



Plan S – A Golden Addition to the Diamond Open Access Publishing Model

We wish to tell readers about ‘Plan S’, which is a very recent initiative in Europe, begun in September 2018 with the aim of speeding up a transition from the traditional, subscription-based publishing model to the Gold Open Access model.

This plan envisages that all research supported by public money in Europe should be published in Gold OA journals from 2020. Although not all details have been decided, it appears that Plan S could involve imposing sanctions against authors whose research was supported by public research agencies but publish their work subscription-based journals, even in leading journals such as *Annals of Mathematics*, *Acta Mathematica*, *Inventiones Mathematicae*, *JAMS* and *JEMS*.

An obvious possible consequence of this is that some high quality research will be sponsored by private funding (to avoid such sanctions), and that public funding will support research of lesser importance. Accordingly, it seems to us that Plan S is not about research, or about authors or readers, but is driven by financial considerations.

Plan S was put up by cOAlition S, which is a consortium of 16 European National Research Agencies. These agencies intend to pay the costs of APC (article processing charges).

For example, the Slovenian Research Agency ARRS (which is a founding member of cOAlition S) issued a call in October 2018 and set aside 300 000 € for paying back APC for gold OA for articles published in 2018. At the end of November 2018 the results were published and can be found here: <http://www.arrs.gov.si/sl/progproj/rproj/rezultati/18/inc/rezultati-odprti-dostop-18.pdf>

About 80 Gold OA papers are listed there as winners. The APC for each of them will be paid by the ARRS. The costs of publication vary from about 500 € to over 4000 € per paper, with the majority of APC sitting between 1000 and 2000 €, and one can easily check that most of this public money goes to private publishing houses.

There were three criteria for the eligibility of a paper for this payment:

- (a) acknowledgement of support by the ARRS,
- (b) payment for the APC in 2018, and
- (c) ranking of the journal in which the paper appears as Q1 in WoS or Scopus.

We note that the third criterion is not compliant with the 2013 Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA), because it involves the use of impact factors. We also note that to date, no authors of mathematical papers have applied for this support by the ARRS.

The pertinent question for *Ars Mathematica Contemporanea* is how should Diamond OA journals adapt to Plan S.

First, we plan to ensure that *AMC* is compliant with Plan S. For any article in which support is to be acknowledged from a Plan S compliant agency (such as the ARRS), we will offer the authors the option of either removing the acknowledgement, or paying APC at some reasonable rate (such as 2000 €). Before we start implementing this policy, we will negotiate with the ARRS (and through the ARRS with other Plan S agencies and other institutions) to make sure they will indeed reimburse the APC.



Strictly speaking, this means we will change our publishing model from Diamond OA to Gold OA, but on the other hand, we will waive APC for most papers. We believe other Diamond Open Access journals should consider similar adjustments, to deal with Plan S.

An interesting question remains. The supporters of Plan S are being encouraged to sign DORA. But when this happens, it is not at all clear how the ‘excellence’ of eligible journals will be determined.

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