



# cOAlition S

## Accelerating the transition to full and immediate Open Access to scientific publications

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### Plan S: Rights Retention Strategy

#### Summary

cOAlition S has developed a *Rights Retention Strategy* to give researchers supported by a **cOAlition S Organisation** the freedom to publish in their journal of choice, including subscription journals, whilst remaining fully compliant with Plan S.

cOAlition S Organisations will facilitate this by changing their grant conditions to require that a Creative Commons Attribution licence (CC BY<sup>1</sup>) is applied to all Author Accepted Manuscripts (AAMs<sup>2</sup>) or Versions of Record (VoR<sup>3</sup>) reporting original research, supported in whole or in part by their funding.

Some cOAlition S Organisations will, as of the commencement of the grant, require their grantees to apply a CC BY license to *all* future AAMs which arise from their funding (*prior licence*). Other cOAlition S Organisations will impose an obligation on their grantees that their research articles (either the AAM or VoR) are licensed CC BY (*prior obligation*). In either case (prior license or prior obligation) the effect is the same; all research articles which arise from funding from a cOAlition S Organisation must be licensed CC BY before they are submitted to a journal for publication.

cOAlition S Organisations' grantees will also be required to ensure Open Access at the time of publication (no embargoes) to all research articles which arise from their funding.

cOAlition S will give notice to publishers about these new grant conditions.

This strategy applies to all manuscripts submitted for publication from researchers funded by a cOAlition S Organisation. However, it is especially relevant when submissions are made to journals whose publisher does

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<sup>1</sup> Although the default licence is the Creative Commons, Attribution licence (CC BY), many cOAlition S Organisations allow researchers to request Creative Commons Attribution, No-Derivatives (CC BY-ND) by exception

<sup>2</sup> The AAM is defined as the version of the work as accepted for publication, including all changes made during the peer review process

<sup>3</sup> The VoR is defined as the version of a journal article that has been made available by any organization that acts as a publisher by formally and exclusively declaring the article "published".

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not yet offer their authors the opportunity to make the VoR of research articles Open Access in a way that is aligned with Plan S. It, therefore, enables to continue to seek publication in their preferred journal by making the AAM available in a repository at the time of publication.

This strategy aligns with the repository route in the Plan S [Implementation Guidance](#).

## Background

The Plan S guidance includes the following commitment:

*Where possible, cOAlition S members will ensure by way of funding contracts or agreements that the authors or their institutions retain copyright as well as the rights that are necessary to make a version (either the VoR, the AAM or both) immediately available under an open license. To this end, cOAlition S will develop or adopt a model 'License to Publish' for their grantees.*

To deliver on this commitment, cOAlition S Organisations will modify their funding agreements such that:

- Authors (or their organisations) must retain sufficient intellectual property rights to comply with their Open Access requirements.
- Authors (or their organisations) must ensure Open Access to the Author Accepted Manuscripts (AAMs) or the Version of Record (VoR) of research articles, at the time of publication. All research articles must be made available under a [Creative Commons Attribution](#) "CC BY" licence or equivalent or, by exception, if so decided by a cOAlition S Organisation, a [Creative Commons Attribution, NoDerivatives](#) "CC BY-ND" licence, or equivalent.

The grant agreement of most cOAlition S Organisations will stipulate that a Creative Commons Attribution "CC BY" licence or equivalent (or a Creative Commons Attribution, No Derivatives, "CC BY-ND" licence if agreed by the cOAlition S Organisation) will be applied to all future Author Accepted Manuscripts ("AAMs") as of the commencement of the grant.

## Implementing the Rights Retention Strategy

The cOAlition S Office is contacting around 150 subscription/mixed model publishers – who collectively publish the majority of research articles attributed to cOAlition S Organisations – to encourage them to modify their existing publishing agreements to allow all authors to make their AAMs available at the time of publication with a CC BY licence. By exception, publishers can choose to allow this for just those researchers who are funded, in whole or in part, by a cOAlition S Organisation.

## What actions should publishers take?

For publishers who agree to add these rights to their existing publishing agreements, no further action is required. A number of publishers, such as the [Royal Society](#) and the [Microbiology Society](#) already grant these rights to all authors.

For publishers of journals which are not already Open Access, or which haven't entered into transformative arrangements, if they are not willing to modify their existing publishing agreements to expressly permit self-archiving of AAMs, the cOAlition S [letter](#) gives them notice of the Open Access requirements which cOAlition

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S researchers are bound by. In particular, the letter informs publishers that submissions they receive from researchers funded by a cOAlition S Organisation will already be licensed under a public licence, or that beneficiaries and their authors are bound by a prior obligation to provide such a public license to their AAMs or VoRs.

This public licence and/or agreed prior obligations take legal precedence over any later Licence to Publish or Copyright Transfer Agreement that the publisher may ask the author to sign.

The **letter** to publishers includes a **response form** to indicate how they will manage future submissions from authors who are funded by a cOAlition S Organisation.

The information provided by publishers will be added to the Journal Checker Tool, a public web service that will help researchers to determine compliance with cOAlition S Organisations' Open Access requirements for any given journal.

## Author Accepted Manuscripts vs Version of Record?

In developing the Rights Retention strategy, we are mindful that the AAM version differs from the VoR. Not only does the latter contain all the changes from the copyediting process, journal formatting/branding etc., but it is also the version maintained and curated by the publisher, who has the responsibility to ensure that any corrections or retractions are applied in a timely and consistent way.

For this reason, our preferred option is to ensure that the VoR is made Open Access. In cases where this version can be made available in accord with the Plan S principles, many cOAlition S Organisations make funding available to pay for these services in the form of APCs and contributions to transformative arrangements.

## Case study: the Wellcome Trust

In advance of January 2021, Wellcome will change its standard grant conditions to ensure that grant holders retain sufficient intellectual property rights to comply with their Open Access requirements.

Specifically, the language shown in Box 1 below will be included in the Wellcome grant conditions and will apply to all existing and all future grants.

You hereby grant a CC BY Public Copyright Licence to all future Author Accepted Manuscripts (AAMs). If you allow others to own copyright in AAMs, you must ensure they grant such a licence.

All submissions of original research to peer-reviewed journals must contain the following statement:

*“This research was funded in whole or in part by the Wellcome Trust [Grant number]. For the purpose of Open Access, the author has applied a CC BY public copyright licence to any Author Accepted Manuscript (AAM) version arising from this submission.”*

*Box 1: Wellcome grant conditions: Open Access language*

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Information on how other cOAlition S Organisations are implementing the rights retention strategy can be found on the [Implementation Roadmap](#) webpage.

The cOAlition S Office will be running a series of webinars, aimed at publishers, in July and September. If you would like to sign up for one of these, please complete the form available here: [Rights retention webinars](#).

## Related information

- [Rights Retention Strategy: Press Release](#)
- [Implementation Roadmap of cOAlition S Organisations](#)
- [Communication to publishers](#)
- [Publisher Response Form](#)
- [Rights Retention Strategy: Graphic](#)
- [Rights Retention Strategy: FAQs](#)
- [Rights Retention Strategy: Webinars](#)
- [Plan S Implementation Guidelines for Repositories: Results of COAR Repository Platforms Survey](#)

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