

# *Eighteenth-Century Ireland Society*

## *Cumann Éire san Ochtú Céad Déag*

The Eighteenth-Century Ireland Society: An Cumman Éire san Ochtú Céad Déag (ECIS) is pleased to participate in the call for feedback on Plan S, and its requirement that after 1 January 2020 outputs resulting from research funded by public grants must be published in compliant Open Access journals or on compliant Open Access Platforms. ECIS publishes an annual journal, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland: Iris an dá chultúr*. For reasons stated below, we cannot envisage *Eighteenth-Century Ireland* becoming a compliant Open Access journal by 2020, or within the three-year transition period entailed in Plan S. Currently, our Journal makes available significant research at extremely modest cost to the end user. We are concerned that in the immediate term the implementation of Plan S will weaken our Journal, and that a possible and unintended consequence of the full implementation of Plan S may be the Journal's cessation. We believe that the funding model and general resourcing of *Eighteenth-Century Ireland* is similar to that of many other journals in the humanities, and that therefore our case and possible fate under Plan S is likely to be replicated widely across the sector of humanities publication.

The Eighteenth-Century Ireland Society is open to all and includes members of the public as well as academics. The annual journal of the society is interdisciplinary. It publishes articles on history, literature, and art history, and in both of the national languages, Irish and English. *Eighteenth-Century Ireland* is made available to members as part of their annual subscription: currently, the ordinary rate is €35 ordinary; the student/retired rate is €20. There is also a €45 library/institutional rate. While the affiliations of contributors to the Journal vary from year to year, roughly two-thirds come from Ireland and the UK, including Northern Ireland, and one third from elsewhere, mainly North America and Australia. All of the editorial work on the journal is carried out voluntarily by academics, usually based in Irish, but occasionally in UK, universities.

The availability of appropriate Open Access infrastructure to the Society by 2020 is highly uncertain; even if it were to be available, the potential of *Eighteenth-Century Ireland* to become an Open Access compliant journal is extremely limited.

Plan S envisages a system in which 'Open Access publication fees are covered by the Funders or universities'. Only a small proportion of research published in *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, perhaps 10%, comes from publically funded research grants. This might rise to 20% if the Irish Research Council is considered a 'funder' in the context of Plan S implementation (The Council's position on Plan S is not clear at time of writing). It is difficult to see how publication fees would be accessed

for the remaining c.80% of the research the Journal publishes. Colleagues from outside the EU do not have access to publication fees of the kind on which Plan S relies. Even within the EU, early career researchers, researchers on short-term contracts, and retired members of staff are very unlikely to have access to university funds to pay for publication on Open Access.

Open Access publication fees for up to 20% of material published by the Journal would not substitute for the society membership fees that currently pay publication costs. As a result, the Journal would become 'non compliant'. In the short-term, then, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland* would be weakened by the necessity for colleagues funded by public grants to place their work elsewhere.

As noted above, a substantial proportion of research published in *Eighteenth-Century Ireland* is self-funded: either carried out by university staff whose research is indirectly supported by their institutions; or, by early career and retired staff without access to university funds. Plan S calls for universities to 'align their policies'. A possible outcome of such alignment could be a requirement that all staff, as they are 'funded' through their university positions, publish in Open Access journals. If this were to be the case, and without a clear mechanism, yet to be developed, for direct funding of publication costs it is likely *Eighteenth-Century Ireland* would be obliged to cease publication altogether and a highly cost-effective and publically beneficial channel for the dissemination of important research would be lost.

We would urge that the complexities of journal publication in the humanities be more explicitly acknowledged and accommodated in Plan S and that the timeline of implementation be extended so as to allow this consideration to take place.

On behalf of The Eighteenth-Century Ireland Society: An Cumman Éire san Ochtú Céad Déag,

Aileen Douglas, President