

# Open Access and the Research Excellence Framework

**Ben Johnson**

Research Policy Adviser

FOSTER OA Good Practice Exchange Workshop

7 July 2015

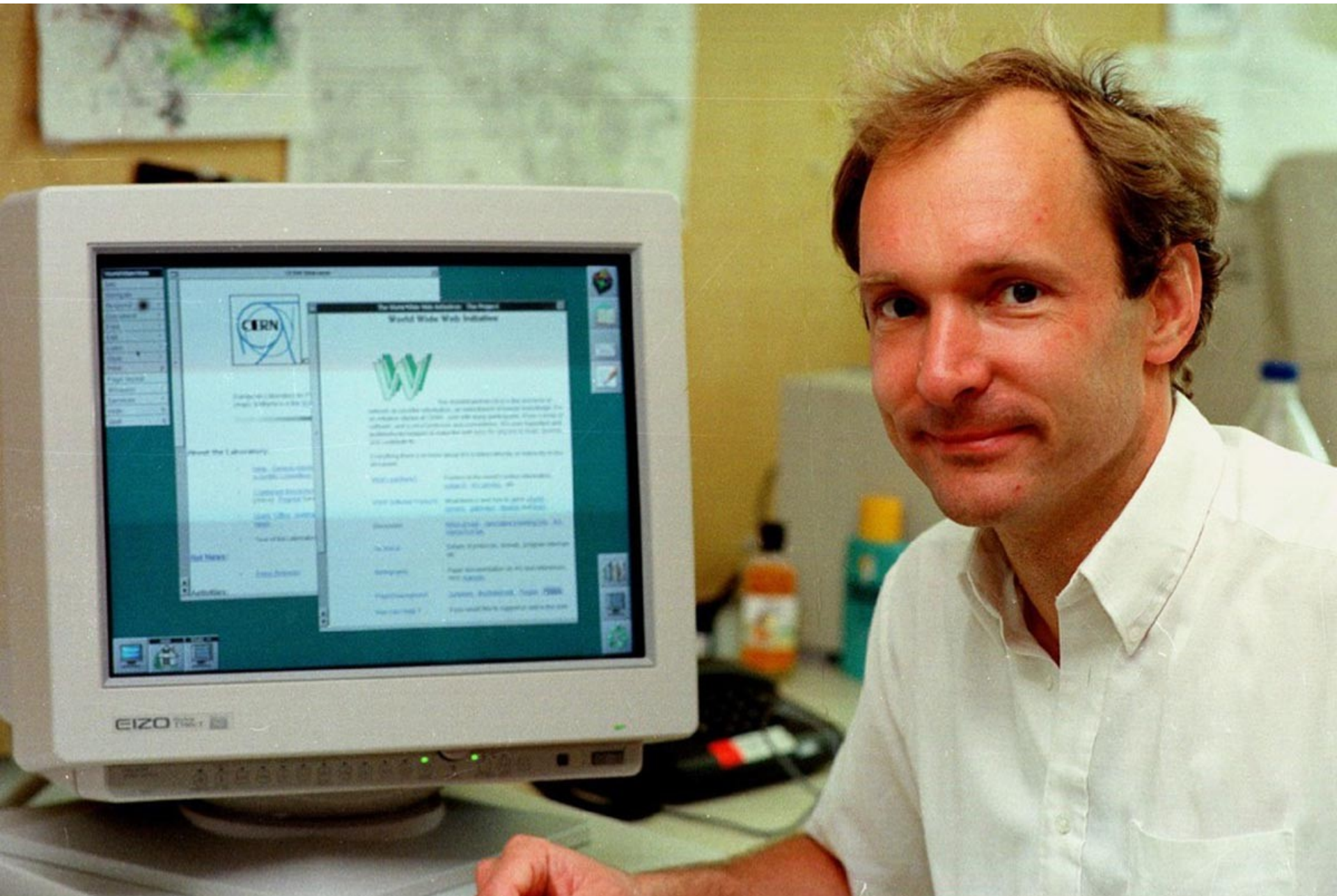


Image: CERN



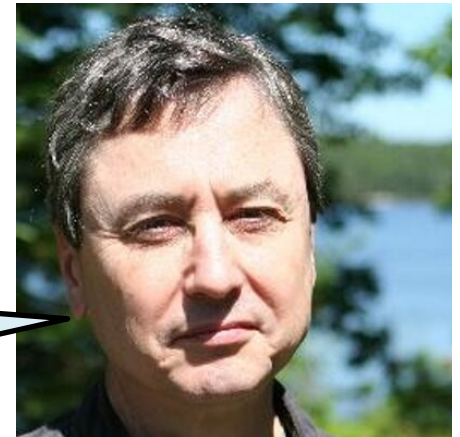
# Motivations for OA

The Internet makes it easy to share research outputs freely.



So let's subvert the current system...

...to deliver an unprecedented public good!



