

# YERUN Position Statement on Plan S



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Despite having many advocates in the last 15 years among policy makers, researchers, funders, research performing organisations and libraries, progress towards a sustainable and global OA framework has been slow to materialise, and has been hampered by fragmentation and other challenges.

YERUN therefore welcomes the launch of [Plan S](#), by [cOALition S](#), a group of 13<sup>1</sup> national research funders and the European Commission (ERC) for the realisation of full and immediate OA. YERUN members discussed the principles during their General Assembly held at Brunel University London, 5 September 2018.

Plan S gathers 10 principles with the main objective that ***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 OA Journals or on compliant OA Platforms.***

YERUN fully supports Plan S which is outlined as follows:

**1. We wholly support the principle that researchers must retain the copyright of their publications without restrictions, and that they must be published under an open licensing.**

This will allow researchers and institutions to comply instantly and quickly with funder requirements to deposit and share their outputs in institutional repositories, and allow for the fastest possible dissemination so that research and knowledge can be built on. We note that while a Creative Commons Attribution Licence (CC-BY) is preferred, Plan S does not restrict other forms of open licensing provided they comply with the open requirements expressed in the [Berlin Declaration](#).

**2. We welcome the commitment to develop funder standards and criteria for the services that providers of OA services and platforms must adhere to.**

This will provide a clear brief to service providers and simplify the current framework. In turn, universities using Plan S compliant services will be sure that they will comply with requirements for publicly funded research, easing the administrative burden of monitoring compliance.

**3. We value the willingness to create robust criteria and requirements for OA journals or platform services, and to incentivise the creation of journals and platforms needed to sustain Open Science in the future.**

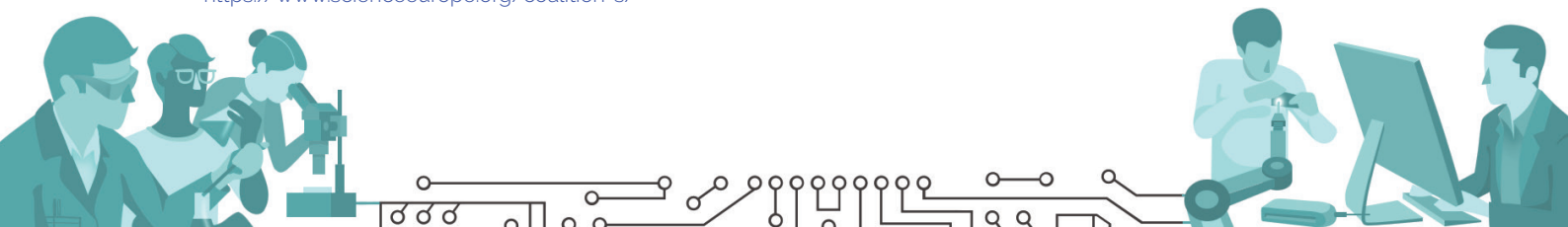
YERUN members note that many good examples of OA journals and publishing platforms already exist, which include solutions developed by universities themselves, including Open Book Publishers, Ubiquity Press, UCL Press, DCU Press. These services could be encouraged to share their experiences with the funders to help develop clear standardised criteria.

**4. We strongly support the principle of continuing funder commitment to helping institutions and researchers meet the costs of OA publishing, and that costs should not be borne by authors.**

We would urge that further guidance is provided on how this principle should be recognised and aligned in funder, national and institutional policies to facilitate effective pan-European research collaboration and dissemination of research outputs, in particular, in the case of research collaboration with partners outside Europe.

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



We would point out that many of the costs of OA currently borne by institutions and researchers are not monetised. Researchers and their institutions already invest significant time and resources in delivering and supporting OA publishing. Every effort should be made to reduce costs for all parties. Therefore, we would urge funders to invest in the creation and development of shared open infrastructure and business models for the research community, as this will help to ensure that OA is operationally and economically sustainable in the long term.

**5. We welcome the proposal that OA publication fees shall be standardised and capped across Europe, and better internationally.**

Institutions and researchers hold concerns over the long-term sustainability of current OA publishing business models. There is currently little transparency around OA publishing charges and their relationship to the services provided, as content and peer review services are provided by the research community free of charge, with hybrid journals also charging subscription fees. When adopted, this will allow for a much better regulated market, where institutions and funders will be able to evaluate value for money, demonstrate return on investment to taxpayers, and will assist forward financial planning and resource allocation. A thorough calculation and analysis of 'reasonable' APCs is needed. The Commission and other funders should provide mechanisms to assess the prices before establishing limits for this.

