

[10.6084/m9.figshare.19529251](https://doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.19529251)

The Impact and Visibility of OA Books in the Humanities

April 2022



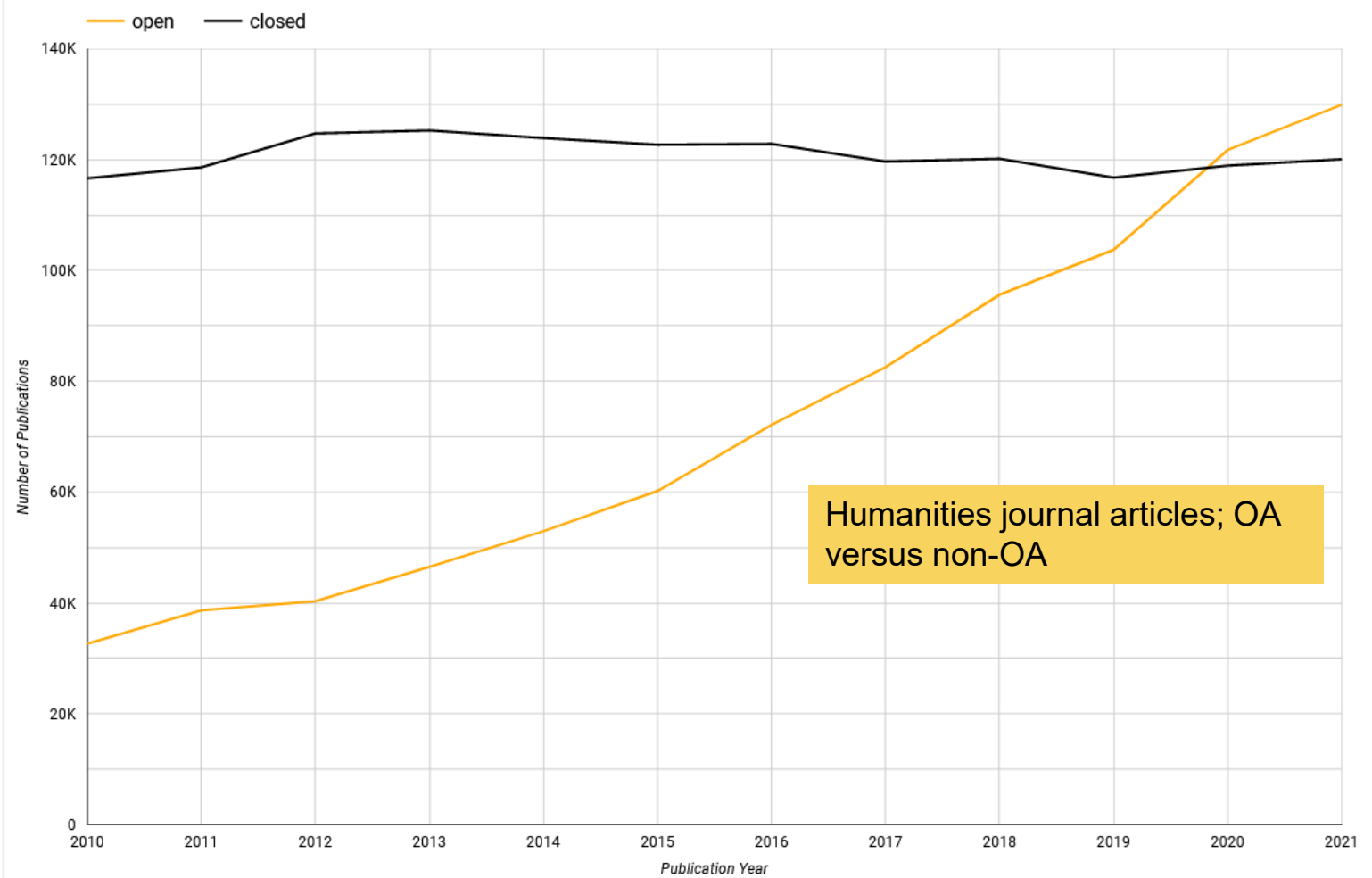
Your presenter...

- Mike Taylor, Head of Data Insights at Digital Science
- Mostly working on Altmetric and Dimensions / Insights.
- Before Digital Science, I worked at a very large publisher for twenty years. Over half that time on books, in various roles.
- Big books fan, and I regularly talk with small and large book publishers - so I understand their pain!
- Humanities focussed: I run a theatre company; participate in archaeological research, also have a social sciences degree
- <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8534-5985>
- [Recent paper on OA books and altmetrics in *Scientometrics*](#)
- m.taylor@digital-science.com



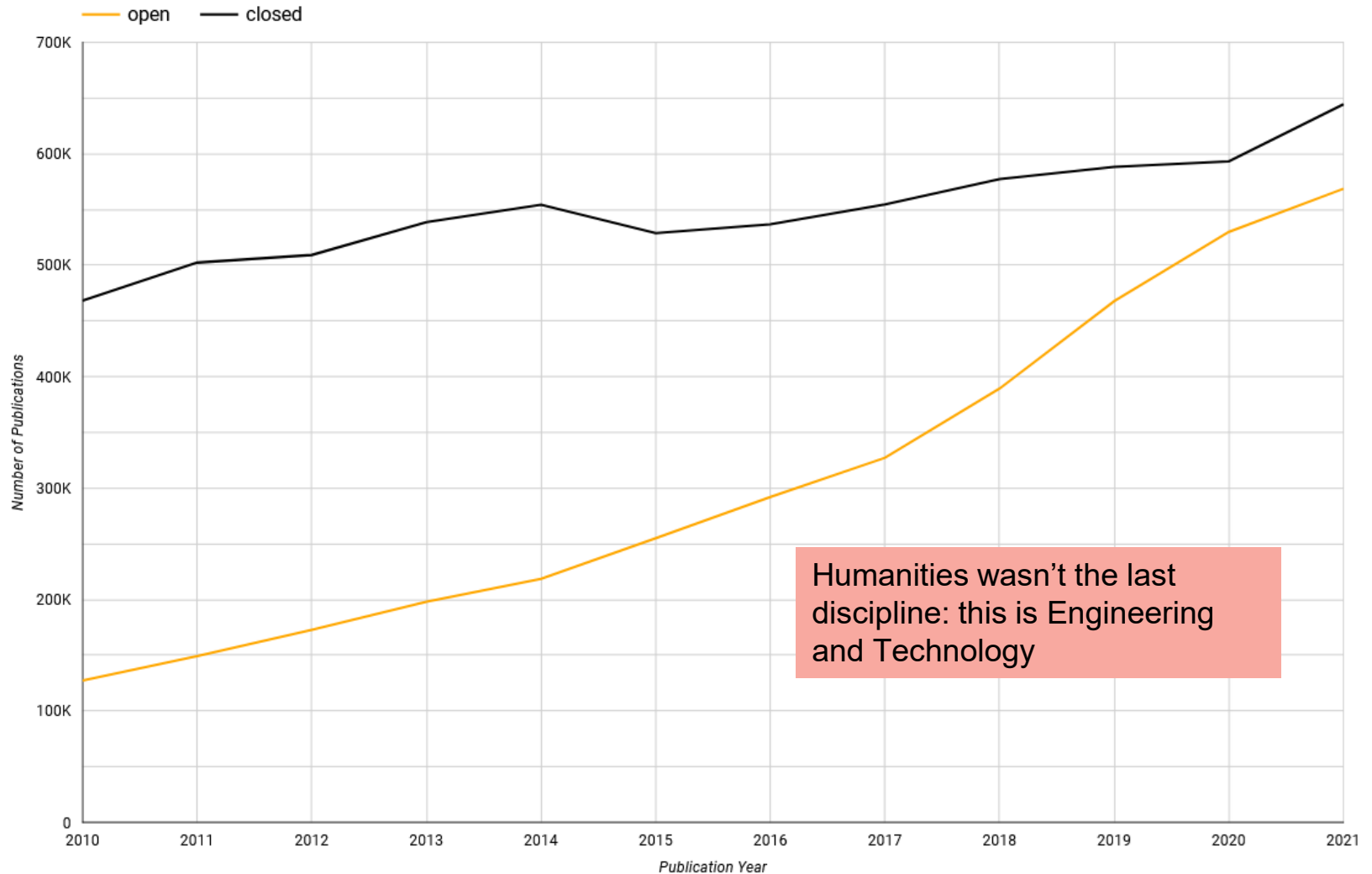
The growth of Open Access

(Journals, apologies!)



