



cOAlition S:

Making full and immediate Open Access a reality

World Health Organization and TDR Join cOAlition S to Support Free and Immediate Access to Health Research:

(Brussels, 29 August 2019) Today the World Health Organization (WHO) announces it is the first of the United Nations agencies to join the growing coalition of research funders and charitable foundations who implement Plan S. This commitment will ensure that all WHO supported health research will be free to read online on the day it is published.

TDR, the Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases, a global programme of scientific collaboration that helps facilitate, support, and influence efforts to combat diseases of poverty will also join cOAlition S alongside WHO. TDR is hosted at WHO, and is sponsored by the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank, and WHO.

“WHO champions the right of everybody to access quality health care services, and our support for Open Access to the health research that underpins that care goes hand-in-hand with that commitment,” said WHO Chief Scientist Dr Soumya Swaminathan. “By joining this coalition, we believe we can accelerate progress towards universal free access to health research – an ambition that supports our current strategy of one billion more people benefiting from universal health coverage over the next five years.”

WHO has a long history of making health information and evidence widely accessible. One of the first milestones on their journey was the Hinari Access to Research for Health Programme, which was set up by WHO in 2002 and today provides access to 15,000 medical journals for health workers and researchers in 120 countries. In 2014, WHO introduced its [policy](#) on Open Access to ensure that journal articles and book chapters authored or co-authored by WHO staff members or produced by researchers funded by WHO were freely available in [Europe PubMed Central](#). This policy was extended in 2016 to ensure all WHO publications are freely available in the WHO Institutional Repository for Information Sharing ([IRIS](#)).

Today, there is a growing number of Open Access publishing platforms where authors can ensure their works are widely available. TDR, one of the research programmes within the WHO’s new Science Division, has developed one such Open Access publishing platform: [TDR Gateway](#) provides greater opportunities to TDR-supported researchers to publish the results of their work and to make them available to the public for free.

cOAlition S

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“There are numerous challenges for researchers, and sadly, one of these is limited access to current science literature. Thanks to the Plan S initiative, this will soon no longer remain a barrier to good research,” said Charles Mgone, Vice Chancellor of Hubert Kairuki Memorial University in Tanzania and Chair of the TDR Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee. “I strongly support the position of WHO and TDR in joining cOAlition S and feel this is another major step forward in achieving universal access to health information.”

“We are delighted the World Health Organization is joining cOAlition S, marking an important day for health research,” said Jeremy Farrar, Director of Wellcome. “In joining the partnership, the WHO’s global reach will play a vital role in supporting researchers and institutions in member states in making their research fully Open Access so that it is freely and immediately available to all. Wellcome is committed to working towards a fully Open Access world when no research is behind a paywall.”

Notes to Editors

Plan S is an initiative for making full and immediate Open Access a reality that was launched in September 2018. The plan is supported by cOAlition S, an international consortium of research funders. Plan S requires that all scholarly publications describing the results from research funded by public or private grants provided by national, regional, and international research councils and funding bodies, must be published in Open Access Journals, on Open Access Platforms, or made immediately available through Open Access Repositories without embargo.

For more information:

- cOAlition S: <https://www.coalition-s.org/>
- Participating funders: <https://www.coalition-s.org/funders/>
- WHO statement: <https://www.who.int/news-room/detail/29-08-2019-who-joins-coalition-for-free-digital-access-to-health-research>
- WHO policy on Open Access: <https://www.who.int/publishing/openaccess/en/>
- TDR statement: <https://www.who.int/tdr/news/2019/WHO-TDR-join-coalition-free-digital-access/en/>
- TDR Gateway: <https://www.who.int/tdr/publications/tdr-gateway/en/>

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