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OPEN SCHOLARSHIP POLICY OBSERVATORY



The Fonds de Recherche du Québec Join cOAlition S

by Caroline Winter | 14 January 2022 | English, Observations, Observations and Responses | 0 comments



Lisez-le en français

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At a glance:

Title	The Fonds de Recherche du Québec Joins cOAlition S
Creator	The Fonds de Recherche du Québec
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In June 2021, the [Fonds de recherche du Québec \(FRQ\)](#) announced that they were joining [cOAlition S](#) and implementing the principles of [Plan S](#), including full and immediate open access to the research it funds.

The FRQ are the first Canadian funding organization and the first public funding organization in North America to join cOAlition S, which was founded in 2018 as a group of 11 European funding organizations

committed to advancing open access, supported by the European Research Council (ERC) and the European Commission (see “[Plan S and cOAlition S](#)”). It has since expanded to include members from Africa, the Middle East, and the US (see “[Plan S Update: The Expanding Membership of cOAlition S](#)”).

The FRQ comprise Québec’s three research funding agencies: [Nature and Technologies \(FRQNT\)](#), [Health \(FRQS\)](#), and [Society and Culture \(FRQSC\)](#). Representing almost a quarter of Canada’s research community, the FRQ administered \$253 million in research funding in 2019–2020 to researchers based in Québec (European Science Foundation, 2021). The FRQ also offers a Scientific Journal Support Program, which supports the publication of scholarly research in French, with priority to digital publication and open access (FRQ 2021). Their existing [OA policy](#), in place since 2019, requires publications to be open access within 12 months of publication; in order to align this policy with Plan S, as of March 2023, this embargo period will be eliminated (Gouvernement du Québec, 2021).

Response from the INKE Community

Plan S and cOAlition S have been of interest to the INKE community since their launch, in recognition of the global nature of open scholarship. In its 2020 report *Advancing Open: Views from Scholarly Communications Practitioners*, the Open Repositories Working Group of the Canadian Association of Research Libraries—an INKE partner—expresses concerns about Canada’s readiness to adopt a “transformative open scholarship model” such as Plan S (MacCallum et al. 7). The FRQ’s extended timeline for eliminating its embargo period—nearly two years rather than the typical one—seems to address this concern, however. As the FRQ’s press release notes, “Aware of the impacts that this change could have on the scientific and student community, the FRQ will gradually deploy the 10 principles of Plan S and establish measures to support members of this community” (European Science Foundation 2021; Gouvernement du Québec 2021).

INKE partner [Érudit](#) has collaborated with the FRQSC since 2006. Following the FRQ OA policy, all journals funded by FRQSC are OA through [Érudit](#) (Érudit 2021).

The FRQ, cOAlition S, and Open Scholarship

As the first Canadian funder to join cOAlition S, the FRQ are paving the way for other Canadian and North American public funders to join Plan S, which has become a global initiative.

Although research funded by the FRQ is not necessarily published in French, its joining with Plan S occurs in the context of other initiatives led by the Chief Scientist of Québec, including [the launch of a francophone network on science advice for public policy](#), announced in September 2021. The report accompanying the launch of this network notes that French language research must be available in open access to all francophone researchers (Scientifique en chef 2021, p. 48). The [FRQ OA policy](#) also supports French-language scholarship as one of its core principles (FRQ 2019).

The news of the FRQ joining cOAlition was shared on the website of the [Consulat Général de France à Québec](#), pointing to the fact that French OA policy is another important context for the FRQ’s decision. Itself adopted in the context of broader European frameworks, including Horizon Europe, [The Second French Plan for Open Science: Generalizing Open Science in France 2021–2024](#) expands upon the first plan of 2018 to include open code, infrastructure to support data sharing, and an emphasis on generalizing OA more broadly, including through the translation of French publications to improve their accessibility. As noted in an article in [Times Higher Ed](#), France’s new Plan is one of the new national policies to emphasize support for diamond OA, a route to OA in which journals do not charge article processing charges or subscription fees (Matthews 2021). The [Agence Nationale de la Recherche \(ANR\)](#), France’s national research funding body, has been a member of cOAlition S since its inception, and many French researchers likely publish in Québec’s French-language journals.