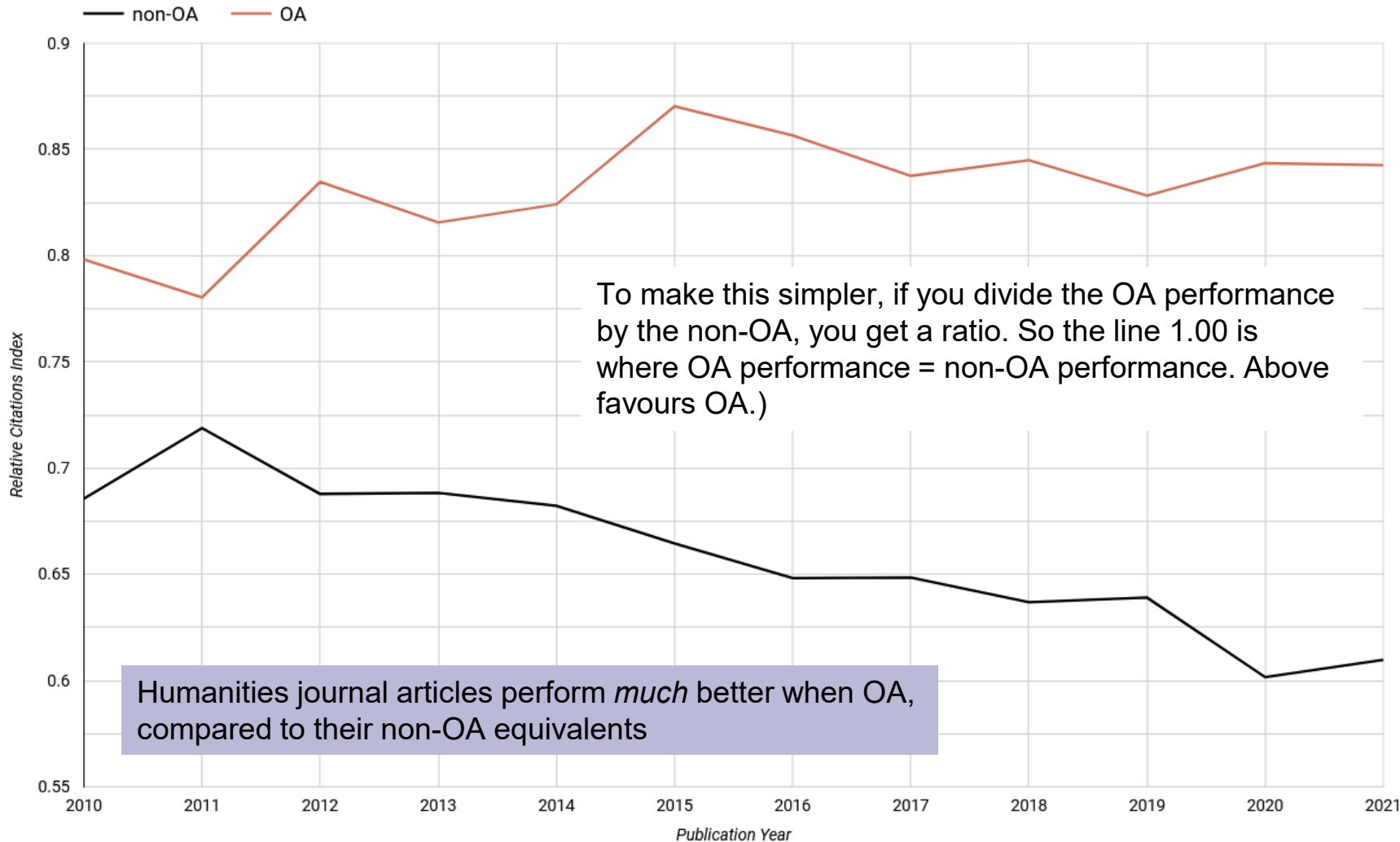
Humanities journal articles; OA versus non-OA





Humanities wasn't the last discipline: this is Engineering and Technology

OA works for journals

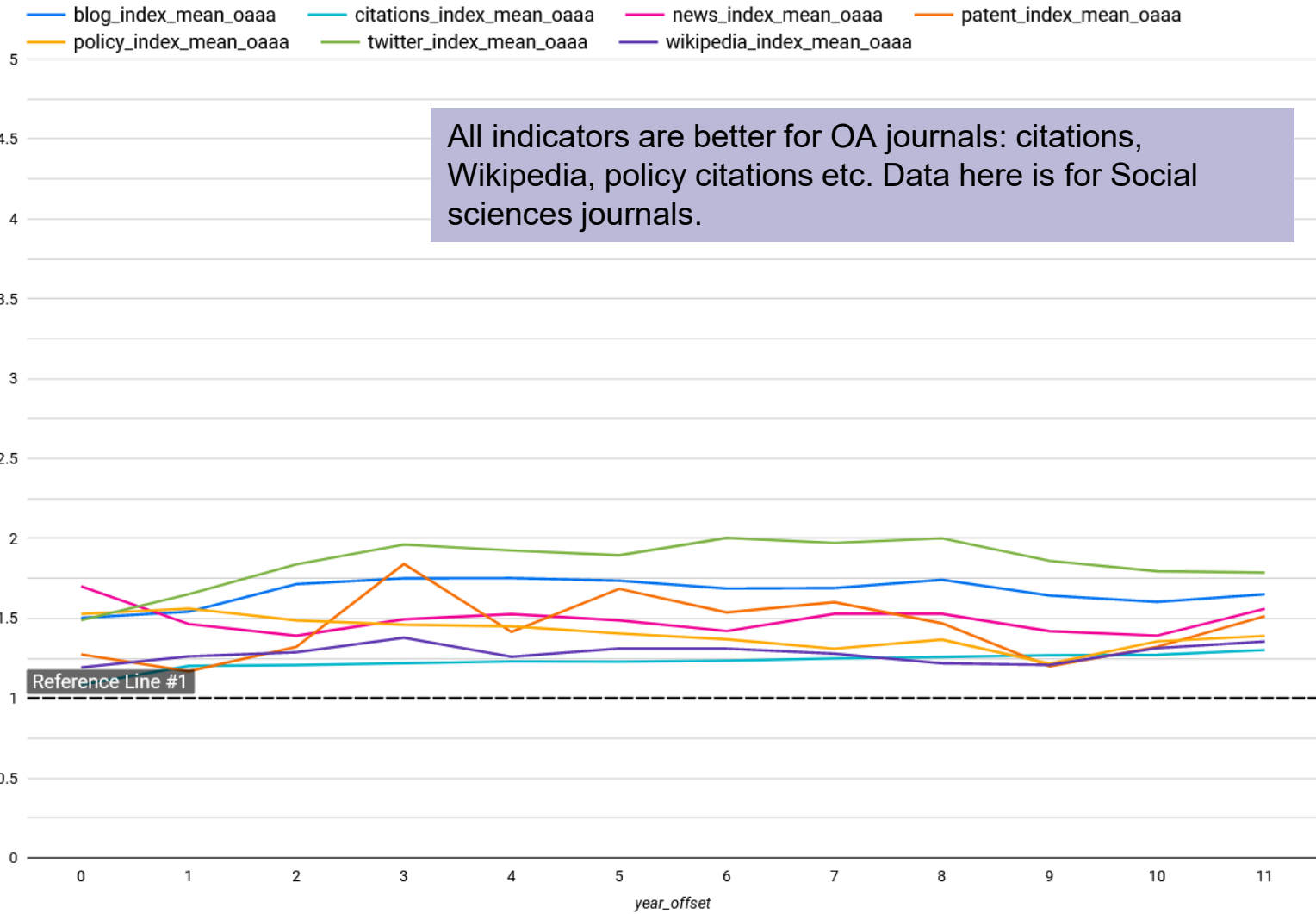


Humanities journal articles perform *much* better when OA, compared to their non-OA equivalents





blog_index_mean_oaaa | citations_index_mean_oaaa | news_index_mean_oaaa | patent_index_mean_oaaa | policy_index_mean_oaaa | twitter_index_mean_oaaa | wikipedia_index_mean_oaaa



So what?