# Motivations for OA

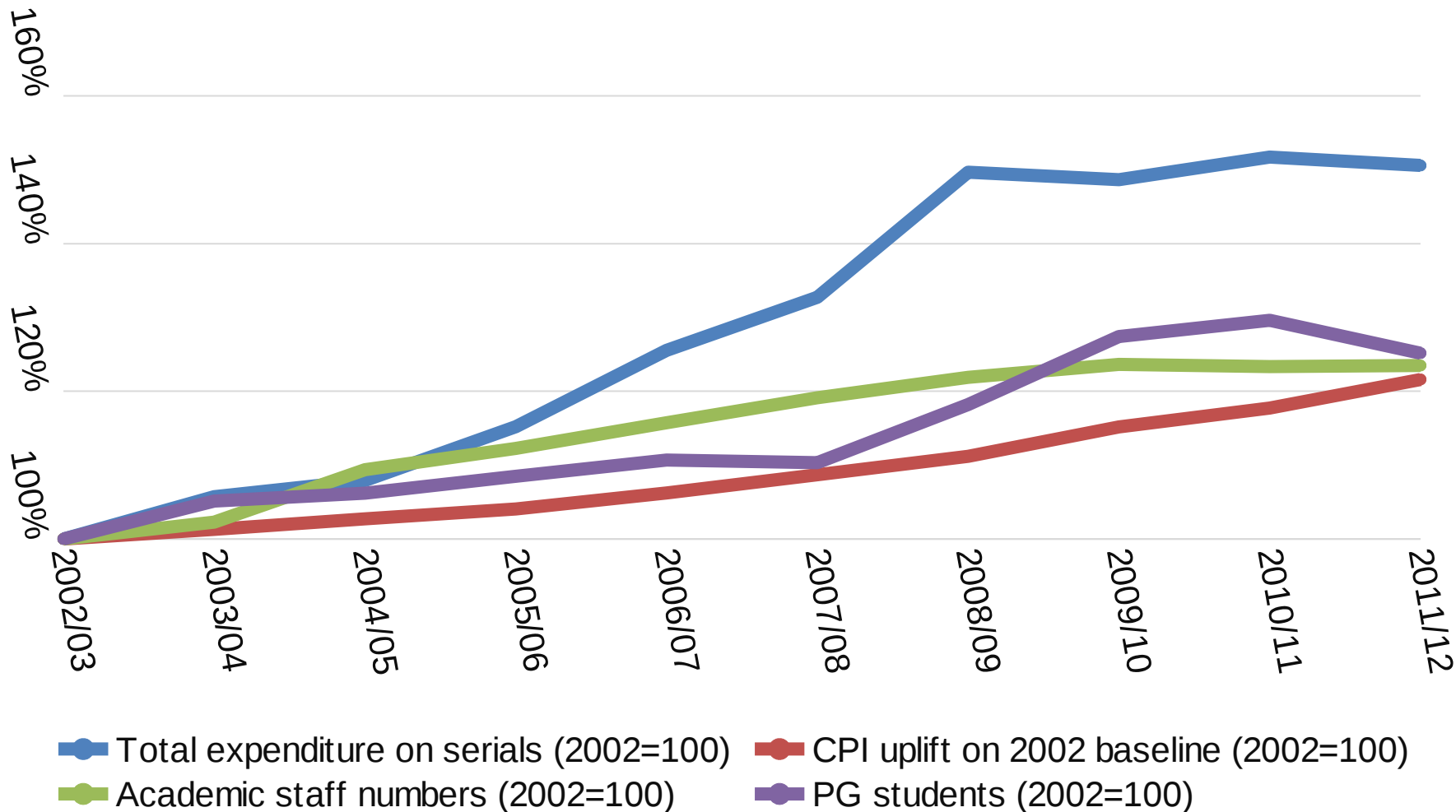


“The principle that the results of research that has been publicly funded should be freely accessible in the public domain is a compelling one, and fundamentally unanswerable.”

# Motivations for OA

The current system of journal publishing is too expensive, unsustainable, and in crisis.

# Growth of serials expenditure in the UK



Data: SCONUL statistics (expenditure); ONS (CPI); HESA (other data)



