

What is Plan S?

At the end of 2018, [cOAlition S](https://www.coalition-s.org/), an international consortium of research funders supported by the European Commission and the European Research Council, launched a new Open Access (OA) publishing initiative called [Plan S](https://www.coalition-s.org/), which comes into effect on **1 January 2021**. Plan S is an initiative that hopes to make **immediate, full Open Access** a reality by committing to the following:

“With effect from 2021, all scholarly publications on the results from research funded by public or private grants provided by national, regional and international research councils and funding bodies, must be published in Open Access Journals, on Open Access Platforms, or made immediately available through Open Access Repositories without embargo.” (See: <https://www.coalition-s.org/about/>)

Plan S signatories from the UK include UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) and the Wellcome Trust. You can find a full list of signatories [here](#).

Key Points

Plan S is based on a framework of [10 principles, supported by implementation guidance](#). The main points are:

Hybrid model: Gold Open Access publication in subscription journals via an Article Processing Charge (APC) payment is known as ‘hybrid’ model. Plan S funders to fund hybrid Open Access only when it is part of a transformative agreement supporting a transition of publication platforms to full Open Access.

Copyright: Authors or their institutions to retain copyright of their publications.

Licenses: Authors to publish under an open licence, preferably the [Creative Commons Attribution \(CC BY\) licence](#).

Fees: Where applicable, Open Access publication fees are covered by the funders or research institutions, not by individual researchers.

Monographs: It is understood that the timeline to achieve Open Access for monographs and book chapters will be longer and requires a separate and due process.

Compliance: Funding agencies will monitor compliance and sanction non-compliant beneficiaries/grantees.

Metrics: The Funders commit that when assessing research outputs during funding decisions they will value the intrinsic merit of the work and not consider the publication channel, its impact factor (or other journal metrics), or the publisher. This will require that funders and universities align with the principles of the [Declaration of Research Assessment](#) (DORA) or the [Leiden Manifesto](#).

What are the benefits of Plan S?

By advocating the point that no scholarly publication should be locked behind a paywall, and that Open Access should be immediate (i.e., without embargoes), Plan S aims at reinforcing the key principles and benefits of Open Access as exemplified in the following:

- Increased visibility and impact of research
 - Raised profile for author, funder, and university
 - Faster dissemination of research outputs
 - Compliance with funder and Research Excellence Framework (REF) requirements
 - Social and public good
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How does Plan S affect me as a researcher?

If you are funded by a [cOAlition S signatory](#), as of 1 January 2021 you will be required to make your research publications Open Access via one of the acceptable routes (Please see below the “Three routes to make your research outputs compliant with Plan S” section).

The detailed implementation decisions of individual funding agencies, such as UKRI, will be key in determining the likely impact of Plan S on researchers at Goldsmiths. UKRI is conducting an [Open Access Review](#) to develop the new UKRI Open Access policy in response to Plan S.

Goldsmiths has Open Access publishing agreements with a diverse array of journals. Goldsmiths researchers can now publish open access with no charge in journals that are part of [“Read & Publish” agreements](#). Publishing in these journals will meet the Plan S requirement that allows hybrid Open Access only as part of a transformative agreement.

If you are not funded by a [cOAlition S signatory](#), you are not bound to publish in a compliant journal (i.e. a fully Open Access journal or a hybrid journal that is part of a transformative agreement), although it is best practice to do so if possible.

What research is in scope?

The scope of Plan S is primarily peer reviewed research. Plan S applies to all peer-reviewed publications that are based on results from research funded fully or partially by cOAlition S members. This means predominantly:

- **Scholarly articles:** From 1 January 2021 journal articles and conference papers are in scope.
- **Monographs:** By the end of 2021, cOAlition S will provide a statement on Plan S principles (and their implementation guidance) as they can apply to monographs and book chapters.

Three routes to make your research outputs compliant with Plan S:

All scholarly articles that result from research funded by members of cOAlition S must be openly available immediately upon publication without any embargo period.

