

University of Exeter policy for managing central open access (OA) funds

This policy was agreed at the meeting of REIG on 16 December 2020 and applies from 01 January 2021.

V.1 Updated July 2022 to reflect the new UKRI open access policy that applies from 1st April 2022.

1. Background

The University has four central OA funds administered by the Open Research team (Library)

- UKRI OA block grant (UKRI OABG)
- Wellcome Trust (Wellcome OABG)
- British Heart Foundation (BHF OABG)
- Institutional Open Access Fund (IOAF)

2. Aims and Rationale

The policy aligns our strategy with [Plan S](#) and [Wellcome Trust OA policy 2021](#). It is underpinned by the rationale that the transition to full and immediate OA to all research outputs is best served by supporting full OA journals and publishers that are committed to transitioning from a subscription / hybrid business model to fully OA through Transformative Agreements (TAs).

This policy will allow the Open Research team to manage central OA funds to ensure that:

- academic freedom is protected - researchers can continue to publish in most appropriate journals
- researchers wishing to publish in full OA journals later in the year can still access APC funding
- the University receives the best value for money from payments made to publishers
- authors can comply with funder OA mandates
- OA funding is distributed fairly across the University

3. Management of funds

Funds will be prioritised to support:

- OA publishing fees where these are essential to publication e.g. full OA journals
- Transformative Agreements (TAs)
- Article Processing Charges (APCs) in hybrid journals only if required for funder compliance

4. Scope of Expenditure

UKRI OA block grant

- APCs in full OA journals
- publisher TAs (2021-2024) according to UKRI guidance for use of funds towards TAs

Wellcome Trust block grant

- APCs in full OA journals where publisher deposits to PubMed Central (PMC)
- APCs in Transformative Journals, compliant with Wellcome OA policy 2021
- publisher TAs (2021-2024) according to Wellcome Trust guidance for use of funds towards TAs

Institutional OA fund

- APCs in full OA journals
- publisher TAs (costs that cannot be paid using UKRI, BHF or Wellcome Trust funds)
- other costs as approved by RIEG/19/98 - OA monographs, data publication charges, open research initiatives, OA compliance, support training and campaigns, non-OA publication charges when these are essential to publication and cannot be waived

Frequently Asked Questions

Scope of policy

Does this policy apply to all research output types?

The Institutional fund covers all peer-reviewed research output types (excluding invited/commissioned reviews). Funder OA policies and scope of OA funds varies by funder – check funder policy for details.

How does this proposal relate to long form output types e.g. monographs, chapters, edited collections?

OA publishing fees for long form outputs are within scope of the Institutional OA Fund. UKRI new OA policy requires OA to long form outputs published from 1st January 2022 within 12 months of publication. Wellcome have required OA to monographs since 2013.

Compliance and freedom to publish

Can researchers still publish in hybrid journals?

Many hybrid journals are included in [Transformative Agreements](#). When the Exeter author is *primary / responsible / submitting corresponding author*, publish OA without any publishing fees. If your chosen journal is not included in a TA we have signed up to, publish not-OA (without paying any publishing fees) and upload the accepted manuscript to ORE. If the research being published was externally funded, check funder OA policy whether you can comply by self-archiving in ORE. Ensure you include funder's set text in your submission advising that a CC BY licence has been applied to any future accepted manuscript arising from the submission; check publishing contract before signing to ensure no conflict with funder.

Can researchers still comply with REF 2021 OA policy?

Researchers can publish in hybrid journals and comply with REF 2021 OA policy by uploading the accepted manuscript to ORE within 3 months of acceptance, free of charge. There is no requirement in the REF policy for researchers to pay APCs. The policy facilitates researchers publishing REF submissions in full OA journals by prioritising funds to pay.

Co-authorship with another institution

How does this policy affect funded research outputs in co-authorship with another institution?

If a paper acknowledges funding, it must comply with the funder OA policy even if the funded author is not lead or corresponding. Discuss funder OA obligations with co-authors before submitting. To publish OA through TAs, Exeter author must be *primary / responsible / submitting corresponding author*. When publishing in a full OA journal, apply to the institution of lead / corresponding author for OA funding. If no OA funds are available from the lead / corresponding author institution, and the fee must be paid to publish, [contact Open Research](#) to discuss your options.

Plan S and Transformative Agreements

What is Plan S?

[Plan S](#) aims to accelerate the transition to free and immediate online access to, and largely unrestricted use and re-use of, scholarly publications. Hybrid journals do not meet the requirements of Plan S. [Plan S funders](#) are aligning their OA policies with Plan S, this now applies to Wellcome, UKRI, Horizon Europe.

Why don't hybrid journals meet Plan S principles?

"Hybrid" refers to a publishing model in which subscription-based journals allow authors to make individual articles OA on the publisher website upon payment of an APC. The average cost of a hybrid APC is significantly higher than in full OA journals. Hybrid journals generate greater income by "double dipping", Research Libraries UK (RLUK) defines this as "a publisher seeks an unwarrantable increase in revenues by levying APCs [...] while not providing a proportionate decrease in subscription costs".

How do Transformative Agreements (TAs) differ from hybrids journals?

The Library currently pays journal subscriptions to publishers, in addition to paying APCs. TAs are nationally negotiated by [JISC](#) and aim to convert institutions' subscription expenditure to fund OA publishing, constraining the total cost to institutions. TAs provide a route for publishers to transition to full OA and provide authors with Plan S-compliant publishing routes. They deliver better value for money, simpler workflows for researchers and increased OA publishing compared to paying individual APCs.

Where researchers can find the Transformative Agreements (TAs) in place?

The list of current publisher TAs available to Exeter corresponding authors can be found [here](#).