

## Section 1

Consent for sharing concept notes openly

1. We want to be transparent about the decisions we've made. For this scheme, where you have given your consent, we will make your name, project title(s), and details of proposal(s) for successful and unsuccessful concept notes openly available on our publicly accessible website.

This information is your personal data and you are ultimately in control of it. If you are happy for us to share the following sections of your concept note as noted above, please check the boxes below. Please note this is entirely optional; it is up to you which boxes are checked. We will not take your willingness to share these details into account when making the decision on inviting full applications.

Potential further uses of your personal data and your consent

Please also note that if you are invited to submit a full application, we may contact you subsequently to ask your consent to share some details of the full application online. Once all decisions have been communicated to applicants, we will ask your consent to share a short summary of why you have been successful or not. Again, it will be entirely optional whether or not you provide consent for this. The legal basis for this processing of these personal data noted above would be your consent and the Wellcome Trust will be the "data controller". This and all other information will be stored and used, in addition to the details noted above, as per the Wellcome Grants Privacy Statement <https://wellcome.ac.uk/sites/default/files/wellcome-grantsprivacy-confidentiality-statement-20181207.pdf>

Withdrawing your consent

You can withdraw your consent for us to use your personal data in this way at any time by contacting Wellcome's Data Protection Officer [Dataprotection@wellcome.ac.uk](mailto:Dataprotection@wellcome.ac.uk) \*

- ☒ I am happy to share my full name
- ☒ I am happy to share my project title
- ☒ I am happy to share the details of my proposal (questions 6, 7 & 8)
- ☒ I am happy for you to use my personal details to contact me in relation to the 'Potential further uses of your personal data and your consent' set out above
- ☐ I do not want to share any of the details of my application

## Section 2

Personal information

2. Please provide your full name (including title) \*

Dragan Okanovic

3. Please provide your position and name of your employer \*

Symphony.is

4. Please provide your email address \*

dragan.okan@gmail.com

## Section 3

Details of proposal

5. What is your project title? \*

Unfold Research

6. Please list your team members or key collaborators (name and organisation) and provide a very brief outline of their role in the proposed research. (200 words max) \*

Dragan Okanovic - founder and lead full-stack developer (currently part-time on the project due to full-time employment as a senior software engineer)

pending collaboration with 3327 (<https://3327.io>), a web 3.0 tech incubator, that could potentially add 1-4 developers working on the project part-time or full-time

7. Provide a summary of your Open Research Fund proposal. Please describe the vision for your proposal, including aims, target audiences, and activities (700 words max, 4000 character limit) \*

\*\*\*PLEASE NOTE: We are aware of an issue with the word/character limit for this question. If you encounter problems with this question then please download the Word version of the form at <https://tinyurl.com/ORFconcept2021> and submit to Aki MacFarlane [a.macfarlane@wellcome.org](mailto:a.macfarlane@wellcome.org) by 11:59PM (GMT) on 12th March 2021. \*\*\*

We are building a community-driven academic publishing platform that offers an alternative way for scholars to make their living and fund their research.

Besides uploading publications, the core of the platform is an open review system and the ability to link the content together by adding and pointing to supplementary materials, and on top of that, there's a points-based voting mechanics to help filter and curate content, thus making the discovery of relevant, high-quality, trusted research easy, and helps moderation of the low-quality content. All content, reviews, and links can be voted on by the users - votes earn you reputation points, downvotes reduce them. This metric of reputation points is what we intend to use to completely replace and deprecate h-index and similar metrics. By balancing the number of points that you earn per type of research work, we intend to incentivize different parts of academic work that have historically been less popular. Due to the reputation point metric's dependence on communal activity, it's more resilient to abuse and better expresses the sentiment around a specific work.

With metrics put in place, we will integrate payments. There are multiple different ways that one could achieve that, and the most basic one is that a part of users' monthly subscription would go into a collective fund for research whose resources would, on a monthly basis for example, get distributed to scholars based on the number and type of contributions in that period. This creates a way for the general public and other scholars to fund scientific research, and in turn incentivizes scholars to produce good work and be collaborative, offering them a way to have a sustainable and secure income stream.

Additional contributions to the funding budget could come from private and public organizations, and eventually, they could also be set to fund specific people and/or projects, for additional targetted support.