	Open Access publishing venues (journals or platforms)	Subscription venues (repository route)	Transition of subscription venues (transformative arrangements)
Route	Authors publish in an Open Access journal or on an Open Access platform.	Authors publish in a subscription journal and make either the final published version (Version of Record (VoR)) or the Author's Accepted Manuscript (AAM) openly available in a repository.	Authors publish Open Access in a subscription journal under a transformative arrangement.

Funding	cOAlition S funders will financially support publication fees.	cOAlition S funders will not financially support 'hybrid' Open Access publication fees in subscription venues.	cOAlition S funders can contribute financially to Open Access publishing under transformative arrangements.
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Table 1. "Guidance on the Implementation of Plan S" on <https://www.coalition-s.org/guidance-on-the-implementation-of-plan-s/>

FAQs

I am not familiar with Open Access publishing and I am confused by the terminology used to describe Plan S. How can I get help?

The Goldsmiths Research Online team published an Open Access LibGuide, which explains basics of Open Access and includes a glossary of terms. If you have further questions around the terminology, please email gro@gold.ac.uk for clarification.

How will I know if I am submitting my paper to a Plan S compliant journal?

Compliant journals will be listed in the Directory of Open Access Journals ([DOAJ](https://doaj.org/)). Hybrid journals which agree to transformative agreements for being Open Access as means to ensure compliance with Plan S, are also acceptable. The Goldsmiths Research Online team will be happy to help with any queries around the eligibility of specific journals. Please email gro@gold.ac.uk for help.

How do I know where to publish?

We are awaiting further guidance from funders but can advise authors to not publish in hybrid journals (unless they have signed transformative agreements to become fully Open Access journals), check funder requirements, and understand journals' copyright policy. The Goldsmiths Research Online team will be happy to help with any queries around the eligibility of specific publishing platforms. Please email gro@gold.ac.uk for help.

What about Green Open Access (deposit of manuscript to a repository)? Should I still deposit my papers to Goldsmiths Research Online?

Yes. Plan S promotes Gold Open Access (paid Open Access via the journal/publication platform). However, deposit of your final accepted manuscript to GRO is acceptable provided the file can be made available immediately (i.e. with no embargo) and under a CC-BY licence.

What if I submit my paper to a non-compliant journal before January 2021, but it will be published after the implementation of Plan S?

Papers submitted for publication prior to January 2021 are expected to be exempt from revised Open Access policies which implement Plan S.

At the latest, funders must apply Plan S principles to publications resulting from grants published, or application deadlines, after 1 January 2021. However, funders are encouraged to implement principles to publications resulting from grants awarded from 1 January 2021, and so calls with deadlines prior to this may be affected.

What are the consequences if I publish in a non-compliant journal?

In time, cOAlition S funders, will align grant agreements and/or contracts with Plan S. Funders will monitor and sanction non-compliance on the basis of such agreements or contracts. As stated on [cOAlition S webpages](#), possible sanctions may include “withholding grant funds, discounting non-compliant publications as part of a researcher's track record in grant applications, and/or excluding non-compliant grant holders from future funding calls”.

Can I still submit papers which are not directly funded by a UKRI council to a non-compliant journal?

Probably, but with careful consideration. If your work is not supported by funding from UKRI and your paper is not subject to grant conditions based on a policy adhering to Plan S, then you are free to publish in any journal/platform. Consider, however, that your work would need to be clearly decoupled from any funding you may be in receipt of, to ensure you do not break grant agreements. This point is expected to be further clarified once UKRI release an updated Open Access policy which implements Plan S.

I am an early career researcher (ECR). Will I be disadvantaged because I don't have funds for OA?

If you are not funded by a cOAlition S signatory you are not bound to publish in a compliant journal, although it is best practice to do so if possible. You can self-archive in appropriate repositories (such as GRO) where embargoes will be applied – if appropriate – as well as using pre-print servers to promote early drafts of your work.

Plan S takes ECRs into account and principles such as responsible research metrics are put in place so that they can publish in appropriate journals for their content and career stage without prejudice.

Help and Support

These pages will be updated with information relevant to Plan S. If you have any questions regarding Plan S please email Goldsmiths Research Online at gro@gold.ac.uk.