

Immediate Action Plan (2019-2020)

We are in the midst of a rapid evolution in tools, services, concepts and corresponding strategic moves by key stakeholders in the global realm of Open Scholarship. Thus, we deem it necessary to highlight the most important aspects of the full strategy that we consider necessary to be fulfilled in order to consider any measure of ‘success’ in implementing an Open Scholarship system. This is also so that we do not have to fall back to solutions that would otherwise come into play with a potentially negative impact that might then stifle the further development of open research practices on a global level.

In short: Simply channeling more time, effort, and funds into maintaining the existing system, with perverse incentives and skewed power dynamics, is clearly no longer sustainable for global research. This document seeks to provide a comprehensive and strategic solution to this problem.

In order not to re-live the lock-in of research by yet another business plan that only pays lip service to the guiding values, principles and practices of Open Scholarship, this time around, academia cannot afford to lose sight on the variety of aspects that Open Scholarship contains. Primarily, the re-centering of scholarly practices on fundamental open principles that – as is outlined in more detailed form throughout this strategy – comprise not only free access to, but also the possibility to freely participate in and re-use research output in all its forms. We see this freedom as essential to any future of Open Scholarship, and that violation of these freedoms also violates the principles of Open Scholarship.

Thus, immediate and strategic action points include:

- Bring together as many relevant stakeholders from as wide a spectrum as possible - including research institutions, learned societies, funders, libraries, and publishers - to collaborate on a **full transition to open research practices** for the benefit of scholarship and society.
- Take action against the privatisation of scholarly works and processes in order to achieve **transformation of the publishing industry** into one comprised of fair licensing, fair market competition, and under the governance of the wider scholarly community.
- Start the implementation of national and/or international **open scholarly infrastructures**, with cross-stakeholder agreed upon open standards, roadmaps, and governance structures. Ensure this is supported with seed funds from trusts and funders, with sustainable funding streams continued by a diversion from refreshed library budgets after publishing contracts have been terminated or expired.
- Create scholarly standards to implement an alternative **non-profit and community-owned** scholarly publishing platform/environment (using the funds freed from subscriptions, building on existing repositories/environments and infrastructure).
- Fund and publish detailed government-level investigations in order to **stabilise the scholarly publishing market**.
- Establish a permanent fund to be used towards **financially supporting sustainable open ventures**, including Open Source software development, APCs and BPCs, and other costs related to Open Scholarship.
- Require researchers to work with **open standards and file formats** (either exclusively or in addition to proprietary standards and file formats).
- Ensure that more rigorous and **fairer research assessment policies and processes** are in place, and well-supported and monitored.
- Incentivize and mandate **all research outputs to be published in Open Access** journals, repositories, or platforms, and mandate for raising broad awareness towards non-APC models.
- On an international level, **adapt the new UK Scholarly Communications License** (or relevant variations of it) towards other regional funding and licensing strategies.
- Encourage a wider **adoption of preprint and Open Access policies** similar to those at the NIH (USA), Wellcome Trust (UK) and the European Commission’s Plan S.

- **Advocate with Research funders** to define the limits of what is an acceptable standard of publication (e.g., based on APC caps, embargo periods, licensing).
- Consider the ramifications of **Plan S**, which aims for full and immediate Open Access to publications from publicly funded research, for your national and local context, and see what can be done to implement Plan S for your context. Further reading: Kramer & Bosman, 2018
- A **systematic reduction of article-processing charges (APCs)** in hybrid titles to match the market average for OA-only journals

For Libraries & Research Institutes:

- Map and coordinate when current subscription and big deal licenses will run out across research institutes, and let it happen. Where cancellations or terminations occur, ensure that there is adequate post-subscription access and support using existing sustainable and legal mechanisms.
 - Where subscriptions have not yet expired, mandate offsetting agreements for hybrid journal titles in order to reduce double-dipping.
 - Where offsetting deals are in place, these can be streamlined and standardised across sectors to reduce administrative burden.
- Refuse to engage with publishers that double dip on payments.
- For research institutes that currently lack them, either launch and maintain an Open Access repository or find an existing resource to use, and adopt an Open Access policy. Make these easily discoverable and accessible on the institutional website, and any relevant indexing services.
- Research libraries should collect information about how the sector as a whole interacts with the research literature. Such information could be used to help with publisher negotiations, break up big deal contracts, and cancel subscriptions by providing evidence into the cross-sectorial value of services, and includes:
 - Which venues researchers are publishing in;
 - Who is doing the editorial and peer review work;
 - How much is being spent on serial subscriptions;
 - How much is being spent on APCs and Book Processing Charges (BPCs); and
 - Which articles are being downloaded and cited.
- Mandate the creation of OA policy at your institution: Examples of OA policies can be found e.g. via the ROARMAP. Examples of Open Education / OER policies are listed in e.g. the Creative Commons OER policy registry, or the European Union's Policy approaches to Open Education, 2017.
- Create new or support existing international library consortia/collaborations (e.g., the International Coalition of Library Consortia) to co-operate on infrastructure developments (e.g., LIBER and EIFL).
- Explore routes for reinvesting money saved for library budgets.
- Mandate ORCID for researchers across all research outputs to help assist in the persistent identification of authors across the entire research literature, and easier research discoverability.
- Start implementing semantic technology across all scholarship outputs, including for the purposes of enabling unrestricted text and data mining.
- Create showcases/highlights/good practices of Open Scholarship practices on national websites or portals, together with relevant information and resources.
- Develop and teach courses on the various practices of Open Scholarship (e.g., as required seminars/workshops for graduate school programs).