## Harvard University says it can't afford journal publishers' prices

University wants scientists to make their research open access and resign from publications that keep articles behind paywalls



Accessibility, sustainability, excellence: how to expand  
access to research publications

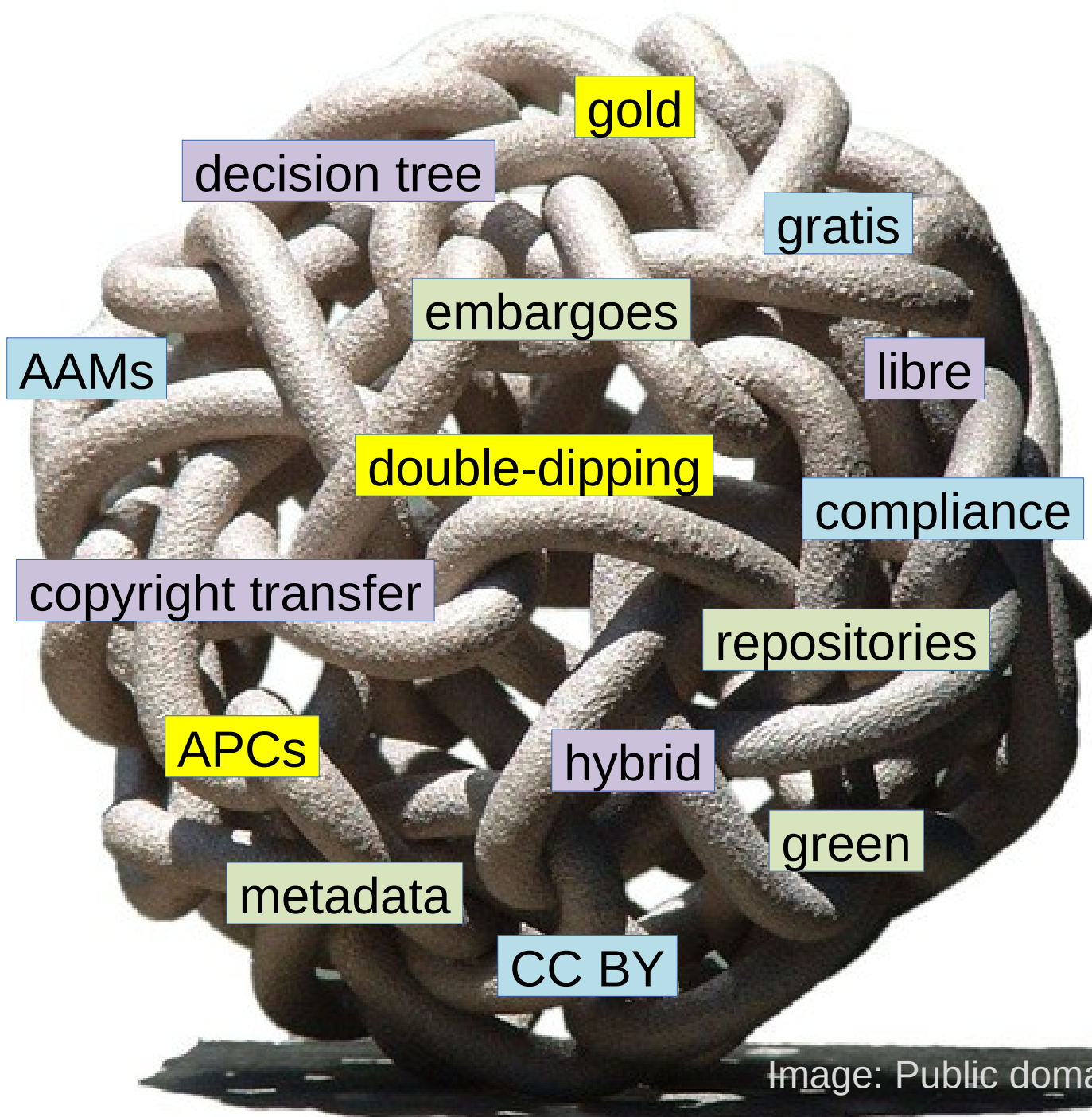
Report of the Working Group on Expanding Access to Published  
Research Findings