We know (absolutely) that good quality Twitter engagement drives journal page views

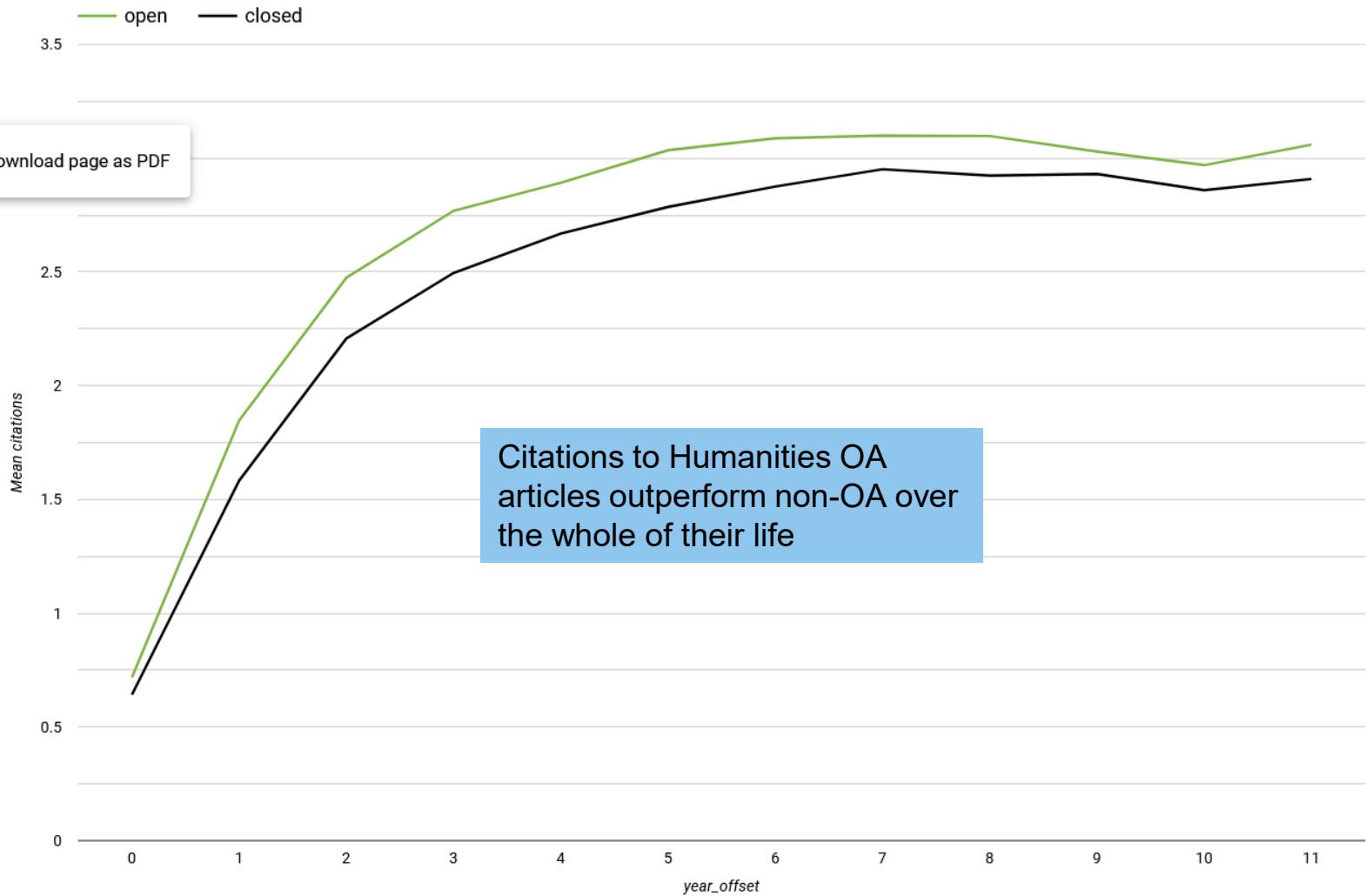
We know (absolutely) that the journey to discovery most often starts with Wikipedia, Google, Google Scholar.

We know (absolutely) that news coverage of research increases knowledge of research amongst professionals / clinicians

We also know (less absolutely) that stakeholder groups who interact with research *aren't* dominated by academics, but other groups: patients / advocates; students, professionals, other 'para-academics', and that the 'agents of impact' are also not (mostly) academics

The OA Advantage persists

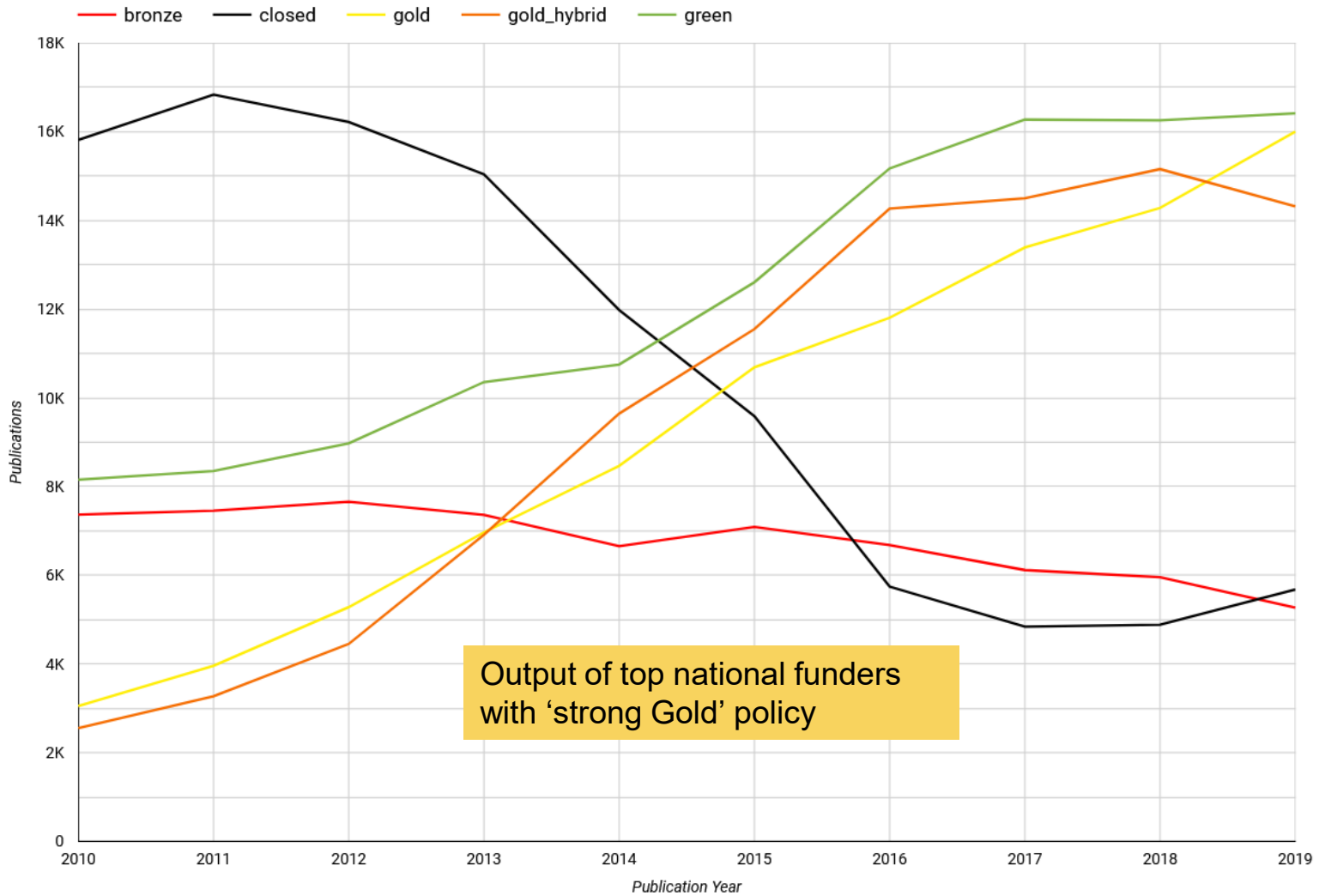
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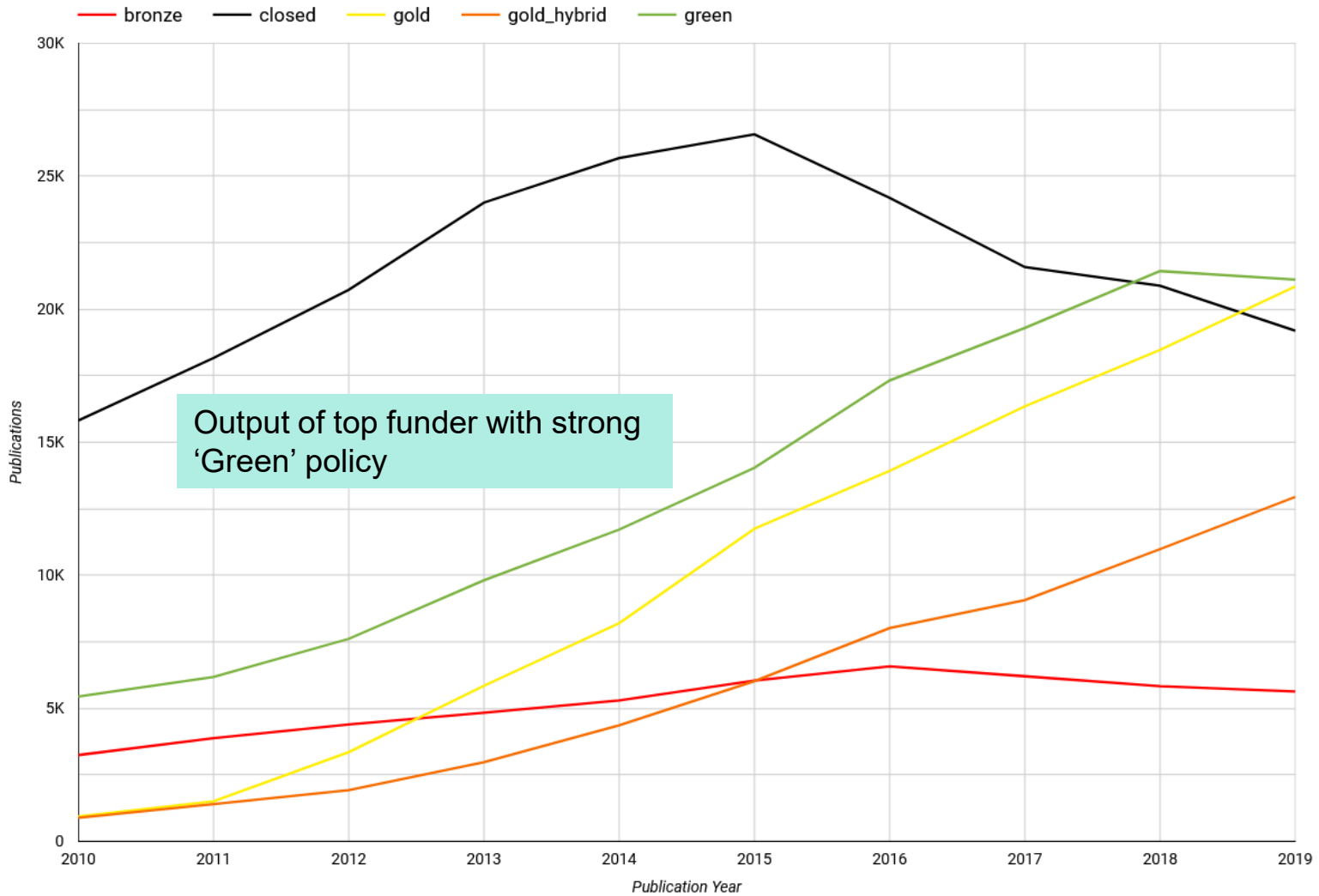
Citations to Humanities OA articles outperform non-OA over the whole of their life

