



# Plan S

Making full & immediate  
Open Access a reality

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## Annual Review 2025

Accelerating  
Open Access

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cOAlition S

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## INTRODUCTION

Plan S is a funder-led initiative to accelerate Open Access to scholarly publications. The research funding and performing organisations endorsing Plan S — united in cOAlition S — have committed to ensuring that scientific publications resulting from their funded research are made openly available. Since 2018, the coalition has been rolling out policies and tools in pursuit of that goal, working toward a scholarly communication system that is rapid, open, transparent and equitable.

This annual review covers the year 2025, a year of deliberate transition for cOAlition S, marked by the development and launch of a new five-year strategy. It reflects on the activities of cOAlition S and its member organisations during the year and looks ahead to the priorities that will shape the coalition's next chapter. In line with this transition, the open access performance metrics featured in previous annual reviews — which drew on Dimensions data and were coupled with funders' own OA metrics and case studies — are being reassessed, to ensure that reporting reflects the broader outcomes the new strategy is designed to track: equity, sustainability, and the diversity of routes to open science.

## About

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## FOREWORD

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***Open science did not stand still in 2025. Across the world, research funders, institutions and communities continued to push for more open, more equitable and more transparent ways of sharing knowledge – even as the landscape grew more complex. The rise of artificial intelligence, persistent concerns about the cost and equity of open access, and increasing pressures on research systems globally all made the work of cOAlition S more relevant, and more urgent.***

*For cOAlition S itself, 2025 was a year of deliberate renewal. We made a conscious decision to concentrate our collective energy on getting the foundations right for the next phase – developing a new strategy through extensive consultation with our members, redesigning our governance, and preparing the ground for new leadership. It was the work that makes everything else possible.*

*And yet, even as we focused inward, the community kept moving. Member organisations launched new open access policies, built new infrastructure for community-led publishing, and developed practical tools to address equity in scholarly communication. Their continued momentum is a reminder of what cOAlition S, at its best, represents: not a single mandate imposed from above, but a coalition of organisations that share a conviction and act on it – each in their own context, and together with greater force.*

***The work ahead is ambitious. The coalition that will carry it forward has never been better placed to do so.***

*Two transitions mark the beginning of our next chapter. We are delighted to welcome Curt Rice as the new Director of cOAlition S — an experienced academic leader with a long-standing commitment to open science, who joins at a moment when the coalition is ready to move from framework-setting into implementation. We are equally pleased to welcome OPERAS as the coalition's new host secretariat, bringing strong alignment with our mission and considerable expertise in open scholarly communication. At the same time, we want to express our genuine appreciation to Johan Rooryck and Robert Kiley, whose tenures shaped the coalition's first seven years, and to the European Science Foundation, whose dedicated support since 2020 built the foundation on which we now stand.*

*In November 2025, cOAlition S published its 2026–2030 Strategy — reaffirming our commitment to full and immediate open access while expanding our vision to encompass the rapid, open, transparent and equitable sharing of trustworthy scientific knowledge. The work ahead is ambitious. The coalition that will carry it forward has never been better placed to do so.*

**Mari Sundli Tveit**

Chair of the cOAlition S Leaders Group

**Lidia Borrell-Damián**

Chair of the cOAlition S Executive Steering Group



# STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT IN A CHANGING LANDSCAPE

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*The year 2025 was, for cOAlition S, a year of deliberate transition. Internally, the coalition concentrated its efforts on defining its next strategic direction — renewing its leadership, redesigning its governance, and consulting its members on the priorities that would shape the next five years. Externally, the open access landscape continued to move in ways that both validated the coalition's founding work and made the need for its next chapter clear.*

## *Policy momentum across the membership*

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**Across the funder community, 2025 saw a renewed wave of open access policy development that reflected the principles cOAlition S has long championed.**

In February, the Foundation for Science and Technology of Portugal (FCT) brought its new Open Access Policy into force, mandating funded authors to retain rights over the accepted manuscript version (AAM) of their works and requiring immediate deposit in the national repository network RCAAP — even for work published behind a paywall. Research Ireland — the agency that was formed in 2024 through the merger of Science Foundation Ireland and the Irish Research Council — launched its Interim Open Research Policy in April, requiring immediate open access to research publications under a CC BY licence with no embargo. Publications must be deposited in an open repository, authors are strongly encouraged to retain copyright, and researchers are invited to engage in broader open research practices including data sharing and preregistration. Both policies reflect a shared conviction that open access must be the default, and that authors should remain in control of their own outputs.