Image: Public domain



gold

decision tree

gratis

embargoes

AAMs

libre

double-dipping

compliance

copyright transfer

repositories

APCs

hybrid

green

metadata

CC BY

Image: Public domain



Gratis

Libre

Green

Gold

# Some concerns...

- Quality?
- Ability to pay?
- UK “going it alone”?
- Double-dipping?
- Licensing?
- Learned societies?
- “Academic freedom”?

And is it even necessary?





# And now the REF

- Open research is excellent research
- Mandates are successful
- £1.6 billion

March 2014/07  
Policy development  
Statement of policy

Institutions are advised to comply with this policy

This document sets out the details of a requirement that certain research outputs should be made open-access to be eligible for submission to the post-2014 Research Excellence Framework (REF). This requirement will apply to journal articles and conference proceedings accepted for publication after 1 April 2016.

## Policy for open access in the post-2014 Research Excellence Framework



Cynor Cylido Addysg  
Dwrch Cymru  
Higher Education Funding  
Council for Wales

hefce



HIGHER EDUCATION  
FUNDING COUNCIL  
FOR ENGLAND

hefce

OGL

© HEFCE 2014  
This publication is available under the Open Government Licence 2.0.  
[www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/2](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/2)

<http://is.gd/OAREF>

# Our aims

- Maximising the reach and impact of research we fund
- Delivering a future that is ‘open by default’
- Not ‘distorting’ the system unilaterally and ideologically
- But fixing some of the problems in the system



# Our aims

- Author engagement is essential
- We must set clear and straightforward rules
- We must be ambitious, but reasonable and flexible

# The minimum requirements

- To be eligible for the next REF, journal articles and conference papers accepted after 1 April 2016 must be:
  - Deposited in a repository as the peer-reviewed manuscript (or better)
  - Made accessible for read and download after 12 months or 24 months

