

VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT BRUSSEL

PLAN S – A VUB PERSPECTIVE

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PLAN S – Open Access is getting ambitious!



A list of 10 Principles built around a main statement:

“After 1 January 2020 scientific publications on the results from research funded by public grants provided by national and European research councils and funding bodies, must be published in compliant Open Access Journals or on compliant Open Access Platforms.”

Delivered by the ***cOAlition S for the Realisation of Full and Immediate Open Access***

PLAN S – The cOAlition S: who is in there?



The European Commission
(including the ERC)

Also appointed Robert-Jan Smits, a special envoy on open access



11 (12) National Funding agencies

Austria, Finland, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Slovenia, Sweden Sweden, UK (+ Belgium!)



Statements of Support from 15 Organisations



FORMALLY BACKED UP BY SCIENCE EUROPE
"No science should be locked behind paywalls!"

Marc Schiltz, President, on 4 September 2018

PLAN S – all the ambitions in a nutshell /1

- *Targeting all European research, EU/Member state funded*
- *Positioning itself as a mandate for policy makers*
- *Switching with decision the copyright ownership: to the authors!*
- *Selecting CC-BY license model as the default one*



PLAN S – all the ambitions in a nutshell /2



- *Pledging for the end of embargoes and [de facto] of hybrid journals*
- *Defining a maximum cap for Article Processing Charges and identifying who shall pay: funders and universities.*
- *Defining monitoring compliance and sanctioning non-compliance.*

What's the 'S' for? 'science, speed, solution, shock' – you choose!

An impact at multiple level

Imposing compulsory OA for public research will mean a restructuring of the funding offered by **NATIONAL AGENCIES**, a different negotiation approach (and burden) to **UNIVERSITIES**, new rights and obligations for **RESEARCHERS** and a new business model for **JOURNALS** and **PUBLISHERS**

UNIVERSITIES

FUNDING
AGENCIES

JOURNALS

RESEARCHERS

Voices from the different stakeholders

Funding agencies – a different gradation of enthusiasm

The **11 first-hour signers** (worth around €7.6 Billion of funds annually)

“This is part of a bigger transition towards open science and a re-evaluation of how we measure science and the quality of scientists!” - Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research

The **new comers**: e.g. Belgian agency FWO, now on board – after flagging the absence of an agreement on Horizon Europe and uncertainty on the final intention of Commission

The **still doubting agencies**: e.g. Swiss National Science Foundation and Germany’s National Research Council: doubts on timeline, unpredictable effects of the mandatory character

Main common concern : forcing the abandoning of the embargo period, might cause a raising of fees!

Voices from the different stakeholders

Journals: fearing the disruption of the business model

No traditional subscription magazine offering optional paid OA (Hybrid) would be today compliant with Plan S!

4 major uncertainties:

- **Consequence of banning** publications in hybrid journals
- Requirement of **CC-BY license**
- Institution of **caps on APCs** funding
- **Automatic copyright** to the researcher



Dark clouds on the market:

Plan S to remove 0.1% of the value of market by 2022, rising to 0.25% percent in 7 years.
If Plan S becomes widespread (outside EU):
0.6% reduction in market value by 2021 and 1.83% reduction in 7 years.

Analysis by [Deltathink](#).

Clapping hands at PLAN S goals:

“Plan S is a bold step. Its wider adoption will be necessary to ensure that researchers truly benefit from the proposals”

Marie Curie Alumni Association Chair, Matthew DiFranco

“Plan S is only the first step to move away from evaluation practices based on journal impact factors and number crunching”.

Young Academy of Europe Chair, Marcel Swart

Fearing overwhelming side-effects

*“Forbidding researchers to publish in existing subscription journals will put knowledge production & society at severe risk. **Forced gold OA publishing could lead to higher costs of many high quality journals and an overload of papers of low quality or limited novelty in lower quality journals. Furthermore, in the likely event that the rest of the world will not join in, Plan S will severely hamper internationalization, and discourage collaborations between the cOAlition S countries and the rest of the world. Finally, insofar as it mandates a limited set of publication venues, Plan S violates researchers’ academic freedom”***

From the appeal of [Lynn Kamerlin & others](#)

Voices from the different stakeholders

Universities: concern hidden behind excitement?



*“EUA supports Plan S, and its **vision** to accelerate the **transition to full OA**, while also **encouraging more national research funders** across Europe to adopt Plan S. EUA will further reflect on how universities can further align their policies to contribute to its implementation”*

EUA POSITION - [Open Access by 2020](#)

*‘Plan S represents an important move in the debate over how to achieve full Open Access’ It is **clear that hybrid APC payments are not delivering a transformative move** to full and immediate OA. The capping of APC payments and the requirement for researchers to retain their copyright represent a momentous change in the future publishing landscape’. Prof. Kurt Deketelaere, Secretary General of LERU.*



*‘The move to full Open Access was stalling, and **this plan is a major step forward** in the right direction.’. Dr Paul Ayriss, Chair of the LERU INFO Community.*

Voices from the different stakeholders

VUB VIEW: no rushed judgments...

A strong declaration, an appeal to national founders to coordinate their policies, a clear back-up for copyright in author's hands, but:

- **It is a declaration of intent** and its concrete application modalities are not outlined = **target date of 2020 rather unrealistic.**
- **Negotiations with publishers might become harder**, hence these are placed on the shoulders of universities = it would be essential having cOAlition S acting as a catalyst in the effort to enforce the preservation of rights towards journals (for example with regard to major market players).
- **Universities currently do not have the financial means to make the complete transition to gold open access** = national agencies will increase resources or will this simply be a shift within budget lines in projects?
- The **APCs cap? Great!** But this shall be posed not on the funding side, but on the publishing side!

Thank you!

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