In the United States, HHMI announced its Immediate Access to Research Policy, requiring scientists to share both an initial and a revised preprint reflecting updates to the work — such as new data, analyses, or feedback from peer review — and signalling that HHMI will generally rely on a preprint version of the authors' choosing rather than the journal article in its own internal review processes. This approach broadens and accelerates access to HHMI research outputs

while giving scientists the flexibility to update their work on their own timeline. HHMI also continued to invest in preprint peer review through its Transparent and Accountable Peer Review (TAP) programme, supporting early career scientists in gaining hands-on experience in review evaluation practices. Together, these initiatives represented a significant step toward normalising preprint-centred research communication — an approach the new cOAlition S strategy explicitly recognises as one of the multiple pathways to open, transparent and trustworthy publishing.

In the United Kingdom, Wellcome changed the remit of its open access block grant funding: from January 2025, these funds can no longer be used to support transitional agreements, but can instead be used to support open scholarly communication infrastructure enabling open access for both short and long-form research outputs.

cOAlition S also contributed to the consultation by the Canadian Tri-Agency on their revised open access policy, expressing broad support for the policy's alignment with immediate open access principles, while offering recommendations on licensing requirements, rights retention policies, and preprints. The response highlighted opportunities to link the policy with data management principles and develop similar guidelines for long-form works. These engagements reflect the coalition's broader role as an active voice in shaping open access policy beyond its own membership — and its continued attention to the diversity of national contexts in which open access is being implemented.

## ***Equity as a structural question***

### **A common thread running through these developments was the equity theme:**

a growing recognition that open access, as currently structured, does not benefit all researchers equally — and that alternatives to the APC-dominated model are actively explored. In May, cOAlition S, together with Jisc and PLOS, launched the updated "How Equitable Is It?" tool — the refined version of an instrument originally introduced at the OASPA conference in September 2024. Developed by the Beyond Article-Based Charges Working Group, comprising librarians, library consortia, funders and publishers, the tool helps users assess the equity of scholarly communication models across seven criteria, from access to read and pricing transparency to open peer review.

The updated version incorporated community feedback gathered during the beta testing period. Early reception was encouraging: the tool recorded over 1,000 uses in its first month, with sustained engagement in the months that followed, and was praised by users for its utility in structuring equity discussions in scholarly communication — reflecting both the relevance of the tool and the appetite for practical frameworks.

In the same vein, cOAlition S monitored closely the National Institutes of Health (NIH) consultation on APC caps and engaged in discussions on payment structures centred on publishing services rather than journal prestige — issues that sit at the heart of the new strategy.

## ***Diamond Open Access: from concept to infrastructure***

**Alongside these policy developments, 2025 saw meaningful progress in building the infrastructure for community-led, no-fee publishing.** January marked the official launch of the European Diamond Capacity Hub (EDCH) in Madrid, offering six essential services to Diamond Open Access publishing providers across Europe, from quality assurance tools to a training platform. The EDCH has received initial financial support from ANR and CNRS. Working alongside regional capacity hubs in Latin America and Africa, it gives institutional form to the principle that high-quality scholarly publishing need not come at a cost to authors or readers.