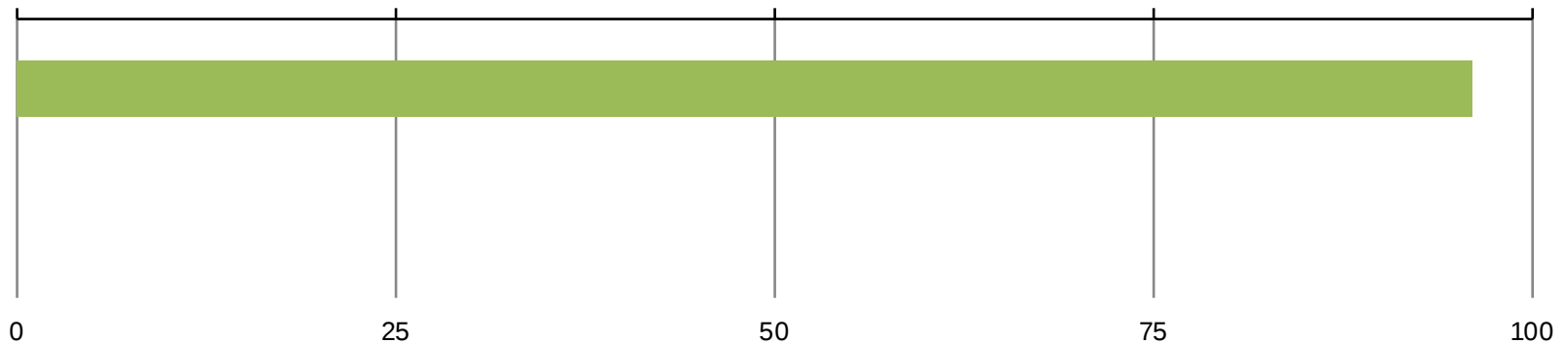
Will publishers allow authors to deposit their papers in repositories?

**Yes!**



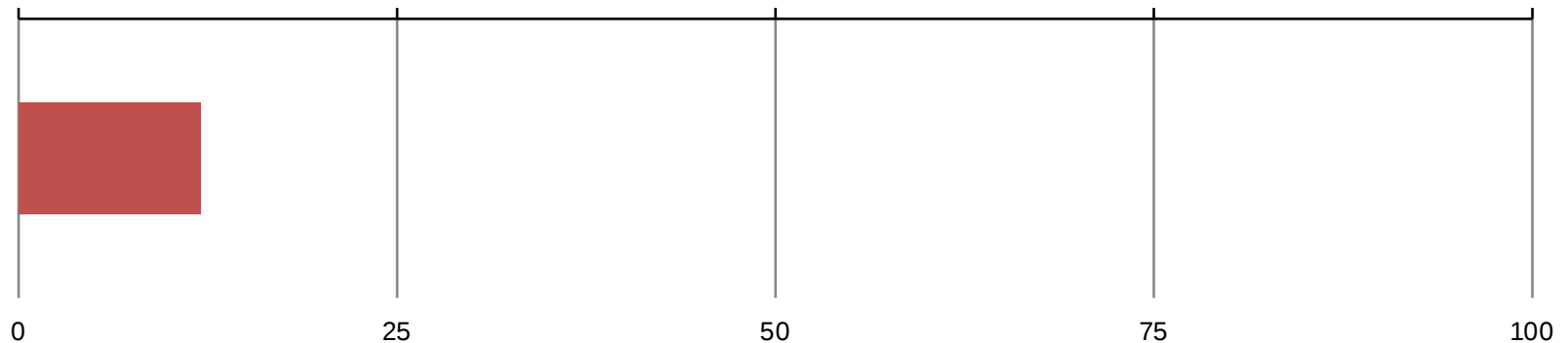
How many journal articles are published in venues with permissible embargoes?

96%



# How many papers are being deposited today?

12%



## A few more details...

- Exceptions apply where deposit not possible / open access not possible etc
- Benefits of OA should be extended beyond journals and conferences
- Libre OA is a desirable 'end game'



# Challenges

- Implementation and monitoring
- Stability vs. harmony
- Ambition vs. realism
- Long-term trajectory for UK OA: are we seizing the golden opportunity?

The future is open, and the  
benefits are substantial



Thank you for listening

[b.johnson@hefce.ac.uk](mailto:b.johnson@hefce.ac.uk)

[openaccess@hefce.ac.uk](mailto:openaccess@hefce.ac.uk)