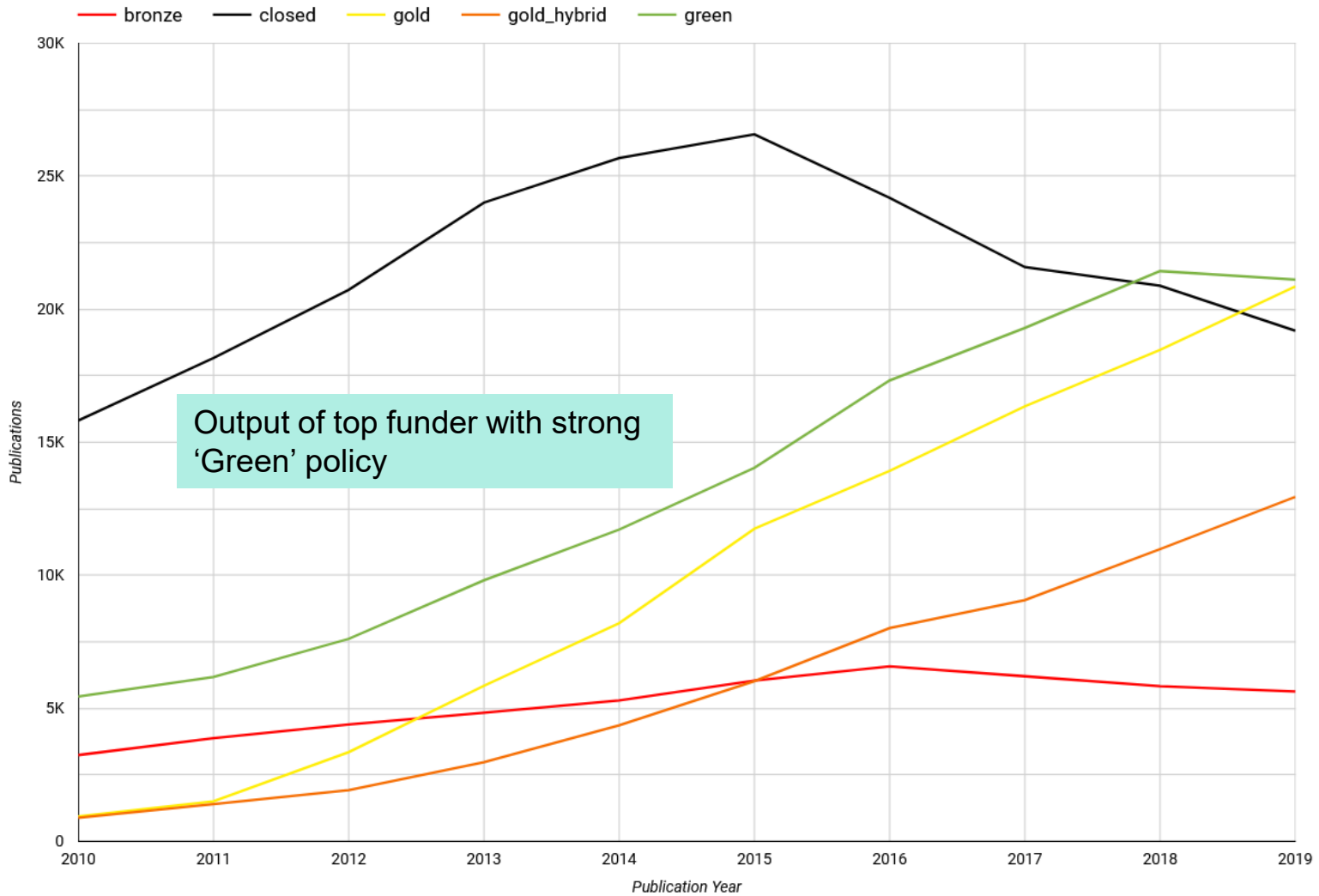


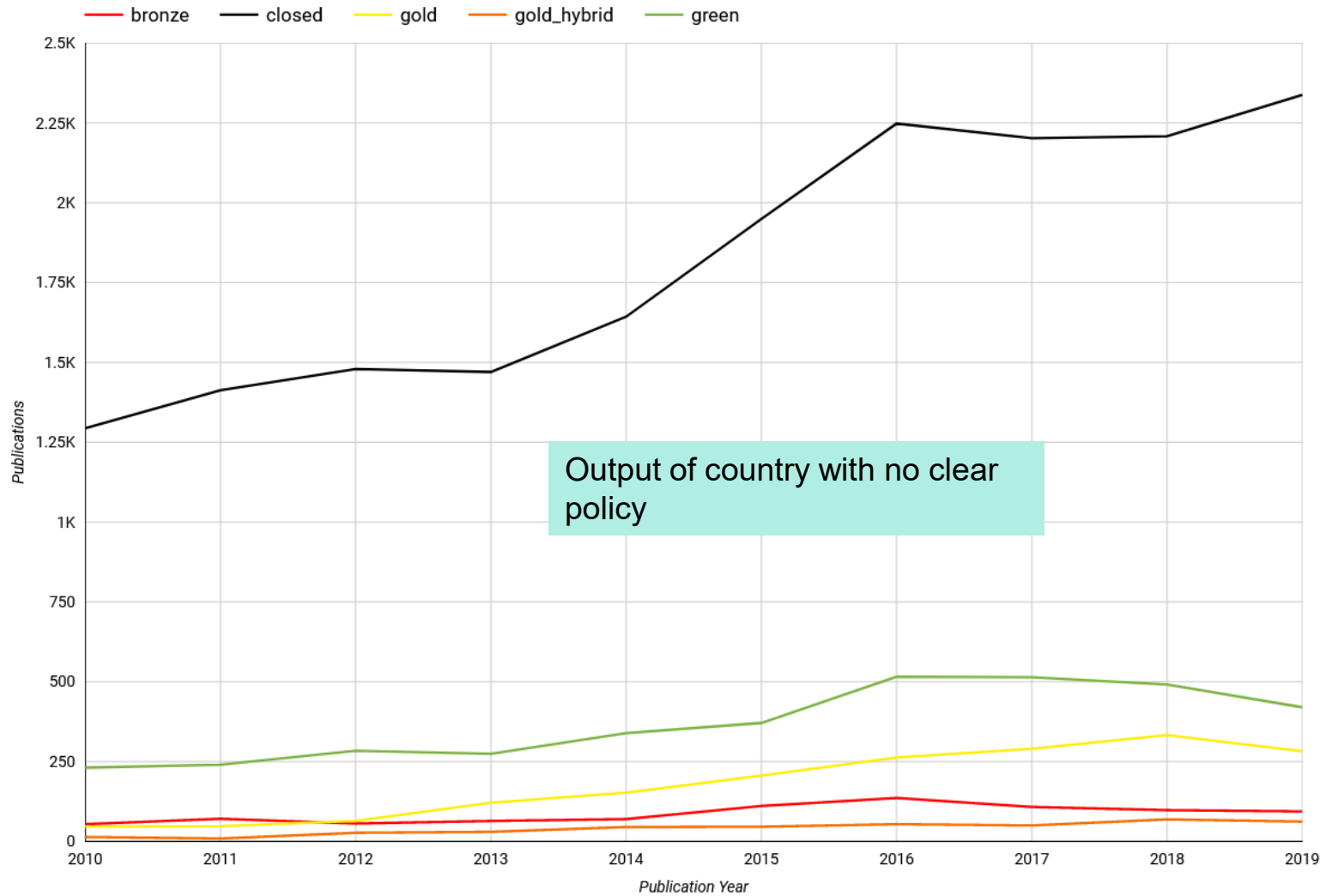
OA growth hasn't occurred 'naturally'
(we all know this)



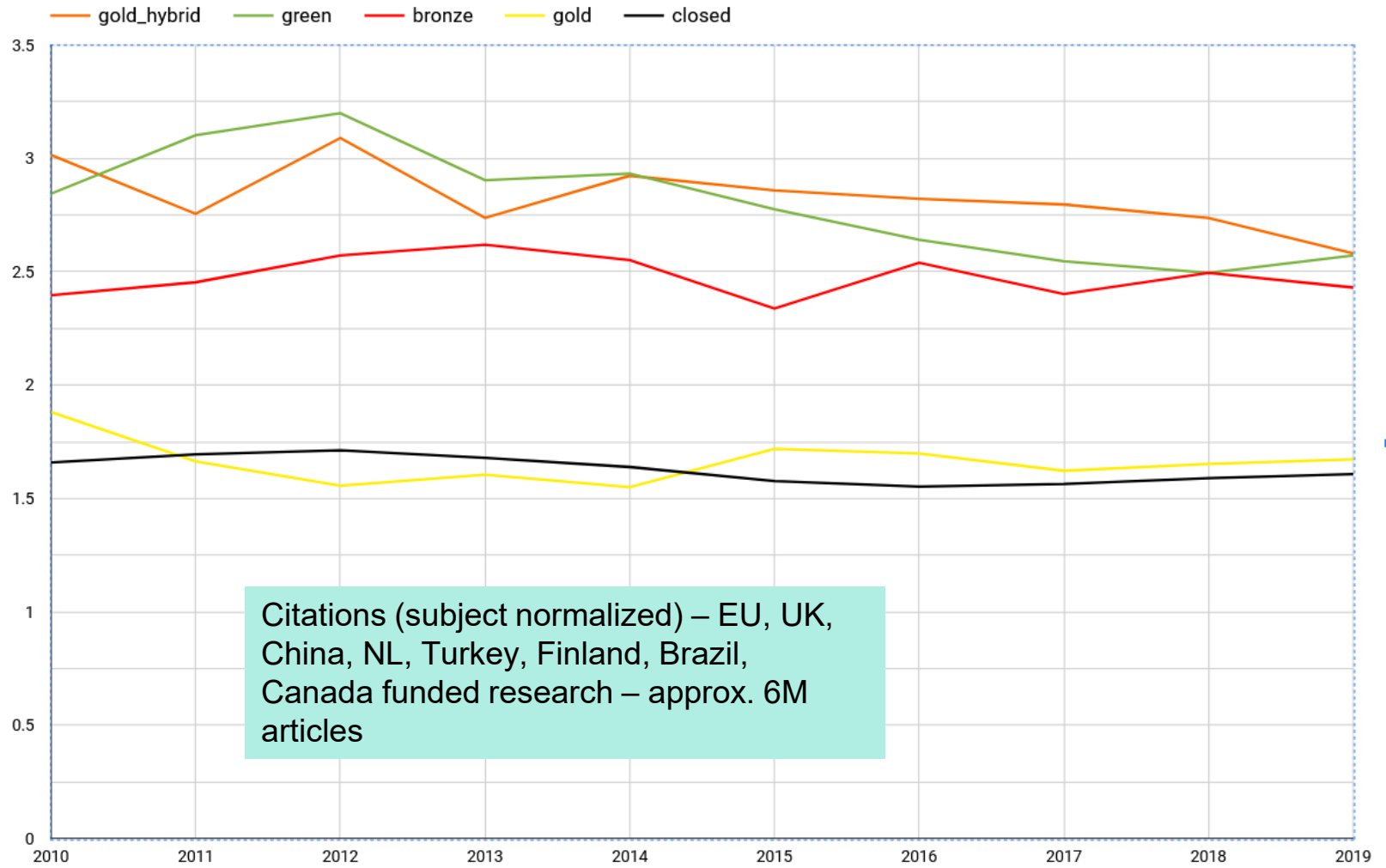
Output of top national funders with 'strong Gold' policy



