

Coalition – S: Response by the European Academy of Neurology

Although the European Academy of Neurology (EAN) recognizes that Coalition S is an important initiative to support open access as a major step towards universality of science, the EAN is currently unable to give its full support to the implementation of Plan S. There are several issues that require further clarification and consideration. The core of the scientific publishing mission is to give rapid access to important and cutting-edge research findings in an unbiased manner including financial interest or financial restrictions. This includes assurance of high quality and independent evaluation of scientific results and conclusions, whilst avoiding financial or economic inequities. We require actions to guarantee that open access publication will not endanger these aspects, which are of importance for evidence based patient care. EAN requests that paying for open access publication will have no impact on the evaluation of the quality of scientific research and acceptance of scientific articles for publication."

Some issues need to be addressed: To date, promotion of researchers or academic positions relies, at least in part, on the Impact Factor (IF) of scientific journals. Requiring publication mainly in open access journals may penalize those young talents until institutional policies and selection processes are changed and other measures of scientific excellence considered. Financial differences within and across countries and between research programs may cause inequalities between researchers having to pay the same amount of publications fees to open access journals. This could be unfair to people with equal merit but discrepancies in resources. Another issue is the risk of inappropriate re-use of scientific material under a Creative Commons license.

Therefore, EAN cannot support the Plan S initiative in the present form, while being open to progress in this field.