



# OPEN ACCESS WORKING GROUP: STATEMENT ON PLAN S GUIDELINES

The recently published guidance for the implementation of Plan S<sup>1</sup> offers welcome new details on how full and immediate Open Access to research publications would be achieved under this new initiative.

As LIBER stated in September<sup>2</sup>, when Plan S was first announced, we fully support the ambitions of Plan S. It aligns with LIBER's 2018-2022 Strategy<sup>3</sup> – specifically our goal to make Open Access the main form of publishing – and our Open Science Roadmap<sup>4</sup>.

Within this new guidance, we are pleased to see that multiple routes to Open Access have been acknowledged. This is especially important as the transition to an open, transparent research infrastructure can only take place if as many stakeholders as possible are invited to participate. Clear demands and a concrete timeline will push the process, yet it can inadvertently exclude some who are willing to participate but not yet fully able to comply. LIBER therefore calls for an inclusive approach. The success of Open Access rests on participation on a global scale.

The guidelines provide three scenarios to reach full, immediate open access:

## 1 Open Access Journals or Open Access Platforms

Full Open Access journals and Open Access platforms will form the core publishing infrastructure of the future. Many new opportunities are being developed, both by commercial publishers and through grassroots initiatives. For startups, the detailed and high-level demands in the guidelines are hard to comply to, creating a situation in which established parties are favoured.

LIBER therefore recommends that cOAlition S:

- Address the support of Open Access journals and platforms in more detail. How can funders help scholarly-led journals to become compliant?
- Recognise other Open Access publishing business models that do not require Article Processing Charges (APCs), such as consortial funding mechanisms, freemium services, or other collaborative approaches.
- Establish a grace period for OA journals and platforms to comply with Plan S conditions, like the transition period granted for transformative agreements. Criteria could be that these journals should be listed in DOAJ and owned or published by the scholarly community

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

2. <https://libereurope.eu/blog/2018/09/04/liber-supports-new-plan-to-make-open-access-a-reality-by-2020>

3. <https://libereurope.eu/strategy>

4. <https://zenodo.org/record/1303002>



## 2 Deposit of Scholarly Articles in Open Access Repositories

LIBER is pleased to see that the Green Road is acknowledged as a way to reach full, immediate Open Access. Libraries have been establishing repositories since the late 1990s, not only to provide access, but also to record, preserve and monitor the scholarly output.

The many detailed technical requirements will exclude many Open Access repositories in countries that do not have the means to invest heavily in open science infrastructures.

LIBER recommends that cOAlition S:

- Study the recommendations by the Coalition of Open Access Repositories (COAR) on the next generation repositories<sup>5</sup>.
- Support the development of global Open Access infrastructures, such as the Directory of Open Access Journals and Sherpa/RoMEO via SCOSS<sup>6</sup>.

## 3 Transformative Agreements

LIBER sees transformative agreements as a feasible pathway for institutions with their libraries to contribute to full and immediate open access. In our 'Five Open Access Principles for Negotiations with Publishers'<sup>7</sup> we have offered support to the library community on how this can be done.

LIBER recommends that cOAlition S:

- Acknowledge that the transitional power of transformative agreements is assessed not just in terms of time but in terms of participation. We find that the condition that transformative agreements 'include a scenario that describes how the publication venues will be converted to full Open Access after the contract expires' does not appropriately reflect their purpose and potential. Rather, cOAlition S should require that these agreements include language acknowledging the transitional nature of the agreement model and stating the specific intent of the agreement, which is to make a substantial contribution to the transformation of scholarly communication from subscription-based to Open Access.

As Plan S develops, it will be important to ensure that its principles are fully integrated within the broader research workflow. At the moment, Plan S focuses heavily on Open Access for articles but it needs to be seen in the broader context of the Open Science ecosystem to which we aspire.

5. <https://www.coar-repositories.org/files/NGR-Final-Formatted-Report-cc.pdf>

6. <http://www.scoss.org>

7. <https://libereurope.eu/blog/2017/09/07/open-access-five-principles-for-negotiations-with-publishers>