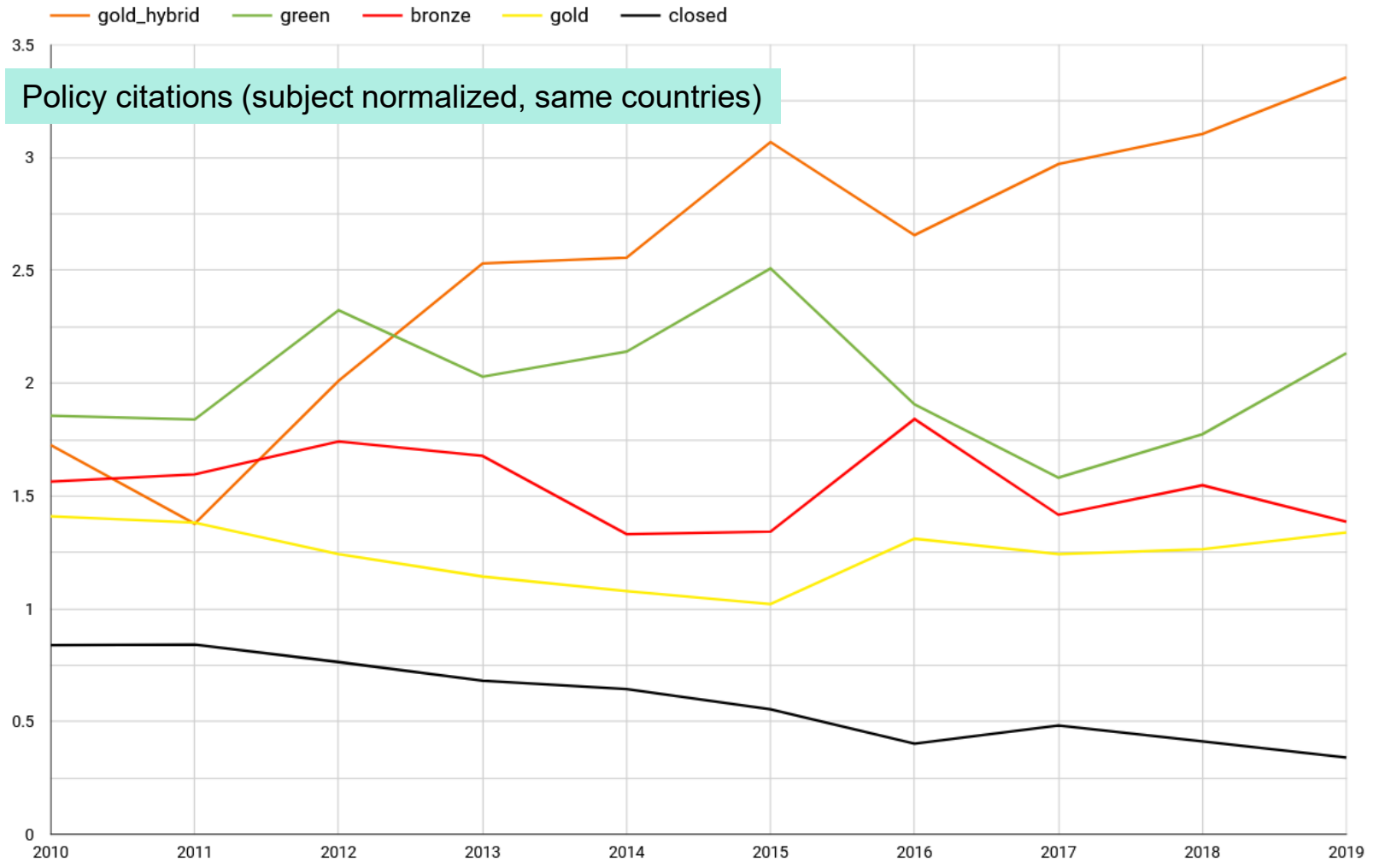




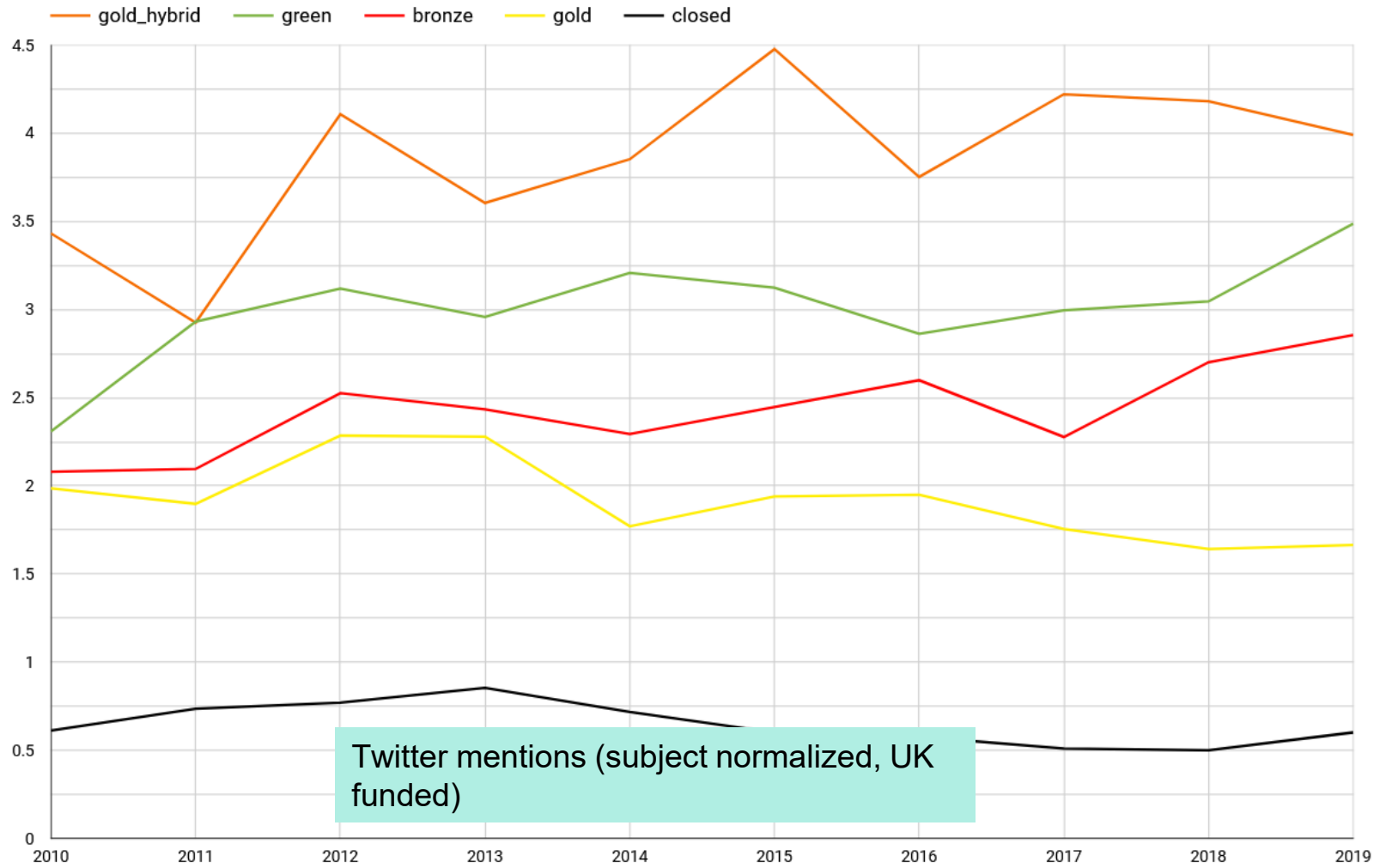
How do those policies translate into impact?



Citations (subject normalized) – EU, UK, China, NL, Turkey, Finland, Brazil, Canada funded research – approx. 6M articles



Policy citations (subject normalized, same countries)



Twitter mentions (subject normalized, UK funded)

Conclusion: the 'colour' of Open Access doesn't appear to matter

What is the nature of the OA advantage?

It's not a question of 'quality', or researcher preference

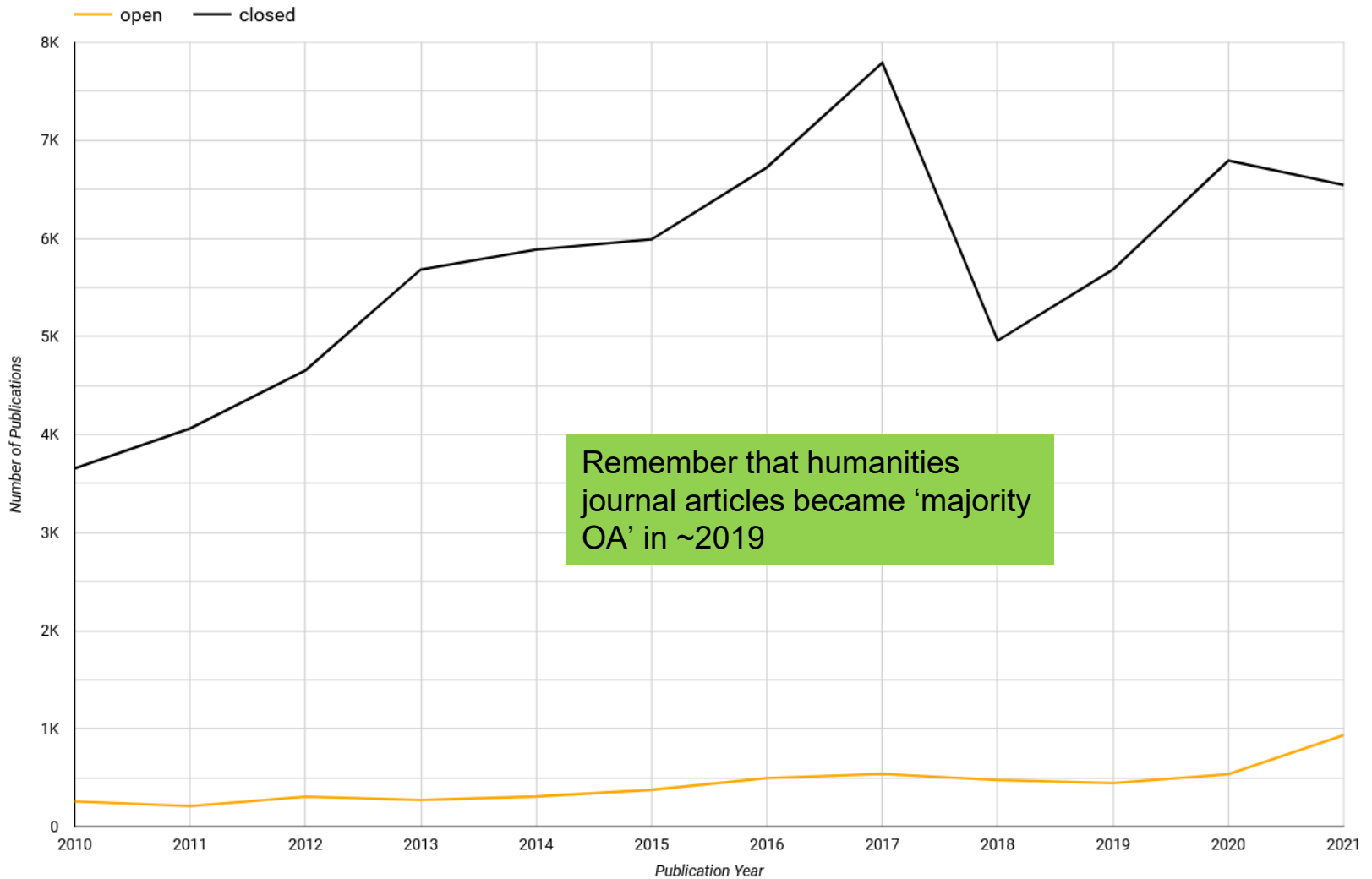
It's not a question of 'early advantage'

