

OPEN ACCESS IN HORIZON EUROPE

POSITION DATED 25TH FEBRUARY 2020

Recalling our position paper '[CESAER going towards Open Science](#)' and '[Roadmap towards Open Access](#)', the universities of science and technology united in CESAER are proponents for open science and open access to scientific publications. We support the transition towards making open science the *modus operandi* in Horizon Europe. We acknowledge the laudable efforts by [cOAlition S](#) - a group of national research funding organisations with the support of the European Commission and the European Research Council - to ensure immediate open access to scientific publications and we support '[Plan S](#)'. In line with our [previous statements](#) and our [mission, aims and values](#), we herewith present our advanced position on open access in Horizon Europe.

RETENTION OF RIGHTS AND LICENSES

We support the [principles](#) behind Plan S stating that researchers (or their universities) should retain full rights to their scholarly works. For example, any 'copyright transfer agreement' where researchers and universities hand over their rights (for their scholarly work or their research data) must be avoided. The retention of rights by researchers and universities is vital as it enables the full utilisation of research outcomes in diverse efforts across all areas of research, education and innovation.

We further note the ongoing developments across Europe on copyright laws with open access amendments, such as the Dutch [Taverne Amendment](#) and similar efforts in [Belgium, Germany, France and other countries](#). These developments help safeguard the rights of researchers and universities, and we therefore strongly encourage their further deployment. We call on the European Commission to propose EU legislation to give researchers the nonwaivable legal right to share publicly funded and peer-reviewed research findings without embargoes.

As an association, we have adopted a creative commons license ([CC BY](#)) as the [default license](#) for our own publications. We endorse the use of [licenses](#) for research outputs which are conformant with the principles laid out in the '[Open Definition](#)'. In short, any researcher who wishes to share the findings contained in their peer-reviewed articles must be able to do so without restrictions or embargoes. This is what publishing is about - to disseminate research findings widely to peers and to the benefit of the broader society.

PREPRINTS

[Preprints](#) enable the rapid dissemination of scholarly knowledge and their usage is '[strongly encouraged](#)' by cOAlition S and Plan S. We encourage its inclusion as a default step in scholarly communication, and call upon research funding organisations to work together with and support open preprint platforms such as [arXiv](#), [bioRxiv](#), [ChemRxiv](#) and [engrXiv](#). The default usage of preprints (before submission to a journal for formal publication) would greatly facilitate the rapid and free circulation of scientific knowledge.

EMBARGO PERIODS

Concerning ‘embargo periods’ sometimes used for the ‘[green open access route](#)’ (using open access repositories), we note that [Plan S encourages green open access without embargo](#) as a route for journals to be compliant. We further note that [many publishers already offer this zero-embargo route for their subscription journals](#). This route offers a clear and quick path for any journal to immediately become Plan S-compatible and we support this path without embargoes and call on all publishers to allow ‘green’ open access for all their journals without restrictions or embargoes.

PUBLISHING COSTS

We recognise that there are several routes to achieve open access. One of them is through the payment of Article-Processing Charges (APC). When an APC is used, it is paramount that the payment does not fall on individual researchers or becomes a new cost for universities. The objective should be to move away from author-facing and reader-facing fees altogether, and instead directly support publishing and scholarly communication infrastructure through grants, agreements and other arrangements (e.g. funder-publisher agreements or agreements between national consortia and publishers). The ability to read and share research findings for a researcher should never be constrained by their ability to pay.

READ AND PUBLISH (AKA TRANSFORMATIVE) AGREEMENTS

We acknowledge the potential value of fast-growing read and publish agreements with publishers as a way to reach the objective of full open access in a quicker, more efficient fashion. However, we stress the need for such agreements to be truly transformative as outlined in the [Plan S principles](#); this includes a defined mechanism to enable the transition in a cost-neutral way to fully open access for all journal titles. We emphasise that there are also other means (than transformative agreements) to get to 100% open access, notably by supporting the many existing fully open access publishers and by using and supporting university-run infrastructure.

CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

A special note should be made in relation to conference proceedings. This is a significant route for disseminating research by many researchers at universities of science and technology. Conference proceedings are often published via different routes from conventional periodicals and journals, and as such merit special considerations. While we, in general, support applying [Plan S principles](#) to conference proceedings, we are currently developing specific recommendations in this area.

RECRUITMENT AND REWARDS

Research funding organisations represented in cOAlition S, like the [Wellcome Trust](#), have recently [updated](#) their open access policy to align it with the Plan S principles. One of the key updates is the specifically stated aim to base their funding decisions on the intrinsic merit of scholarly work without influence from the title of the journal where it was published or the name of the publisher that published it. We welcome these developments, and encourage all research funding organisations to sign and adopt initiatives such as the [Leiden Manifesto](#) or the [Declaration on Research Assessment](#).

Foundational for ensuring that open science will be the *modus operandi* in Horizon Europe, is to ensure modern recruitment, reward and recognition procedures across research performing organisations. Our recent [Declaration on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion](#) provides a commitment to accelerate developments in this area, and efforts such as the [Leiden Manifesto](#), the [Declaration on Research Assessment](#), and the [LERU Open Science roadmap](#) provide complementary guidance on research evaluation. Recognising that some universities of science and technology are trailblazers and leaders in this area, we are currently collecting best practices for dissemination, with specific recommendations and guidelines.

We thank all of our Members who contributed to the development of this position, with special thanks to our Task Force Open Science. For more information and enquiries, please contact our Advisor for Research & Innovation [Mattias Björnmalm](#).

[CESAER](#) is the European association of leading specialised and comprehensive universities of science and technology that: champion excellence in higher education, training, research and innovation; influence debate; contribute to the realisation of open knowledge societies; and, deliver significant scientific, social, economic, and societal impact.



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