



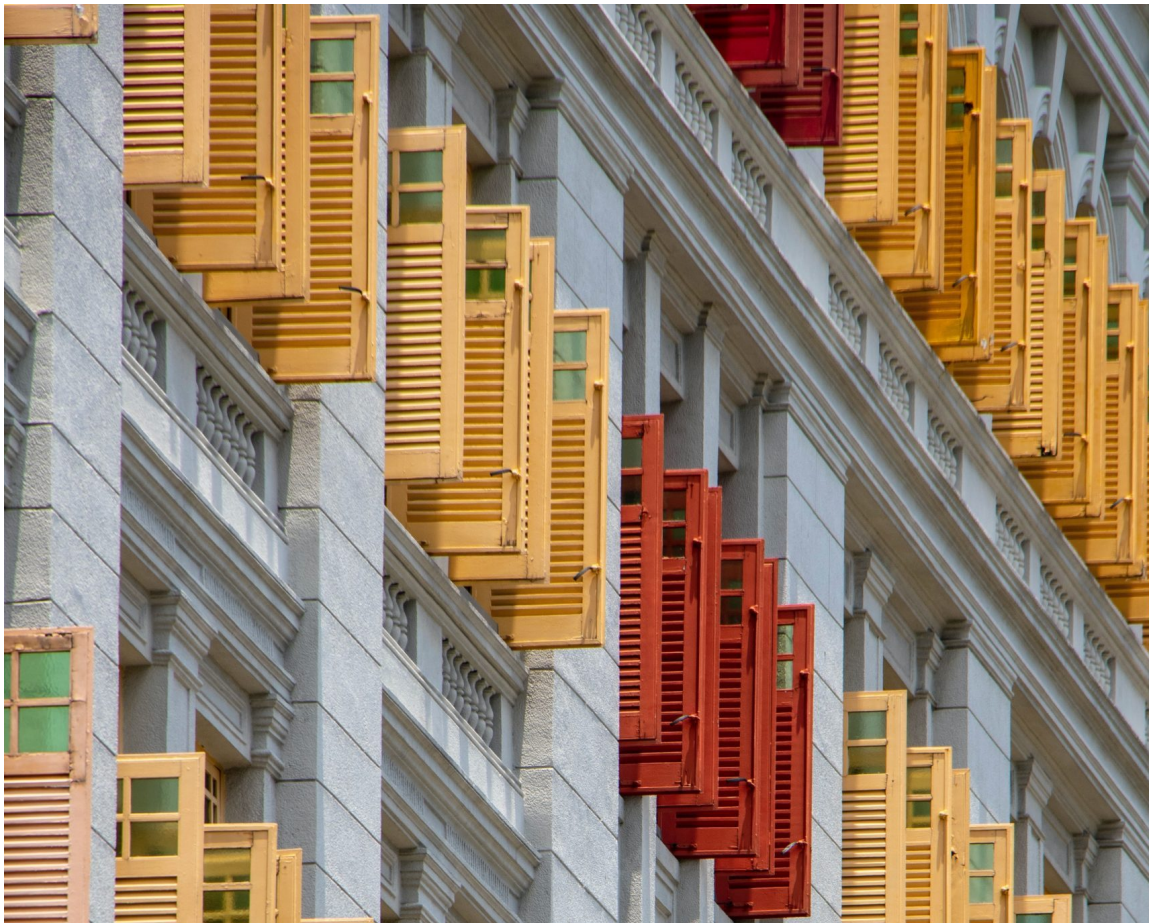
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OPEN SCHOLARSHIP POLICY OBSERVATORY



Plan S Update: The Expanding Membership of cOAlition S

by Caroline Winter | 26 February 2021 | English, Observations, Observations and Responses | 0 comments



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This observation was written by Caroline Winter.

At a glance:

Title	Plan S Update: The Expanding Membership of cOAlition S
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This Observation is part of a series focusing on developments related to cOAlition S and Plan S since they were launched in September 2018.

Plan S is an initiative of cOAlition S, an international consortium of research and funding organizations. The Plan calls for full and immediate open access (OA) of all publicly funded research publications (see “Plan S and cOAlition S”).

cOAlition S launched on September 4, 2018, with the support of **Science Europe**, the **European Commission** and 11 member organizations, national research funders in Europe and the UK (Science Europe 2018):

- **Austrian Science Fund (FWF); OA policy**
- **France’s Agence nationale de la recherche (ANR); OA policy**
- **Science Foundation Ireland (SFI); OA policy**
- **Italy’s Istituto Nazionale de Fisica Nucleare (INFN); OA policy**
- **Luxembourg National Research Fund (FNR); OA policy**
- **Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO); OA policy**
- **Research Council of Norway (RCN); OA policies**
- **Poland’s National Science Centre (NCN); OA policy**
- **Slovenian Research Agency (AARS); national OA strategy**
- **Swedish Research Council for Sustainable Development (FORMAS); OA policy**
- **United Kingdom Research and Innovation (UKRI); open research policies**

Since its inception, the membership of cOAlition S has expanded worldwide; as of February 2021, it includes 26 members from Africa, the Middle East, and the United States. The timeline below lists when each subsequent member joined cOAlition S and includes a link to their Plan S–aligned OA policy (cOAlition S 2021).

