



cOAlition S Releases Revised Implementation Guidance on Plan S Following Public Feed-back Exercise

cOAlition S releases revised guidance on Plan S implementation which has been approved by all coalition members. “Plan S is a bold step forward which the European Commission, along with a growing number of national funders, is committed to implement” explained Carlos Moedas, the European Commissioner for Science, Research and Innovation.

May 31, 2019 – Since its launch in September 2018, Plan S has reinvigorated the global debate on Open Access to scholarly publications. cOAlition S is grateful to all those who took the trouble to respond and provide specific advice during its recent feedback exercise – the largest ever international consultation that has been conducted on an Open Access policy. The 600 plus inputs received allowed the coalition to make changes that take into consideration the views expressed by the diverse communities affected.

Changes include an extension to the formal commencement point for Plan S which will now take effect from 1 January 2021. This new timetable provides more opportunity for researchers, institutions, publishers, and repositories to make changes and for funders’ policies to develop and take effect. The Plan S principles now also reflect a commitment made by the funders to revise methods of research assessment along the lines of the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA). “This final version of Plan S will accelerate the necessary transition to full and immediate Open Access and allow different stakeholders to start implementation in the most optimal way,” explained Prof. John-Arne Røttingen, Chief Executive of the Research Council of Norway (RCN) and co-chair of the cOAlition S implementation task force. “We are committed to implement what is one of the most significant and ambitious changes to the research system and with the final plan now in place we look forward to more funders, from across the world, supporting the transition to full and immediate Open Access by joining and aligning with cOAlition S,” concluded Marc Schiltz, President of Science Europe and co-initiator of Plan S.

In Summary

The revised Plan S maintains the fundamental principles

- No scholarly publication should be locked behind a paywall;
- Open Access should be immediate *i.e.*, without embargoes;
- Full Open Access is implemented by the default use of a Creative Commons Attribution CC BY license as per the Berlin Declaration;
- Funders commit to support Open Access publication fees at a reasonable level;
- Funders will not support publication in hybrid (or mirror/sister) journals unless they are part of a transformative arrangement with a clearly defined end-point.

But a number of important changes are proposed in the implementation guidance

- In order to provide more time for researchers and publishers to adapt to the changes under Plan S, the timeline has been extended by one year to 2021;
- Transformative agreements will be supported until 2024;
- More options for transitional arrangements (transformative agreements, transformative model agreements, ‘transformative journals’) are supported;
- Greater clarity is provided about the various compliance routes: Plan S is NOT just about a publication fee model of Open Access publishing. cOAlition S supports a diversity of sustainability models for Open Access journals and platforms;
- More emphasis is put on changing the research reward and incentive system: cOAlition S funders explicitly commit to adapt the criteria by which they value researchers and scholarly output;
- The importance of transparency in Open Access publication fees is emphasised in order to inform the market and funders’ potential standardisation and capping of payments of such fees;
- The technical requirements for Open Access repositories have been revised.

For more information:
cOAlition S c/o Science Europe
Rue de la Science 14
Brussels
Etterbeek 1040
Belgium
www.coalition-s.org

Why Plan S?

Open Access is Foundational to the Scientific Enterprise

Universality is a fundamental principle of science (the term “science” as used here includes the humanities): only results that can be discussed, challenged, and, where appropriate, tested and reproduced by others qualify as scientific. Science, as an institution of organised criticism, can therefore only function properly if research results are made openly available to the community so that they can be submitted to the test and scrutiny of other researchers. Furthermore, new research builds on established results from previous research. The chain, whereby new scientific discoveries are built on previously established results, can only work optimally if all research results are made openly available to the scientific community. Publication paywalls are withholding a substantial amount of research results from a large fraction of the scientific community and from society as a whole. This constitutes an absolute anomaly, which hinders the scientific enterprise in its very foundations and hampers its uptake by society. Monetising the access to new and existing research results is profoundly at odds with the ethos of science (Merton, 1973). There is no longer any justification for this state of affairs to prevail and the subscription-based model of scientific publishing, including its so-called ‘hybrid’ variants, should therefore be terminated. In the 21st century, science publishers should provide a service to help researchers disseminate their results. They may be paid fair value for the services they are providing, but no science should be locked behind paywalls!

The Swiss Chemical Society supports the fundamental intention of Plan S and welcomes some of the principles formulated. However, the impact of Plan S on the SCS and its community is substantial and the Board of Directors and the Editorial Board of CHIMIA will discuss in detail how to follow up. Let us know your point of view and send us a mail to info@scg.ch.