Similar momentum was visible also at national level: in Sweden, Formas together

with Forte contributed to the launch of Diamond OA Sweden, a collaboration node promoting non-commercial, researcher-led publishing without author fees. The Swedish node coordinates support, resources and funding to increase the quality and dissemination of scientific journals and books, and collaborates with similar initiatives internationally through the Nordic Capacity Centre for Diamond Open Access and the European Diamond Capacity Hub. Formas and Forte also supported the launch of Openscience.se, a national portal bringing together essential information on the key actors, resources and documents central to Sweden's transition to an open science system.

At the global level, cOAlition S has been a collaborating and supporting partner of the Global Summits on Diamond Open Access — key gatherings of stakeholders from across the globe to advance equitable, sustainable and community-driven scholarly communication. Held in Toluca, Mexico (2023), Cape Town, South Africa (2024) and Bengaluru, India

(2026), these events bring together local, national and global partners to strengthen Diamond Open Access in Europe and worldwide. cOAlition S's engagement with this series reflects its commitment to the principle that building a more equitable publishing ecosystem requires broad collaboration, beyond the coalition's members.

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### ***Building the infrastructure for open science***

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**2025 saw significant progress in transitioning Open Research Europe (ORE) — the European Commission's no-author-fee publishing platform — into a service collectively supported by multiple funders and research institutions.** Collaborating parties worked to operationalise their common vision for the platform's next phase, signing agreements defining the governance, operations and financing modalities for the next five years. Nine cOAlition S member organisations — FWF, ANR, NWO, RCN, ARIS, Forte, Formas, FCT and SNSF — joined the European Commission and other partners in committing to fund and govern the new phase, with Science Europe facilitating the collaboration. Planned for launch in Autumn 2026, the platform's next phase will expand its publishing services beyond EU funding beneficiaries to researchers from the countries of participating funders, while continuing to support open science practices such as early work sharing and open peer review. The new service will operate on Open Journal Systems, an open infrastructure developed by the Public Knowledge Project and customised to serve ORE's workflow. Beyond ORE, 2025 also saw meaningful steps toward strengthening the open information infrastructure that underpins accountability in

research. Wellcome became a signatory to the Barcelona Declaration on Open Research Information and announced a grant to OpenAlex to support the development of the research information landscape. In a related move, Wellcome also shifted its publication reporting practices: rather than asking grantees to submit information on their funded original research publications directly to Wellcome, they are now directed to add this information to the openly available EuropePMC repository.

These developments connect to a broader community conversation regarding the importance of data infrastructure. The Barcelona Declaration working group on funding metadata — co-chaired by ANR, FWF and NWO — convened a community roundtable in October, surfacing a significant gap: only around 25% of publications in Crossref currently carry funding information, with considerable variation across publishers. The discussion brought together funders, publishers and infrastructure organisations to explore practical solutions aimed at improving metadata quality across the board, a step that reflects a shared recognition that monitoring and transparency are foundational to any credible open access system.

## *Open science on the European policy agenda*

**At the policy level, the European Commission issued its proposal for the 2028–2034 Multiannual Financial Framework**, proposing open science practices as a horizontal principle of the next Horizon Europe programme, including open access to peer-reviewed scientific publications and open access to research data following the principle ‘as open as possible, as closed as necessary’. Work also began on designing the

European Research Area (ERA) Act, a proposal expected before the end of 2026, with a public consultation launched to gather stakeholder input on measures to improve the free circulation of scientific knowledge through open science. Both developments reflect a growing European policy commitment to more sustainable and equitable open science — the same direction the cOAlition S strategy is designed to advance.

## *Shaping our next chapter*

**Against this backdrop of field-wide activity, cOAlition S undertook an intensive internal process to define its direction for 2026–2030.** The coalition channelled its energy into developing a new strategy, redesigning the governance model, and preparing the ground for new leadership. A Strategy Implementation Group and a Governance Task Force completed their work in the first half of the year, feeding into an iterative review process — involving extensive member consultation, stakeholder engagement and analysis of global trends — that ultimately enabled the consolidation and refinement of the strategy, the governance framework, and the associated budget. Throughout this transition period, the Executive Steering Group and the Experts Group played a central role in shaping and operationalising the post-2025 framework, including initiating a formal review of the Plan S principles with reinforced attention to equity and global inclusivity.