- **January 25, 2021:** The **Foundation for Science and Technology of Portugal (FCT)**, a national science and technology research funding agency. The implementation of Plan S **takes effect** on January 1, 2022.
- **October 1, 2020:** The **Templeton World Charity Foundation**, an interdisciplinary, US-based research foundation. Its new **OA Policy** took effect on January 1, 2021.
- **October 1, 2020:** The **Howard Hughes Medical Institute**, a private, US-based biomedical research institute. Its new **OA to Publications policy** takes effect on January 1, 2022.
- **October 22, 2019:** The **South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC)**, a national medical research funding organization and the largest in South Africa.
- **September 26, 2019:** **Aligning Science Against Parkinson’s (ASAP)**, an international, US-based research initiative and funding organization. Its **OA policy** takes effect on January 1, 2022.
- **August 29, 2019:** The **World Health Organization (WHO)**, an international health organization with 14

Member States, headquartered in Switzerland, is the first United Nations agency to join cOAlition S, along with the WHO's [Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases \(TDR\)](#) (WHO 2021). The WHO Policy on OA came into effect on January 1, 2021, and TDR has its own OA, post-publication peer-review publishing platform, [TDR Gateway](#).

- **May 22, 2019:** [Vinnova](#), the Swedish national research funding agency. Its [OA policy](#) came into effect on January 1, 2021.
- **March 25, 2019:** The [Higher Council for Science and Technology \(HCST\)](#), Jordan's national research funder is [the first cOAlition S member from the Middle East](#). Its Plan S-aligned OA policy came into effect on January 1, 2021.
- **February 23, 2019:** Zambia's [National Science and Technology Council \(NSTC\)](#), the primary national research funder in Zambia is the first African funder to join, after the [African Academy of Sciences endorsed Plan S](#) in January 2019. Its OA policy came into effect on January 1, 2021.
- **November 5, 2018:** [Wellcome](#), a private, UK-based biomedical and health research funding organization. In 2005, Wellcome was the first research funder to implement a mandatory OA policy. It also [announced a new OA policy](#) that came into effect on January 1, 2021. Wellcome is the first cOAlition S member from the UK.
- The [Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation](#), a US-based health and development research foundation, also joined on this date. Its new [OA policy](#) came into effect on January 1, 2021. It is the first cOAlition S member from the US, and, with Wellcome, is one of the first private funders to join.
- **September 29, 2018:** The [Academy of Finland \(AKA\)](#), a national research funder. Its [OA policy](#) came into effect on January 1, 2021.
- **September 9, 2018:** [FORTE: Swedish Research Council for Health, Working Life, and Welfare](#), is the first member to join cOAlition S since its launch. Its [OA policy](#) came into effect on January 1, 2021.

The [European Research Council \(ERC\)](#) was one of the original supporters of Plan S, but in July 2020, the ERC Scientific Council [announced that it was withdrawing its support from cOAlition S](#). The announcement, which cites the plan's lack of support for publication in hybrid journals and the consequences for early career researchers as its reason for withdrawing support, was met with surprise from many in the academic community, although some stakeholders expressed similar concerns (Burke 2020; cOAlition S 2020; Matthews 2020a, 2020b; Kamerlin 2020; Kelly 2020; Walkden 2020).

cOAlition S in the Press

Issues related to the expanding membership of cOAlition S and the widening reach of Plan S have been covered in the academic press. A piece in *Physics Today* called "Transformative Open-Access Deals Spread to the US," for instance, notes similarities between about the read-and-publish agreement struck between the University of California and Springer Nature in June 2020, and those negotiated between publishers and national research organizations under Plan S (Kramer 2020).

[Elsevier's decision to register 160 of its publications as transformative journals](#) through cOAlition S, which cOAlition [announced in January 2021](#), has also drawn the attention of the press. A piece in *Chemistry World*, for instance, notes that this decision coincides with a "crucial new stage" in Plan S, since many cOAlition S members' OA policies came into effect on January 1, 2021 (Durrani 2021).

Discussions about the need for open access to research in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic have also made reference to cOAlition S. A piece in *Big Think* points out that cOAlition S's efforts to prevent

inflated article processing fees by [requiring greater transparency about publishers' costs](#) is essential for preventing the cost of OA publishing falling on researchers. It emphasizes that enabling researchers to provide the public with access to accurate and reliable health research is particularly important in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, when a lack of transparency may lead to mistrust of public health agencies and pharmaceutical interventions such as vaccines (Beres 2021).

cOAlition S and the INKE Partnership

The Canadian Association of Research Libraries' report *Advancing Open: Views from Scholarly Communications Practitioners* notes that, although the Open movement is underway in Canada, our research and funding infrastructures would not yet support a “transformative open scholarship model” such as Plan S (MacCallum et al. 2020, 7; see “[CARL's Advancing Open Event and Report](#)”).

CARL has expressed support for Plan S in principle and submitted a [response to the first iteration of Plan S](#). It has since expressed [support for the revised implementation guidelines for Plan S](#) through a statement by the International Alliance of Research Library Associations (IARLA) and support for the cOAlition S [Rights Retention Strategy](#) (see “[Plan S Update: Rights Retention Strategy](#)”).

Similarly, the [Australasian Open Access Strategy Group \(AOASG\)](#) and the [Council of Australian University Librarians \(CAUL\)](#) have expressed support for Plan S in principle in their [response to the first iteration of the implementation guidelines](#), have [welcomed the revised implementation guidelines](#), and have [expressed support for the RRS](#) (see “[Plan S Update: Rights Retention Strategy](#)”).

cOAlition S's Expanding Membership and Open Scholarship

While cOAlition S began as a group of European funding agencies, it has since expanded to include members from Africa, the Middle East, the UK, and North America. Canada and Australia have expressed support for the coalition's work even though they are not signatories, and Plan S has become an important touchstone against which to compare open scholarship policy. As cOAlition S continues to expand its membership, the reach of Plan S continues to broaden, with implications for open scholarship worldwide.

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