It's not a question of promotion

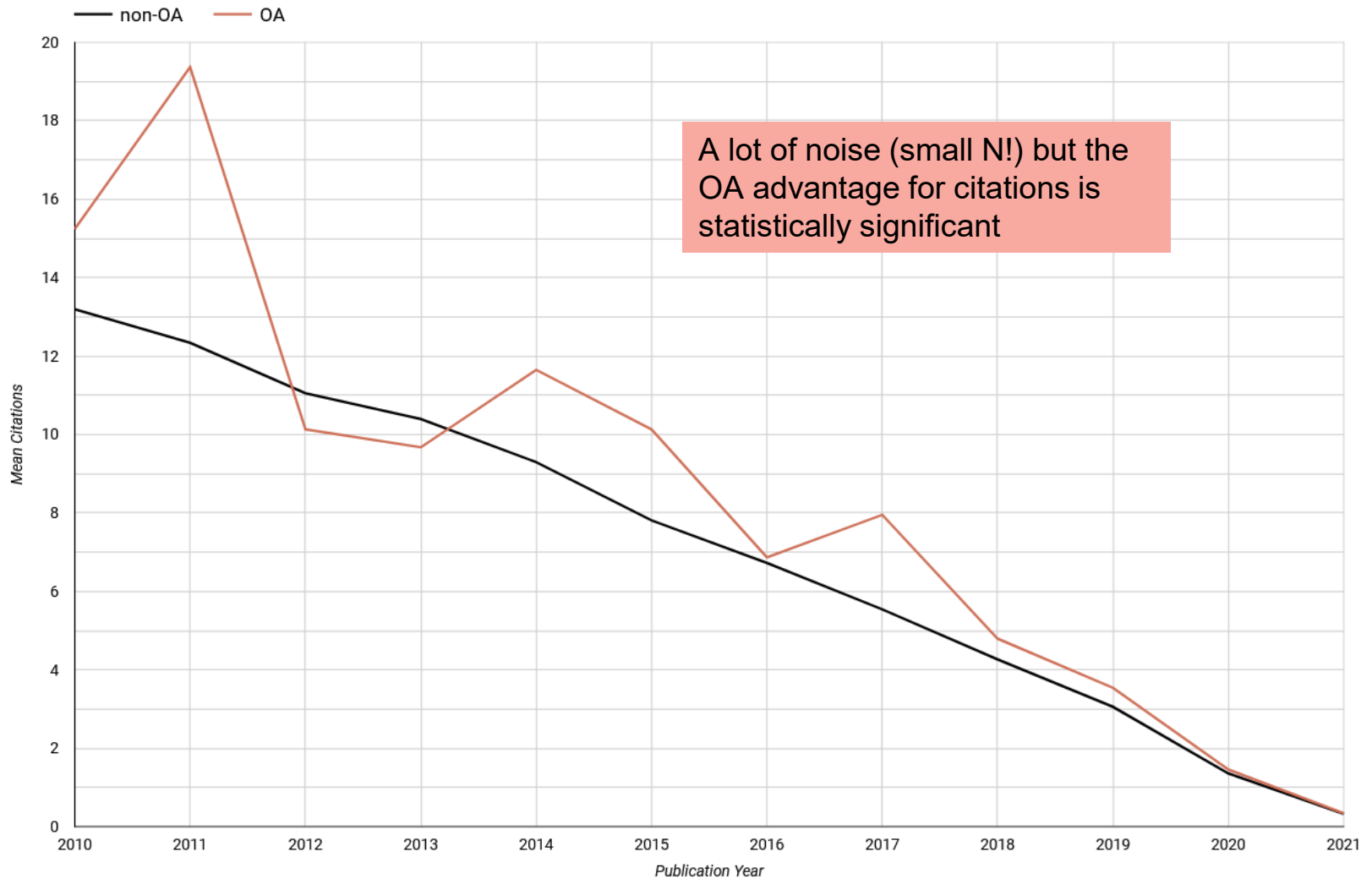
It *might* be a question of 'northern / western / anglo-sphere' advantage (although this looks unlikely) – the most likely explanation is one of visibility, discoverability and (then) accessibility

So what of books?

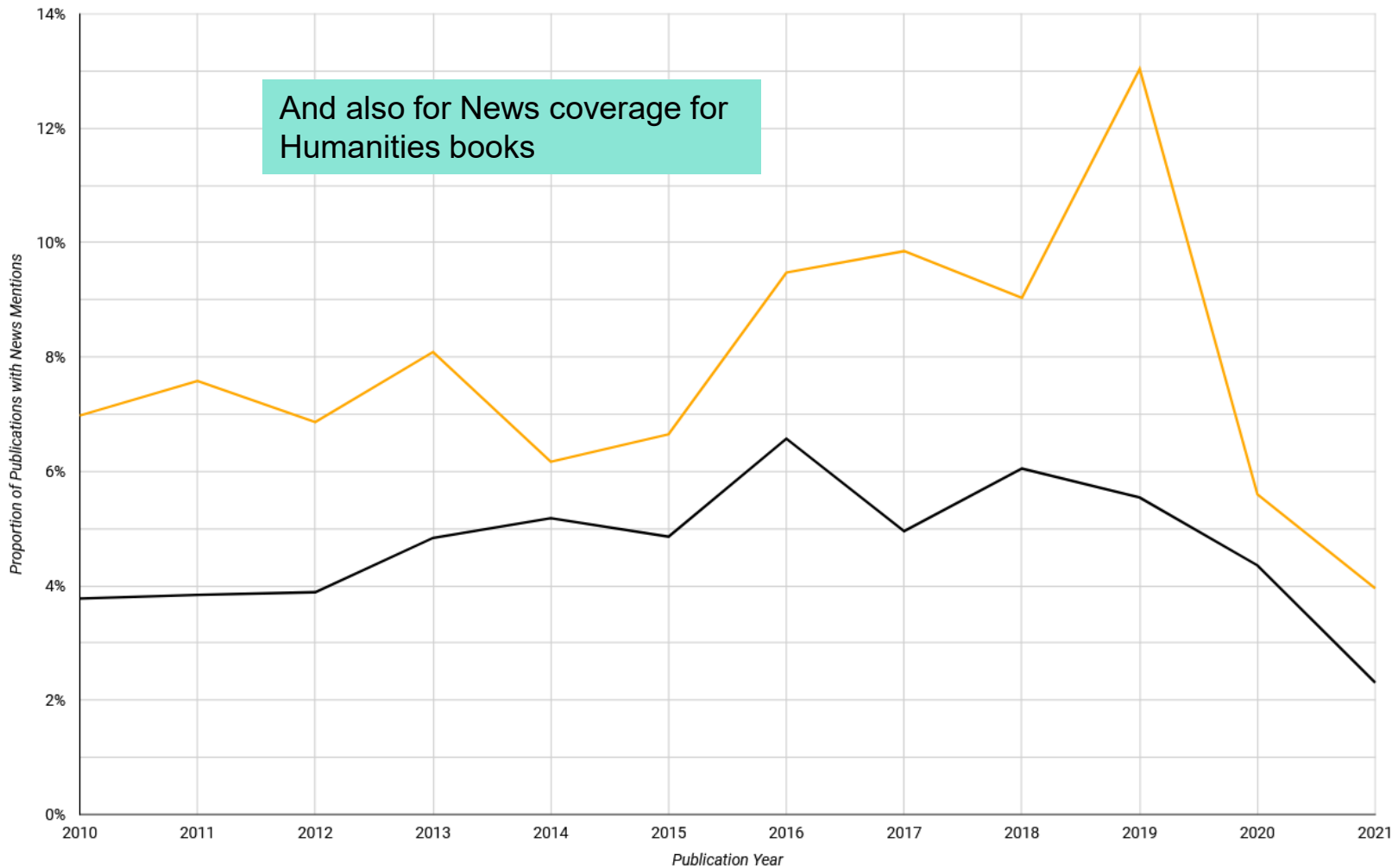
In the absence of good policies (mostly)?
With policies late, weak and incomplete?

