

Joint COAR-UNESCO Statement on Open Access

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In order to reassert their commitment to advance the Open Access agenda within the broader context of sustainable development through optimal resource sharing, the Knowledge Societies Division, Communication and Information Sector (KSD/CI) of UNESCO and the Confederation of Open Access Repositories (COAR) have agreed to release a joint statement on Open Access.

This [statement](#) highlights a number of issues that need to be addressed by organizations during the large-scale shift from subscription-based to Open access mode of publishing:

- **Consider institutions with smaller budgets and developing countries.** Authors will be unable to publish once limited funds have been exhausted. Such a system will need to support researchers who cannot pay APCs – to avoid further skewing a scholarly publishing system that is already biased against the research undertaken in certain disciplines and countries.
- **Avoid further concentration in the international publishing industry.** A flip to APCs will further consolidate the large-scale monopoly of the international publishing industry. In the current system, the five largest publishers publish over 50% of the research papers produced. A mere shift towards the pay-to-publish model will institutionalize the influence of these companies, and discourage new entrants and models other than APC models.
- **Explore ways to reduce costs.** Recent studies indicate that, at current APC costs, there would be a buffer of minimum 40% when subscriptions would be transferred to an open access model. New models should build in mechanisms that ensure cost reductions. Globally, we are already paying billions of Euros/Dollars per year on subscription access to journals. Simply shifting payments to support APCs may lead to higher systemic costs, curb innovation, and inhibit the scholarly community's ability to take advantage of new models and tools.

[UNESCO promotes Open Access \(OA\)](#), with particular emphasis on scientific information (journal articles, conference papers and datasets of various kinds) emanating from publicly funded research. Working with partners, UNESCO works to improve awareness about the benefits of OA among policy makers, researchers and knowledge managers. Through its [global network of Field Offices, Institutes and Centers](#), UNESCO facilitates the development and adoption of OA-enabling policies. In addition, UNESCO engages in global OA debates and cooperates with local, regional and global initiatives in support of OA.