We also plan on using web 3.0 technologies, whether it be the general decentralized peer-to-peer tech that could, among other things, solve the problem of permanent storage for academia, or in the form of integrating cryptocurrency dynamics via blockchain technology. Cryptocurrency micropayments for activities on the platform, depending on the setup, could create highly interesting dynamics where the value of contributions rises over time, thus skyrocketing earnings and incentives, but more investigation into the balance of collaboration dynamics is needed beforehand, and in any case, micropayments integration can be added at any point in time, and even mixed with more classic payment methods.

Unfold Research is a project to restart academia - we are building the publishing platform and the rest of the infrastructure that can be used to achieve the goals and those are redefining incentives and metrics used for measuring scientific output, enforcing Open Science principles, and then streamlining the funding of research. This *is* intended to disrupt the academic business model as is now, and rebalance it in favor of scholars and Open Science.

We operate as an open-source, steward-owned for-profit and we strongly believe this is the right model that will allow us to continue to improve over time and bring the best value to the academic community as well. Our plan is to share data and findings of our experiments with the community so that we can learn and progress together. As mentioned, we will continue building additional services and tools: a fully integrated peer review system, digital lab notebooks, conference organization, project supervision and team management tools, ... all highly directed towards scholars' needs. Development of Unfold is already in progress and can be checked out at <https://unfoldresearch.com>.

8. Please describe how your proposal will influence open research practices in your field or more broadly (300 words max) \*

"Be careful of the incentives you create, since they will reinforce the minimum viable behavior to attain them."

Our goal is not to just provide good intentions, but to enable Open Science by actually building required infrastructure and products that reward good behavior and high-quality research output, create a healthy environment for collaboration, and create sustainable economic opportunities.

We want to make academia more like other industries, where doing your job and producing good output is appreciated and valued, and gives you an opportunity for mental and economic stability and certainty, and that in turn gives you even more reason to simply continue with the good work. Instead of "battling your way to the top", rigging the results to secure the next opportunity, rushing before funding lapses... we believe we can create a stable, cooperative environment. This will allow people to take their time and also review stuff thoroughly, which means high-quality output. This can eliminate p-hacking and build trust in results and people. By rewarding various types of research that aren't only novel research with interesting results, we can finally popularize negative studies, replications and peer review. With all rewards transparent and depending on your contributions and value to the community (rather than your status) - we open opportunities for early career researchers and citizen science, and in that process, we can take the burden off of more experienced researchers as well. And in the end, all that activity leaves a crowdsourced, curated knowledge repository that grows over time.

We see our approach as a way to potentially address every single problem, through the right incentives and practical means, independent of the research field.

9. Please briefly outline how you will monitor and evaluate the success your proposed activities, including approximate targets. (300 words max) \*

The voting system directly provides us a way to measure the amount and the types of activities on the platform, assess sentiments, and derive conclusions. Balancing points for different activities and adjusting pointing functions and their parametrization will allow us to iterate and test new ideas to learn what works well and what doesn't, and perhaps give us insight into what kind of differences there are between different research fields as well.

Our goals are to see that the community is growing (low churn) and has positive sentiments, content being posted is of good quality and crowdsourced curation is working and is linking good materials together. We will heavily monitor content moderation and potentials for abuse.

Our milestones will consist of reaching different community sizes, amount of content, and reducing churn, but more importantly, we will try to introduce payments as soon as possible (we need a critical mass for the economic dynamics to become sustainable and a certain ratio between high-impact contributors and more average consumers) - with a big goal of creating a small group of people, probably within the same research field, that can make their living from producing scientific content and collaborating with the community. That would be a huge achievement, not just for Unfold, but also for an entire academic community, and would present direct proof that such a model is achievable.

The next steps would be expanding to other research areas progressively, introducing new (more specific) features, learning further how to optimize and balance the behavior, and adding more ways to increase the research fund.

## Section 4

### Project timeline and budget

10. Please provide a rough timeline for the project (approximate, totalling no more than 24 months) \*

Development of core publishing functionalities and hiring additional personnel - 6 months. Building research fund

11. Please provide a rough budget for the project (approximate, totalling no more than GBP 100,000) \*

100000

This content is created by the owner of the form. The data you submit will be sent to the form owner. Microsoft is not responsible for the privacy or security practices of its customers, including those of this form owner. Never give out your password.

Powered by Microsoft Forms | [Privacy and cookies](#) | [Terms of use](#)