

Diversity, sustainability and quality must be the hallmarks of academic publishing in Europe

The Guild welcomes the Council's promotion of diversity in academic publishing in Europe and its calls for increased transparency on the contractual arrangements with publishers and the publication costs. We urge the EU member states to further support the development of sustainable and quality alternatives to Open Access (OA) based on the payment of article processing charges. Acknowledging also the role of research organisations in the uptake of Diamond OA, one of these alternatives, in Europe, The Guild supports the Action Plan for Diamond Open Access.

In June 2022, the Competitiveness Council will be invited to adopt conclusions on research assessment and the implementation of Open Science policies. The ambition is to accelerate the implementation and impact of Open Science policies and practices across Europe by reforming research assessment, strengthening capacities for academic publishing and scholarly communications of all research outputs, and promoting multilingualism where appropriate. The Guild welcomes the momentum that these conclusions could create to strengthen research quality, and to increase the scientific, social, economic and cultural impacts of research.

The EU member states must ensure that the first and foremost objective of academic publishing and publishers remains the dissemination of quality research outputs. Our [position paper on Open Access and the implementation of Plan S](#) already highlighted that the recognition of the central work of researchers as knowledge producers, peer reviewers and editors must underpin the development of academic publishing.

Research excellence requires the free flow of knowledge. The Guild highlights nevertheless that some Open Access strategies and models increase the financial burden on research institutions. Open Access based on Article Processing Charges (APC) exacerbates the unsustainable situation of journal spending in university libraries and creates unequal access to knowledge across institutions and researchers. The Guild welcomes the EU member states' recognition of the costs of Open Access publishing. We must avoid situations where researchers choose a journal or platform to publish their research outputs based on the financial capacities of their research organisations rather than on the quality of these publication venues. Greater transparency on the (Open Access) publication costs and fair and transparent contractual arrangements with publishers are crucial for monitoring the proper use of public research funding.

It is also important to develop alternative and sustainable non-APC OA models. Therefore, The Guild encourages the EU member states to support the development and uptake of Diamond Open Access journals and platforms. This OA model consists often of community-driven and academic-led and owned publishing initiatives. Unlike other models of OA, Diamond OA journals and platforms do not charge any fees to either the authors or readers, hence their potential for better empowering

researchers to disseminate their research outputs, ensuring bibliodiversity and vital academic publishing, and containing the publication expenditures of research organisations.

The Guild recognises the need to support the development of Diamond OA. It is crucial that the journals and platforms following this model have rigorous quality assurance mechanisms in place requiring that published research outputs meet quality standards. Because of their financial models, diamond OA journals and platforms also need public support and processes that ensure the efficiency of their operations and their long-term sustainability. The Guild urges the EU member states to provide explicit support to Diamond OA for its contribution to bibliodiversity and the vitality of academic publishing.

Because we recognize that research actors themselves are well placed to address some obstacles hindering the uptake of Diamond Open Access in Europe, we endorse the [Action Plan for Diamond Open Access](#) developed by Science Europe, cOAlition S, OPERAS and the French National Research Agency (ANR). The Action Plan opens a necessary dialogue on the alignment and development of common resources to increase efficiency, quality standards, capacity building and sustainability of Diamond OA journals and platforms without undermining their diversity.