The year also brought significant leadership changes. Both Robert Kiley (Head of Strategy) and Johan Rooryck (Executive Director)

concluded tenures that left a lasting mark on the coalition — broadening its membership, shaping its programmes, and establishing it as a leading voice in the global open access landscape. The work they leave behind is the foundation on which the next phase will be built.

In November 2025, cOAlition S published the 2026–2030 Strategy, reaffirming full and immediate open access as core objective while expanding the vision to encompass the rapid, open, transparent and equitable sharing of trustworthy scientific knowledge. Organised around three strategic priorities — strengthening the foundations for full and equitable open access, supporting digital infrastructure, and exploring financially sustainable and equitable publishing systems — the strategy reflects both the achievements of the coalition's first seven years and the challenges that the developments above make visible. In December, calls were launched for a new Director and a host secretariat, with a submission deadline of 31 January 2026.

## THE COALITION S STRATEGY 2026–2030



Launched in November 2025, the cOAlition S Strategy 2026–2030 marks a new phase in the coalition's work — building on seven years of progress while expanding its ambition.

The strategy is guided by a refreshed shared vision: **a scholarly communication system that enables rapid, open, transparent, and equitable sharing of trustworthy scientific knowledge**. It recognises that while the shift toward full and immediate open access has become global, the rise of Article Processing Charges has created new inequities, and rapid advances in artificial intelligence present both opportunities and challenges that require a collective response.

Work will be organised around three interconnected strategic priorities:

- 1. Strengthening the foundations for full, immediate, sustainable and equitable open access** — reviewing and updating the Plan S principles, enhancing focus on equitable models including Diamond OA, Publish-Review-Curate and preprints, deepening strategic partnerships, and amplifying the coalition's collective voice.
- 2. Supporting digital infrastructures that enable open access** — advancing funder support for publishing infrastructures that deliver immediate, free and sustainable access; and developing a shared understanding of AI in the context of open access and copyright.
- 3. Exploring financially sustainable and equitable publishing systems and monitoring** — investigating new models for funding scholarly communication, and developing monitoring mechanisms that can visualise the results and impact of open access policies across the membership.

Implementation unfolds in two phases: an initial two-year period (2026–2027) focused on the actions above, followed by a three-year period (2028–2030) shaped by lessons learned.



cOAlition S Strategy for 2026-2030

[www.coalition-s.org/coalitions-strategy-2026-2030](http://www.coalition-s.org/coalitions-strategy-2026-2030)



