

Piloting a price transparency framework for Plan S



Sponsors



UK Research
and Innovation

cOAlition S funders



Join the coalition

Overview –

cOAlition S asked us to engage stakeholders to inform the development of the Plan S requirements for more transparent communication of OA prices and services

Moved fast: an initial project ran from September through December 2019, and the outputs were piloted during Q1 2020

Engaged widely: 150+ stakeholders through calls, survey, workshops, webinars, and discussions and took legal advice re competition law

Pilot – q1 2020

- Neither Participants nor Steering Group had access to any publisher's data; these data were held in confidence by the project team.
- Participants:
 - Annual Reviews, Brill, The Company of Biologists, EMBO Press, European Respiratory Society, F1000 Research, Hindawi, IOP Publishing, PLOS, and SpringerNature

The framework, section 1 (blue)

basic title information

- Columns B-E **Title identifier** (an ISSN or DOI)
- **Column F** To make the framework easier for publishers to implement, it is possible to group titles that have less than + or – 5% variance in all data fields and to report averages. This field is optional and is used to report which rows of data report such averages.
- Column G **Discipline** from https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/science-and-technology/frascati-manual-2015_9789264239012-en#page60 or choose from one of the following: all disciplines, all STEM disciplines, or all HSS disciplines.
- Column H **Owner's ROR ID**
- Column I **Publisher's ROR ID**
- Column J & K & L **APC list price low value and high value** (if there is a range, or else these would be the same figures) **and the currency in which list price is set**
- Column M **Link to a publicly available APC waiver or discount policy**, or an indication there is none
- Column N & O **Subscription list price low value and high value** (if there is a range, or else these would be the same figures) **and the currency in which list price is set**
- **Column Q** Subscription list price for a typical member of the Association of American Universities
- Column R **Link to a publicly available subscription discount policy**, or an indication there is none
- Column S & T & U **Date the information was submitted** and the **reporting period start and end dates**

The framework, section 2 (orange)

contextual information

- Column V Link to any **extra contextual information** you would like to provide.
- Column W **Number of research articles published**, excluding author corrections, corrigendum, errata, editorials, and reviews.
- Column X **Acceptance rate**
- Column Y **Desk rejection rate**
- Column Z **Issue publication frequency**
- Column AA **Median number of reviews**. If an article goes back to the same reviewer for a second review, then this counts as two reviews. If reviews cascaded to the journal with a paper, then count this as zero.
- Column AB **Median time submission to first decision**. Decision means whether to reject or send for peer review. Include decisions based on assessment by in-house prepublication teams, editorial boards, editorial boards and external referees, subeditors, etc.
- Column AC **Median days of peer review**
- Column AD **Median time acceptance to publication**
- Column AE & AF **Usage information**: unique item requests and total item requests (from COUNTER 5 or there is information in the implementation guide about how you can calculate this if you have not implemented COUNTER

These columns should total 100% and overheads and profits distributed evenly across them rather than called out separately

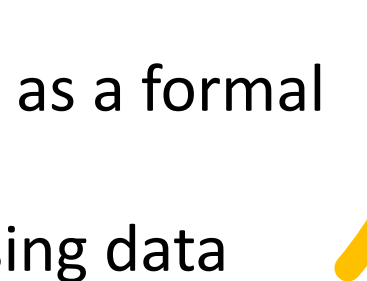
The framework, section 3 (pink)

price and service information

- Column **Journal and community** identify a need for the journal, its aims and scope development, investment in funding for the field, editorial board costs, commissioning content, competitor analysis, benchmarking, policy development, and portfolio development.
- Column AH **Submission to first decision** services that move an article from submission to a first decision about whether to reject or send for peer review (e.g. triaging).
- Column AI **Peer review services** peer review activities including specialist reviews but please do not factor in time or resources donated by editors or reviewers (i.e. recruiting and training peer reviewers and the editors who work with them, peer review management and tracking systems). If the journal operates post-publication peer review, please enter 0% in this column.
- Column AJ **Acceptance to publication** copyediting, formatting, typesetting, proofreading, assigning and depositing DOIs, XML file conversion, tagging, quality assurance checks, integration with abstract and index databases/aggregators/repositories/APC management systems, figure re-lettering or other improvements, dealing with article enhancements such as video abstracts, proofing process and author engagement around this, issue compilation, issue line up, printing, alignment with synchronous articles, vendor management, article pipeline management; addition of ORCIDs and other IDs to support funder/institutional disambiguation, checking references, design.
- Column AK **Post-publication services** handling ethical queries, provision of usage statistics, long-term preservation and access, reader services, postage, inventory and stock control.
- Column AL **Platform costs** include development, hosting, support, and vendor management. One-off development should be amortized over 3 years and figures for the relevant reporting period included.
- Column AM **Sales & marketing** sales teams, sales administration, legal costs for contracts, negotiations with consortia and libraries, sales agents, invoicing, payments collection, debt recovery, bad debt write-offs, integration with and promotion on social media networks, sponsorship.
- Column AN **Author and customer support** non-editorial author support and library customer support (e.g. helpdesk, usage/impact/other reports, training, author queries about copyright or CC licenses).



Our recommendations

- Provide lead time – publishers will need time to engage and develop systems
 - Ask publishers to report in Q3
 - Commission an aggregation service
 - Provide guidance re how to provide data in interim
 - Develop an advocacy plan to promote awareness and use
 - Consider providing an incentive for early implementation
 - Consider establishing this approach as a formal standard
 - Consider hosting a hackathon on using data
- 

Next steps

The Plan S implementation guidance said that no later than 1 January 2020 cOAlition S, in partnership with publisher representatives and other stakeholders, will define the price transparency requirements.

We have recommended cOAlition S next commissions an implementation service, with registration and access controls if necessary.

cOAlition S will take a decision on what its price transparency requirements will be. In addition to our framework there has also been work done in this area by the Fair Open Access Alliance. In due course cOAlition S might endorse one, both, or neither.

We anticipate an announcement from cOAlition S in mid May.

Steering Group

	Organisation	Stakeholder type
Ivy Anderson	University of California	University/Library consortium
Chris Banks	Imperial College London	University
Rachel Bruce	UKRI	Funder
Liam Earney	Jisc Collections	Library consortium
Sarah Greaves	Hindawi	Publisher
Steven Inchcoombe	Springer Nature	Publisher
Robert Kiley	Wellcome	Funder
Jasmin Lange	Brill	Publisher
Falk Reckling	FWF (Austrian Science Fund)	Funder
Arthur Smith	Cambridge University	University