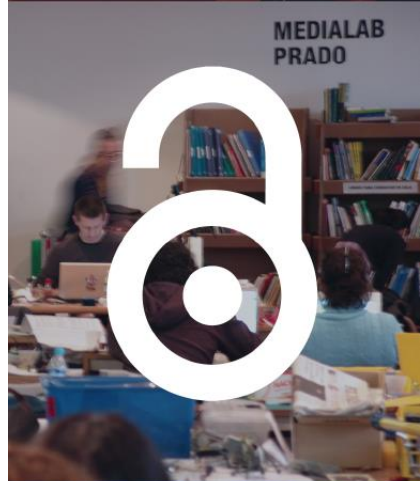


- Institutional support (facilities & premises)
- **Periodically/fixed/permanent negotiated subsidy from journal's institutional base organisation or funding from professional society/government department**
- Implement journal management system (PKP OJS) with e-workflow, editorial policy guidelines, persistent IDs
- **Change in policy** – also refer to *DSI (DSTI) Open Science Policy* (before parliament)



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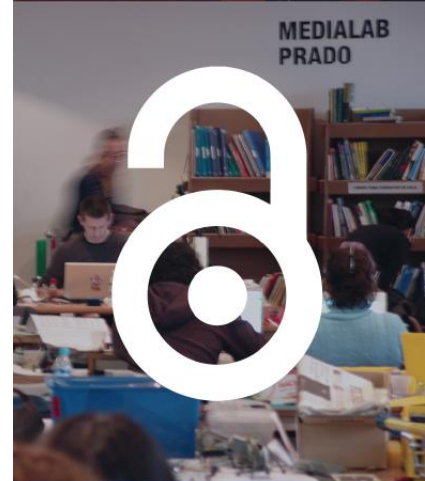
What needs to change for all portals/platforms to become DOA?

- Stay abreast of developments in scholarly publishing and adapt to changing environments
- Infrastructure: federated search across all portals/platforms; collaboration
- **Long-term funding** guarantees: for sustainability, infrastructure development, etc
- Skilled human resources supporting editors (dedicated unit – employed/volunteers)
- Free access to similarity check, persistent identifiers (DOIs)
- Raising awareness about DOA
- Advocacy toolkits
- Centralised PKP OJS for SA journals; IT expertise
- SciELO Africa supported by PKP OJS (**African Index?**)
- **Political support (policy) and commitment**



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Conclusion – policy change

- 1 Funding from owner organisation
- 2 Acknowledge Editors (& Reviewers)
- 3 Change journal evaluation system





Thank you!



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