# Plan S

Making full & immediate  
Open Access a reality



**cOAlition S**

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**Strategy  
2026-2030**

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**November 2025**

# **TOOLS & SERVICES**



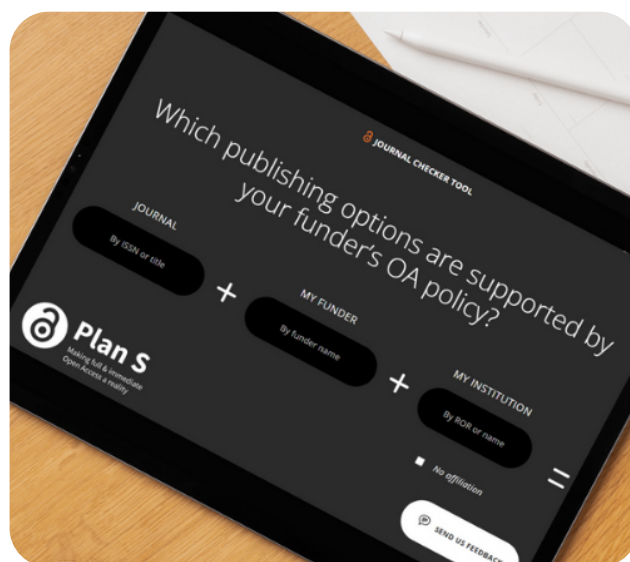
## JOURNAL CHECKER TOOL

The Journal Checker Tool (JCT) continues to be a practical resource for researchers navigating open access compliance. The tool draws on a database of more than 50,000 journal titles and integrates data from DOAJ, Crossref, the Research Organisation Registry, the ESAC Registry and OA.Works to help authors funded by cOAlition S organisations identify compliant publishing routes. Since its launch in January 2021, the JCT has recorded over 1.5 million searches, with more than 3,000 new users each month. Primary access has consistently come from the United Kingdom, the United States and Poland.

In early 2025, cOAlition S launched a user feedback survey to better understand how the tool supports researchers and to inform future improvements. The survey, available in English and French, drew responses from researchers, librarians and other members of the research community. Findings will inform ongoing development of the tool.



<https://journalcheckertool.org>



## JOURNAL COMPARISON SERVICE

After three years of operation, cOAlition S discontinued the Journal Comparison Service (JCS), effective 30 April 2025. Launched in September 2022 to promote transparency in open access publishing fees, the service ultimately reached limited journal coverage and low user adoption — falling short of the scale needed to fulfil its purpose. cOAlition S remains committed to the principles that motivated the JCS and will continue to pursue transparency and equity in open access fees through other means. The code developed for the service has been made publicly available for reuse.

# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW



## FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

cOAlition S is an informal alliance of organisations and institutions that fund and/or perform research activities, and that have publicly expressed their intention to work together towards the implementation of the principles of Plan S. The individual organisations remain fully responsible for implementing their Plan S-aligned Open Access policies. The cOAlition S Office was set up in January 2020 and hosted by the European Science Foundation (ESF) in Strasbourg (2020-2025) to support the coalition's work.

The Office staff and activities are funded by cOAlition S funders' contributions and grants. Human resources represented 2 FTE in 2025, including staff and consultancy. Software development covered the costs of the Journal Checker Tool and the Journal Comparison Service (that was sunsetted in early 2025). Travel and event expenses covered notably the Plan S promotional activities.

ACTIVITY / SPENDING (EUR)	2025
Human resources & related	300 052
Software development	200 437
Communication	2 433
Commissioned studies	0
Legal & administrative	37 320
Travel	4 925
<b>Total</b>	<b>545 167</b>

*Table 1: Budget for supporting the cOAlition S Office*

# **FUTURE OUTLOOK**



## **PLANS FOR 2026 & THE FIRST IMPLEMENTATION PHASE**

With the strategy adopted and the new governance structure in place, 2026 marks the beginning of a focused two-year implementation phase for cOAlition S. The work of this first year centres on establishing the conditions for effective collective action — building the internal mechanisms, updating the foundational principles, and deepening the partnerships that will carry the strategy forward.

The immediate priority is a thorough review of the Plan S principles — engaging all member organisations actively through a series of meetings — to ensure they reflect current and emerging publishing models, with reinforced attention to equity and global inclusivity.

Looking toward 2027, preparatory work will begin on the second strategic priority — supporting digital infrastructures that enable open access — including an initial exploration of how artificial intelligence intersects with open access, copyright and data reuse practices.

Two appointments mark a further step into this implementation phase. cOAlition S has appointed Curt Rice as its new Director, bringing more than three decades of experience in Norwegian and international higher education and a long-standing commitment to open science and research policy. The host secretariat role passes from the European Science Foundation — which supported the coalition since 2020 — to OPERAS, a research infrastructure for open scholarly communication with strong commitment to the values that underpin the mission of cOAlition S.

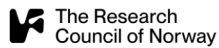
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# ORGANISATIONS ENDORSING PLAN S AND WORKING JOINTLY ON ITS IMPLEMENTATION

## SUPPORTED BY



## NATIONAL FUNDERS



## CHARITABLE AND INTERNATIONAL FUNDERS & RESEARCH ORGANISATIONS



## EUROPEAN FUNDER







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