

UK Research and Innovation open access policy roundtable with the research sector– Meeting Summary

Background

On 9 September 2022, UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) invited colleagues from the research sector to a roundtable meeting to inform the implementation of its [Open Access Policy](#) requirements for longform publications. There were presentations from UKRI and Jisc followed by a discussion on practical implementation.

Summary of the discussion

Defining the scope

Participants noted that the policy applies where an author acknowledges UKRI funding. Participants discussed that there may be uncertainty when an author must acknowledge UKRI funding as the link between a grant and the publication may be tenuous.

Communicating the policy

Participants noted that there are different forums and communities through which the policy can be communicated to researchers and across research organisations. It was noted that targeted conversations with key groups and forums will be effective with the understanding that participants can cascade messages. Participants offered to share messages from targeted discussions librarians and research managers and noted that they may be able to make connections and speak directly to relevant communities, including those external to their organisation. Participants highlighted that a toolkit /guidance aimed at librarians and research managers will be helpful to cascade key messages.

Participants highlighted that the infrequency of longform outputs is a barrier to communication. Participants also noted that while the UKRI policy permits open access via deposit of an accepted manuscript, as book publication is proposal based, it is hard to define what an authors' accepted manuscript is. Participants also noted that as contracts are signed in advance of the content being written so there is an opportunity to inform researchers of open access options and choices in advance of the manuscript being produced, should the publisher be subsequently able to offer an open access option.

Funding

Participants welcomed that the ring-fenced fund for monographs is not linked to UKRI's open access block grant and that is separate from research award so an output can be funded where the research grant that it resulted from has lapsed. Participants noted UKRI endeavours to support different models that facilitate open access, for example diamond models and 'subscribe to open' models.

Participants highlighted that research organisations will need to think strategically about publishing monographs, however smaller institutions may not have university presses that they can utilise in a strategic way for subsidised open access publishing. Participants noted that not all book proposals result in a published output. As funds are usually required at the point a manuscript goes into production, if organisations seek funding for outputs at the time of proposal this may result in over-commitment for the UKRI ring-fenced fund and potential underspending subsequently.

On funding applications, participants discussed that there are resource challenges particularly in smaller organisations. UKRI will engage smaller organisations on its draft funding application. Participants queried about eligible costs and if researchers and their organisations could request funds to secure third-party materials, noting that absence of certain third-party material(s) could compromise the quality of a publication. UKRI will consider this issue.

Publishing practices

Participants discussed that predatory publishing is a key concern and that there is an existing community-led mechanism that may address some concerns. Participants encouraged Jisc to promote good practice in its engagement with publishers and to think innovatively in its engagement with publishers, for example by stressing benefits of open access, such as higher citations and wider readership.

Participants noted that the Open Book Collective undertakes due diligence on the publishers offering membership support programmes to libraries. Participants also noted the role of open access via the author's accepted manuscript could be normalised as a means to move away from book processing charges. It was noted that UKRI's policy is agnostic to route.

On technical standards in monograph publishing, it was noted that as there are no technical standards required for the policy as the development of these and adoption is in an early phase it was noted that should any requirements be introduced they will be done so with due consideration of the concerns of the sector.

Future research assessment

Participants noted that the UKRI policy does not extend to future research assessment exercises. The UK higher education funding bodies are developing the future exercise in consultation with the sector via the [Future Research Assessment Programme](#) (FRAP). UKRI has sought policy commonality with the sector, so if a publication complies with UKRI's requirement it will be compliant with any open access requirements resulting from the FRAP.

Annex 1: Agenda

1	11:00 – 11:10	Rachel Bruce	Welcome and introductions
2	11:10 – 11:25	Tahia Zaidi Graham Stone	Presentation: UKRI & Jisc implementation approach for monographs
3	11:25 – 12:00	Chaired by Rachel Bruce	Open discussion on practical implementation for monographs
4	12:00 – 12:05	Rachel Bruce	Next steps & close

Annex 2: Participants

UKRI Representatives

Rachel Bruce, Head of Open Research, UKRI Strategy (Chair)

Tahia Zaidi, UKRI Strategy

Callum Day, UKRI Strategy

Katherine Warren, UKRI – Arts and Humanities Research Council (ARHC)

Stakeholder Participants

Anna Grey, Edgehill University, Association of Research Managers and Administrators (ARMA)

Christie Walker, Royal College of Arts, ARMA

Valerie McCutcheon, University of Glasgow, ARMA

Janneke Adema, Coventry University, Community-led open publications infrastructure for monographs (COPIM)

Joe Deville, Lancaster University, COPIM

Graham Stone, Jisc

David Prosser, Research Libraries UK (RLUK)

Samuel Moore, University of Cambridge, RLUK

Steven Vidovic, University of Southampton, RLUK

Ann Rossiter, Society of College, National and University Libraries (SCONUL)