**6. We welcome the plan to encourage research organisations, universities and libraries to align their policies and strategies to Plan S.**

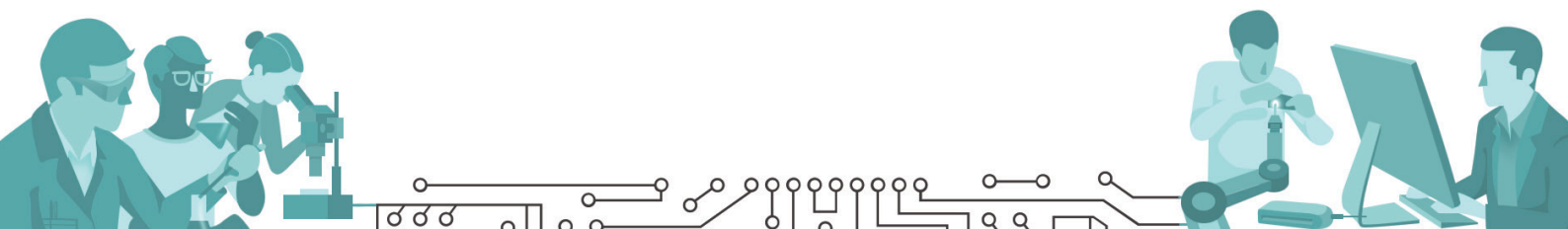
Following YERUN members' commitment to Open Science published in May 2018, YERUN will provide support to Plan S and engage with cOALition S to promote the implementation of its principles. YERUN will work with its member institutions, and others who support OA, to review and amend their Open Science policies to bring them into alignment with the principles of Plan S, where they currently do not. We will also facilitate this through our members, to further engage with other funding organisations.

**7. We broadly support the intention to apply the principles of Plan S to all scholarly publications including monographs, recognising that a realistic timescale going beyond 2020, will be needed to address the challenges.**

Work in this area is already underway (see above point 3), with a number of initiatives and ongoing discussion exploring the future of OA scholarly publishing and potential models. While the intention is to incentivise the development of OA publishing models for monographs, funder guidelines should ensure that any deadlines are practical so that resources can be responsibly and efficiently deployed to develop innovative publishing models.

**8. We welcome the acknowledgement of a continued role for open archives and repositories.**

This principle recognises the significant investment already made by Research Performing Organizations (RPOs), funders and other service providers (e.g. [OpenAire](#) infrastructure), and confirms that Open Science requirements will continue to shape the landscape and enhance services. Open platforms also fulfil a number of additional key requirements including the long-term preservation of publicly funded outputs, and can act as community or discipline-specific hubs. For this reason, there should be a joined-up approach to archiving publications and related research data, and recommend aligning services and development with the future work of the [European Open Science Cloud](#) (EOSC).



**9. We recommend that universities and research organisations raise awareness about existing possibilities for researchers to publish in pure OA journals and suitable OA platforms.**

At the moment, access to academic output is currently widened more through hybrid models than repositories. YERUN, together with academics, publishers and funders, calls for a shift away from hybrid journals and adaptation of the existing ones.

**10. We recognise the intention to incentivise the adoption and implementation of Plan S principles with monitoring and sanctions for non-compliance.**

We would urge the funders to ensure that any sanctions are clearly stated, limited and applied only where absolutely necessary, with full consideration given to the challenges faced by institutions and researchers, terms and conditions that researchers might have contracted already, and developing infrastructure.

YERUN acknowledges the big step taken with the release of Plan S towards truly Open Science. However, it is limited to OA. Incentives, infrastructures and solutions for a new evaluation system should be developed alongside Plan S to promote Open Research Data and publication of other research outputs along with other Open Science practices.

## YERUN's commitment to Open Science

In addition to changes to funding mechanisms we reiterate our support and willingness to contribute to advancing the development and embedding of common standards in three fundamental areas: skills and education; evaluation; and thirdly, rewards and incentives.

- **Skills and education:** Researchers and research organisations should be made fully aware of their rights and obligations and be supported to incorporate the principles into their practice;
- **Evaluation:** Mechanisms are needed that take into account new metrics and indicators to evaluate research outputs and publication outlets beyond the impact factor; and finally,
- **Rewards and incentives:** Rather than sanctions, the community should develop standard mechanisms that incentivise researchers to adopt open scholarship, with recognition for those who demonstrate a clear and outstanding commitment to Open Science principles and practices.

YERUN is committed to supporting Science Europe and cOALition S for a timely implementation of Plan S, and will continue to engage with other stakeholders for a wider and coherent adoption of a full Open Science ecosystem. We intend to do so by encouraging YERUN members to support Plan S principles in their organisational policies, and to promote and support pure OA publishing journals and platforms, rather than hybrid models. With Plan S, public research findings are finally on the way to being universally accessible to all.



2018. Young European Research Universities Network (YERUN)

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YERUN PUBLICATIONS