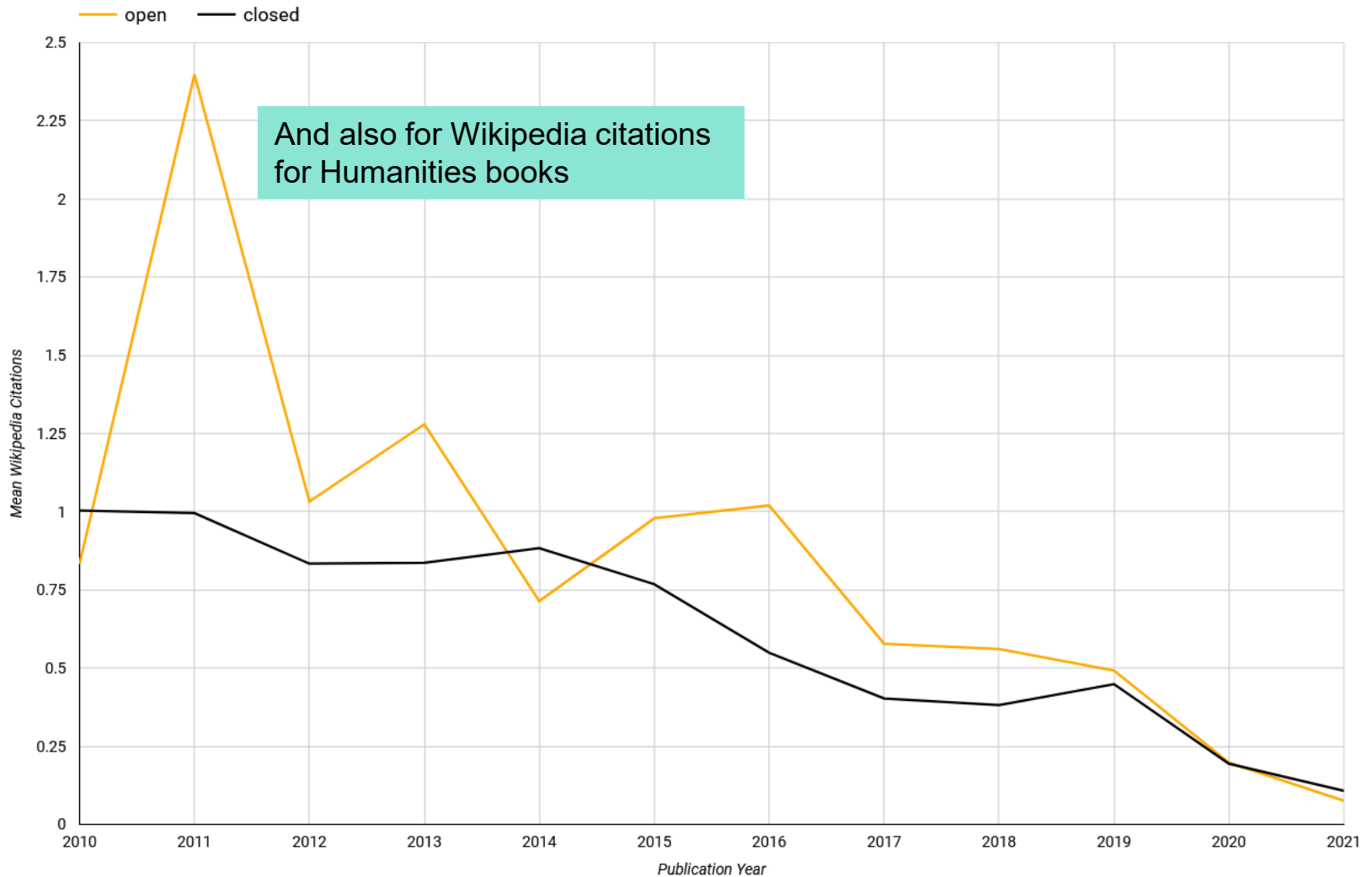


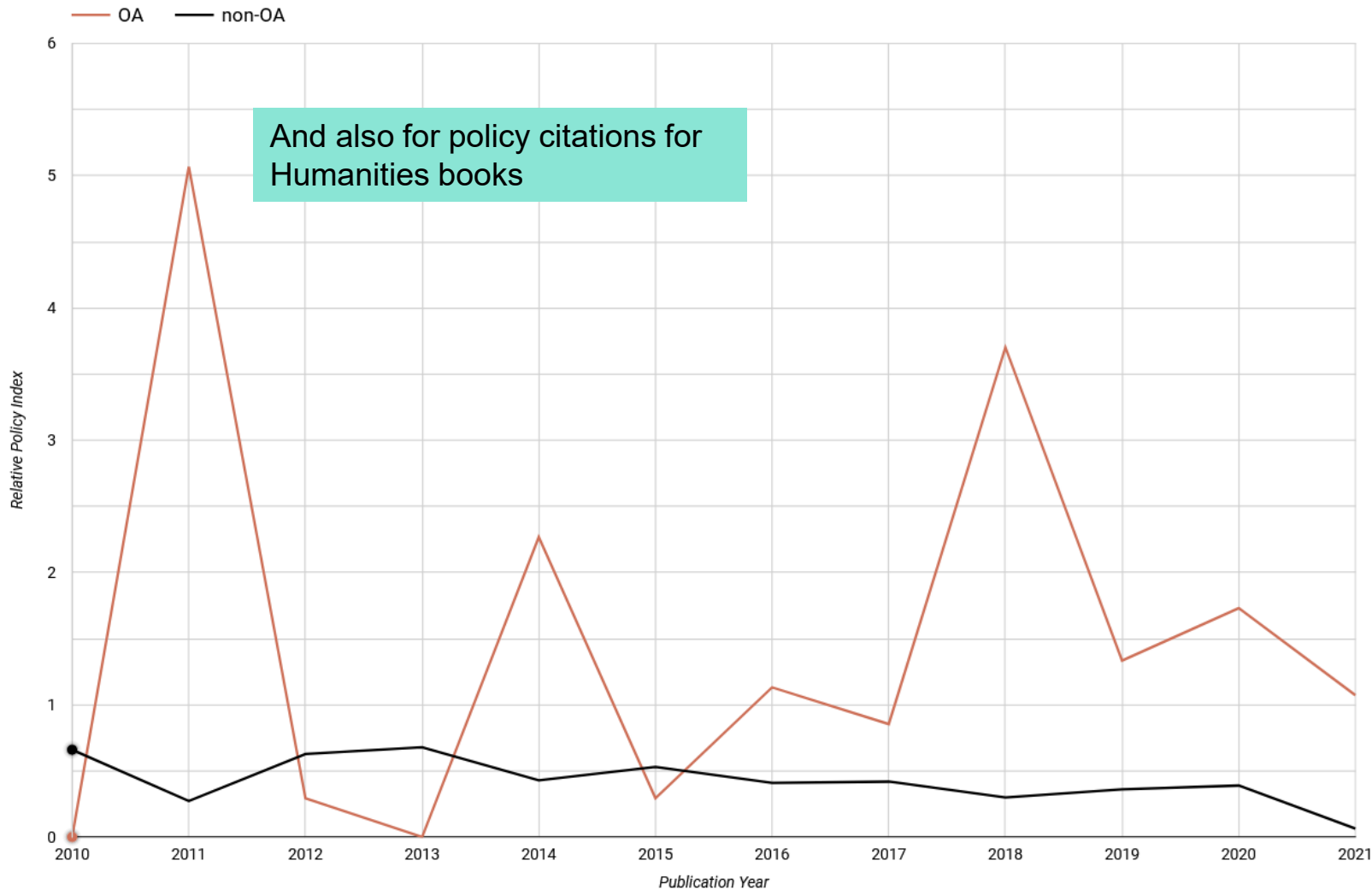
Despite the poor numbers, OA also works for books



— open — closed







What does this mean for OA books?

Books maintain their relevance in the modern world

They've lost ground against journals (even more)

In terms of numbers, there has been no significant movement

Books would benefit enormously from some strategic steps to increase OA publishing

My conclusions

That this doesn't necessarily mean "expensive Gold options"...

...as we know that Green is as impactful as Gold...

... but Green likely only functions well in the presence of good metadata...

...so we would do well to support OA publishing for books in the presence of good metadata (DOIs, abstracts, licences, ORCID)

What do OA books really need?

Effective, complete policies.

Clear support for OA.

Book appropriate definitions for OA.

Mandatory metadata, clear licenses.

An acknowledgement of the complexities of book culture and economics, that doesn't 'bulldoze' change.