

ARVO Feedback on Implementation Guidance of Plan S

Background

The Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO), a society comprised of international eye and vision researchers, publishes three journals in house. There are currently three people on the journal office staff; production and online hosting work is done by outside vendors. Only the oldest journal, first published in 1962, ever used the subscription business model. The second journal, launched in 2001, has always been free to read, as has the third, launched in 2012. All three journals transitioned to full open access in 2016 (i.e., they are not hybrid journals). Since January 2016, authors retain copyright of their articles and are given the choice of publishing under the CC BY-NC-ND or CC BY licenses. Although the journals are open access, they are not Plan S compliant.

As we consider whether or not we can meet the requirements of Plan S, we appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback and ask for clarification on some points of the implementation guide.

Questions

General

To be compliant, does all content on the journal websites need to meet the Plan S requirements or just the content published starting in 2020? For the oldest of our journals, decades of content is available as PDFs, scans of the original print copies. Some of the requirements, such as the fourth bullet under 9.2, would be difficult to achieve for the back content.

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9.1

bullet 4: “The journal/platform must have a solid system in place for review according to the standards within the relevant discipline, and according to the standards of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE). Details on this must be openly available through the website.”

Manuscripts submitted to the ARVO journals go through rigorous peer review, and ARVO is a member of COPE. The peer review process is described on the journal websites. Is that sufficient?

bullet 5: “The journal/platform must provide automatic APC waivers for authors from low-income countries and discounts for authors from middle-income countries.”

How are “low-income” and “middle-income” defined, and what level of “discount” is proposed?

9.2

bullet 1: “Transparent costing and pricing: information on the publishing costs and on any other factors impacting the publication fees (for example cross subsidising) must be openly available on the journal website/publishing platform. This must include details on direct costs, indirect costs and potential surplus.”

Examples would be useful so that we know what exactly is required before we seek approval from the ARVO Board to post financial information.

bullet 5: "Linking to underlying data, code, and so on available in external repositories."

Does this mean the article metadata or the data the authors used? Would any repository be acceptable?

bullet 6: "High quality article level metadata – including cited references – in standard interoperable format, under a CC0 public domain dedication. Metadata must include complete and reliable information on funding provided by cOAlition S funders."

We are unsure what this means or how to assign the CC0 designation to metadata. Is there a journal that currently does this so that we can see what it looks like?