



Statement from UNICA regarding Plan S

Endorsed by the UNICA Steering Committee &
the UNICA General Assembly (15 November 2018)

On 4 September 2018, cOAlition S, a group of eleven national research funding organisations in Europe, launched the Plan S to accelerate the transition to full and immediate Open Access to scientific publications. Plan S consists of one target and 10 principles¹: **“By 2020 scientific publications that result from research funded by public grants provided by participating national and European research councils and funding bodies, must be published in compliant Open Access Journals or on compliant Open Access Platforms.”** cOAlition S currently comprises 13 national research funding organisations from 12 countries who have agreed to implement the 10 principles of Plan S in a coordinated way, together with the European Commission and the ERC.

Plan S aims to move away from a subscription-based publishing model to immediate open access to publications without any embargo period.

As EUA² and LERU³, UNICA acknowledges the potential of Plan S to drive change in the scholarly communication ecosystem and to accelerate the transition to full and immediate open access to publications. Some principles are fundamental such as retention of copyright by the author and the use of licenses compliant with the Berlin Declaration⁴.

Implementation details of Plan S still have to be clarified and published by the signatories.

UNICA draws attention to the following important elements for the implementation of Plan S:

- Plan S is an incentive for subscription-based and hybrid journals to turn to full OA, with funders or universities covering publication fees. To prevent uncontrolled increase of APCs, their funding will be capped. The value should be stated and non-negotiable.

¹ See <https://www.scienceeurope.org/coalition-s/>

² <https://eua.eu/resources/publications/746:open-access-by-2020-eua-supports-plan-s-for-an-open-scholarly-system.html>

³ <https://www.leru.org/news/accelerating-the-transition-to-full-and-immediate-open-access-to-scientific-publications-lerus-reaction-to-plan-s>

⁴ <https://openaccess.mpg.de/Berlin-Declaration>

- The **funding of APCs should not be the only financial support** provided to scholarly publishing. Financial support should also be provided to alternative models, such as the Diamond Open Access model, where neither authors nor readers pay APCs or subscriptions. In this respect, the Young Academies make relevant suggestions⁵. This is particularly crucial in SSH.
- The preamble to Plan S mentions the **commitment of signatories** to fundamentally revise the incentive and reward system of science. This is a fundamental incentive for researchers to change their publishing practices.
- While Plan S is a European initiative, **attention** should be paid that the **publishing requirements are not detrimental to researcher's mobility outside Europe**, in particular in their research assessment, and reversely.
- Plan S will have an impact on universities and their researchers, who will have to comply with the funding requirements. The **deadline established on 1 January 2020 is short** to develop alternative publishing channels and provide adequate support to the research community.

This text has been prepared by the Chair of the UNICA Scholarly Communication Working Group.

Annexes:

Plan S Accelerating the transition to full and immediate Open Access to scientific publications.

https://www.scienceeurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Plan_S.pdf

National Research Funding Organisations Participating in cOAlition S

https://www.scienceeurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/cOAlitionS_National_Funders.pdf

⁵ <https://globalyoungacademy.net/young-academies-release-statement-in-response-to-plan-s-on-open-access-of-scientific-output/>