

SPECIFICATIONS FOR PROPOSALS

- The specifications below are intended to cover the background, objectives, areas of enquiry and the desired outputs for the Scenario & Modelling Study on Scholarly Read & Publish Agreements (hereafter 'the Study').

Background

- A “read and publish” agreement is an agreement between a consortium and a scholarly publisher, typically a journal publisher, whereby the consortium members gain reading access to a publisher’s journal collection and can publish their papers in Open Access (OA) with the publisher in the framework of a single contract.¹ Pioneered by Springer Nature, these agreements are becoming increasingly common as they address a range of drawbacks in other models of publisher-based (“gold”) OA. The benefits of “read and publish” deals are said to be their administrative efficiency and convenience for universities (and publishers), their potential to act as a transition vehicle towards full OA, and their lower absolute cost compared with some other models. However, some have argued that these benefits may be outweighed by risks, including that of deals that risk ossifying the structure of the current journals market, stifling innovation by locking up even more money in big deals, locking out pure OA publishers, and smaller (e.g. society) publishers, reducing customer price sensitivity still further, and impinging on academic freedom where academics may be encouraged to publish in some journals rather than others. At present, many focus on the benefits while paying less attention to the possible risks.
- The announcement of Plan S in September 2018² adds to the already growing momentum amongst European university consortia to pursue Read and Publish (R&P) agreements as a mechanism to bring about a swift transition to open access.
- However, beyond a general assumption that there is enough money in the current system³ to support the transition to Open Access, there has been no systematic scientific review of the features of a market based on such R&P agreements should they become ubiquitous.

Objectives

- The aim of the Study will be to create a set of scenarios that describe how the scholarly publication system may be affected if R&P agreements become widespread. These scenarios will be used to inform the ongoing discussion about such agreements, and more generally on the most desirable features of agreements between university consortia and/or funders and publishers that offer the best value for money, avoid unintended consequences and provide the least risk with respect to academic research and to the taxpayer.

¹ “Publish and read” is sometimes also used to describe this type of agreement. Whether those are similar or distinct type should be further discussed as part of the Study.

² <https://www.coalition-s.org/>

³ See for instance Schimmer, R., Geschuhn, K. K., & Vogler, A. (2015). Disrupting the subscription journals’ business model for the necessary large-scale transformation to open access. doi:10.17617/1.3

Governance

- The Study will be overseen by an international group of sponsors including the EUA, national rectors' conferences, funders and negotiating consortia. This group will also fund the Study.
- A Steering Committee (SC) will oversee the study. SC members will come from the funders of the study who appoint a delegate to represent them. The SC may also invite outside observers as required and will hold at least three (launch, mid-term, final) meetings with the contracted party to steer the Study. These meetings will be hosted by EUA in Geneva (CH) and/or Brussels (BE).
- EUA will act as the contracting body for the Study, coordinating funding and award of the contract, coordinating the SC and being responsible for the dissemination of outputs.
- The Steering Committee may undertake a process of competitive dialogue to refine proposals.

Budget

- The total available budget for the Study is €135,000.
- Payments will be linked to milestones which will be agreed with the funder.

Approach and Areas of Enquiry

- The Study may use scientific research methods such as desk research, expert interviews, professional facilitation and expert briefings to enable experts from the academic, library, university, research funder, and other relevant public service providers to pool their expertise for the purpose of the project.
- Whatever methods are used will need to account for, and where possible draw strength from, differences in the research landscape in different countries and regions, between disciplines, and between funders, universities and publishers with different missions, sizes, etc. Scientific methods for the Study could include:
 - Market analysis and economic modelling
 - A combination of Delphi and scenario planning techniques
- Below is an indicative, non-exclusive list of the issues, challenges and questions the Study would be expected to cover:
 - a. A discussion of possible features of R&P agreements and similarities/differences between R&P agreements, 'Publish and Read' agreements, 'offsetting' agreements and 'transformative' agreements. This may take into account the ESAC principles, guidelines and best practices for transformative agreements.⁴
 - b. Short, medium- and long-term cost implications of a R&P-based market.

