



IMarEST Input to Plan S Consultation

1. The Institute of Marine Engineering, Science and Technology (IMarEST) is the international professional body and learned society for all marine professionals. The IMarEST is the first Institute to bring together marine engineers, scientists and technologists into one international multi-disciplinary professional body.
2. The IMarEST currently has two peer reviewed journals published in partnership with Taylor and Francis; the Journal of Operational Oceanography (JOO) and the Journal of Marine Engineering & Technology (JMET). Both journals are hybrid journals funded jointly by subscriptions and through author fees (Gold OA). The Journal of Operational Oceanography additionally publishes an annual open access supplement the “State of the Ocean” funded by the European Commission.
3. The IMarEST is committed to disseminating its research and scholarly material as widely as possible. We see this as a fundamental part of our charitable purpose in advancing the understanding and practice of marine engineering, science and technology, and in support of our vision for “a world where marine resources and activities are sustained, managed and developed for the benefit of humanity”.
4. We believe that maximising the distribution of knowledge, by providing free, online access, is the most effective way to ensure that the research we bring together through our conferences in marine engineering, science and technology can be accessed, read and cited by others, which in turn will enrich understanding and accelerate progress. In support of this, the Institute has implemented an open access policy for all conference proceedings published using the open access digital repository [Zenodo](#). We do not recover any costs from authors.
5. Open access has always resonated strongly with the IMarEST vision of improving access, production, and use of research in developing countries and in aiding global collaboration, and helping support development goals. However, we also support the right of researchers in developing countries to be able to publish their research free of charge in our journals. At present this is only possible through the existing hybrid model. Additionally, we believe that researchers should have the academic freedom to publish in the journal of their choice- because the journal is well regarded in the field and because publication in that journal is important for a researcher’s career not because it fulfils a certain open access rule. In the field of marine science and engineering a prohibition on publishing in either subscription or hybrid journals may result in a majority being off-limits to authors- limiting choice and allowing only a small number to survive. We support the democratic nature of the existing model where researchers are not limited in their routes to publication due to funding requirements. Finally, the nature of marine research is that it is undertaken at an international level – the lack of ability to publish in hybrid journals may therefore stifle research collaboration with different participants being limited by different requirements of their funders.

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6. Like most Learned Societies we are a not-for-profit who rely on a diversity of income to underpin our charitable purposes. Income received through subscriptions and OA fees to the JOO and JMET are part of this diversified income. Additionally, like most small Learned Societies the IMarEST is dependent on a publishing partnership to enable the production of peer reviewed proceedings to the quality required by authors and readers equally. The internally resources and infrastructure required are simply unaffordable and un-scalable for small societies with limited resources. The resources and infrastructure of the publishing partner are the key enablers but, as a commercial publisher, they have to be assured of the commercial case for publishing. If they cannot be assured then it is likely we would not be in a financial positon to continue with publication without placing a significant financial burden on our members and authors. Additionally, like many other Learned Societies we are tied into contracts with our publisher that may not be able to be easily amended with the timescales currently suggested for transformation.
7. The IMarEST welcome the action taken by Wellcome, UKRI, and ALPSA to look at the various business models available to learned society and would be happy to attend any stakeholder meeting to discuss these options and the viability of options and we look forward to learning what support might be available to help learned societies such as ourselves transition to a financially sustainable, Plan S-compliant, publishing model.

Dr Bev Mackenzie
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IMarEST
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