

## **Important Considerations to Interpreting the CRKN Licensing Costs Data**

### **Why do institutions use consortial licensing?**

- To equalize access to scholarly research output across member institutions;
- To achieve best pricing and terms by negotiating at a national scale and leveraging the buying power of member institutions;
- To eliminate duplication of licensing efforts at member institutions.

### **Why do costs vary by institution?**

While licensing costs may vary across institutions according to the number of students, researchers, and staff, as well as an institution's research intensity, many other factors contribute to the variation in costs observed, including:

- The range of titles included within a given subscription can sometimes vary between institutions.
- Some institutions may subscribe to optional content that is offered within a given license, thereby increasing their cost, while other institutions do not.

Many historical factors also contribute to differences in current licensing costs:

- Current prices generally reflect the cost of subscriptions held by an institution prior to entering the consortium license. Therefore, institutions that held more subscriptions at the outset of the consortium license will likely have higher fees than similar-sized institutions with fewer subscriptions.
- Some licenses may be in a transition period between historic, cost-shared pricing to a more transparent vendor-based pricing model. In these cases, pricing may fluctuate over a transition period of several years and cause variations between institutions of similar size and research intensity.
- In some cases, institutions that joined a license earlier in its lifespan were offered preferential pricing; therefore, newer participants on a license may not enjoy the same beneficial pricing as early adopters.

**As a result of such factors, expenditures may not be directly comparable across institutions.**