⁴ <http://esac-initiative.org/guidelines/>

- c. Implications for the publishing industry including likelihood of consolidation, implications for small, learned society and pure gold publishers, and transparency.
- d. Longer term sustainability of an APC-based market and applicability of APCs as a sustainable business model across markets, publishers and subject areas.
- e. Implications for the distribution of publication costs within and across countries in an R&P environment.
- f. Implications of R&P agreements only become ubiquitous in some parts of the world.
- g. Implications for authors from the Global South.
- h. Implications for freedom to publish in preferred journals.
- i. Implications for arts, humanities and social sciences.
- j. Implications for innovation in research communication.
- k. Implications for service levels offered by publishers, including e.g. text and data mining, post-cancellation access rights, etc.
- l. Implications for transparency in the market, e.g. accountability for public funds, price-informed publication choices, etc.
- m. Implications for demand and costs for Open Access infrastructure such as repositories and archives.

Outputs

- It is intended that the outputs can be used by universities, negotiating consortia, funders and other interested parties to inform discussions and negotiations, also considering the possible impact and trajectories of Plan S. The Study should contribute in a way that benefits associated with R&P agreements are maximised and risks are understood and mitigated. Such modelling might also provide roadmaps/modelling which might be used to evaluate progress.
- The following outputs would be expected:
 - a. Economic market models illustrating the more likely trajectories for journals if “read and publish” deals become common, with dependencies and degrees of confidence in those models.
 - b. A PESTLE (Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal and Environmental factors) analysis relating to the journals market and the transition to OA including the impact of Plan S.
 - c. A set of at least four scenarios, based on economic modelling and stakeholder input, each of which is a plausible extrapolation from the current situation and underlying trends, but where each scenario is distinctive.
 - d. A validated SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats) analysis of each scenario.

- e. A set of recommendations on how to ensure that the objectives of R&P agreements are realised and the costs and risks of both identified in ways that enable them to be monitored, and minimised.
- The outputs and findings shall be delivered to EUA and the international group of funders in the form of a final report. The report shall be made available under a CC-BY licence. Milestones to monitor the progress of the study will be agreed with the funder.

Timetable

- It is expected that the study will take up to six to nine months to complete, starting in early 2019. Indicative timeline:
 - Announcement: 20 February 2019
 - Deadline for responses: 15 March 2019, 17.00 Brussels time
 - Evaluation of responses: 15-29 March 2019
 - Award of contract & project launch: April 2019
 - End of project: October 2019

Applying

- Responses to this call using the proposal form (Annex I) should be sent by e-mail to Lennart Stoy (Lennart.stoy@eua.eu) by **17.00 CET on Friday, 15 March 2019**.

Annex I: Proposal Form

Study on Scholarly Read and Publish Agreements

Proposal Form

1: Contact Information

- Please provide details for the main contact.
- If you are applying in partnership, please use this section to indicate who the contracting party would be. When answering the other questions, please specify which party will be responsible for which tasks.

Name of company:

Named contact:

Position:

Address:

e-mail:

Telephone:

Comments:

2: Approach, tasks and methods

- Provide an overview of the main approach and tasks you propose for the study. Please indicate the main methods and issues you intend to cover, based on the ones identified in the Specifications. Please identify any additional tasks which could be relevant for the objectives of the study.

3: Timeline

- Please describe a project timeline following the Specifications document, including milestones and deliverables.

4: Staff / people involved

- Provide an overview of the staff/persons involved in the Study and their skills and relevant experience.

5: Relevant experience and skills

- Please provide a summary of your skills and experience that demonstrate your ability to undertake the work described in the Specifications. Please give examples of relevant work you have conducted.

6: Costs

- Provide a full cost in EURO (including VAT, if applicable only) for the Study.
- Please explain the calculation of the full costs:
 - Working days estimated for the study and daily rates
 - Travel costs (note that the Specifications foresee three meetings with EUA and the Steering Committee)
 - Other costs

7: Conflict of interest

- Please state any potential conflict of interests of which the EUA and the Steering Committee should be aware.

8: Other comments

- Please state any other comments (if applicable).

Responses should be sent by e-mail to Lennart Stoy (Lennart.stoy@eua.eu) by 17.00 CET on Friday, 15 March 2019.