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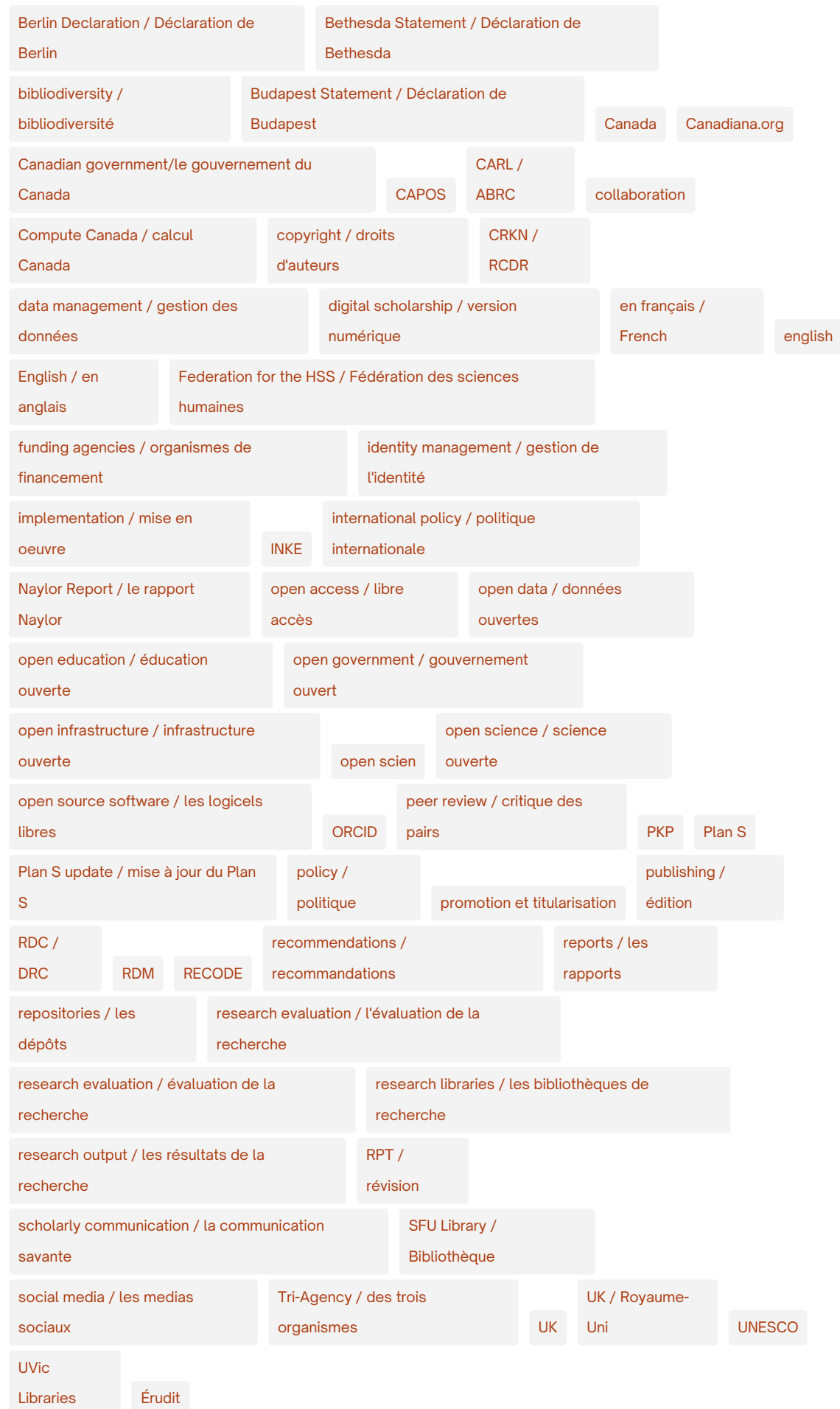
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