

Independent review of the implementation of RCUK policy on Open Access Call for Evidence

Response from the British Pharmacological Society (BPS)

1. The British Pharmacological Society (BPS) welcomed the outcomes of the Finch Report and a move toward gold open access publishing. We are supportive of key points in the RCUK's open access policy with a preference for gold open access and a 12 month embargo period (when APC funds are unavailable) for the green route. All BPS journals offer a gold open access route.

Impact on Learned Societies

2. As a learned society with a significant publishing portfolio we are dependent on journal revenues to enable the Society to deliver its charitable aims. Our objective is to 'promote and advance pharmacology, including without limitation clinical pharmacology'. We achieve this objective by delivering: scientific meetings which are free or heavily discounted to our members, educational activities such as our Diploma in Advanced Pharmacology, research funding, travel bursaries, study grants and public engagement activities.
3. As RCUK has acknowledged it is very early in the implementation of this policy for this review. Accordingly, we have not seen a major impact over this initial 16 month period of implementation.
4. We were pleased to see that RCUK expected a full five years for the transition period; however, it will take considerable time to change our business model without significant impact on our ability to deliver our charitable aims. With the recent open access policy announcement from HEFCE (amongst other international funders) we expect a further increase in the rate of change.
5. Given this uncertainty for the future, the impact of open access policies on the Society has been increased focus on revenue generation from non-publishing sources, a more conservative approach to new projects and a need for review and continuing robustness of our reserves policy.

Impact on our journals

6. Authors publishing in our journals receive funding from a wide range of sources. Many papers in our journals originate from overseas, so implementation of open access policies internationally is of great importance to the Society. So far, most countries are lagging behind UK in this area.
7. Our key concern is that our journals continue to publish high quality pharmacology. Of our three journals, two operate hybrid publishing models – *British Journal of Pharmacology* (BJP) and *British Journal of Clinical Pharmacology* (BJCP) while the third *Pharmacology Research and Perspectives* (PR&P, jointly owned with international partners) is a fully open access journal.
8. Our hybrid journals have a long history and strong reputations in the field. PR&P aspires to the same high scientific standards of BJP and BJCP; however, as a new open access journal there is a need to build this reputation over time.
9. We are seeing year-on-year increases in gold open access papers in our hybrid journals; in 2013 3.7% of papers in BJCP were published open access and 3.4% of BJP papers. The reputation of these journals for high quality science is important to authors and we consider that, in the interests of author choice, enabling publishing in such hybrid journals is important. We consider the hybrid model important to support the sustainability of the Society and the commensurate effect on public benefit through the charitable activities mentioned above, and to enable an ordered transition to open access.
10. The APCs for our journals range from US\$2500 to US\$3000.

Licences and compliance

11. All BPS journals are published with Wiley and utilise the Wiley online licensing system allowing authors to select the appropriate licence for their article. RCUK-funded authors are only offered the CC-BY licence.
12. In considering all open access papers published in BJP and BJCP we are confident of ~90% compliance with the RCUK's mandate for publishing with a CC-BY licence. Currently, the data required to confirm whether any RCUK-funded papers have been published as subscription papers (where funding may have been accessible) is unavailable.
13. For those authors without funder mandates for CC-BY, it is interesting to see a greater preference for CC-BY-NC-ND. In volume 2 of PR&P ~70% of papers were published with a CC-BY-NC-ND licence. In both BJP and BJCP, where authors have a choice, we see a similar preference for this more restrictive open access licence. At this time the numbers are relatively low but we consider that author preference is an issue that RCUK may wish to take into consideration.
14. If a RCUK-funded author does not have the funds to pay for gold open access (or any author publishing in the subscription model) BPS' journals follow the policy of allowing self archiving of the accepted version of a paper in certain repositories following an embargo period of 12 months. It is currently not possible to obtain compliance figures for this potential green route.

About BPS

15. BPS is the primary UK learned society concerned with research into drugs and the way they work. Our members work in academia, industry, and the health services, and many are medically qualified. The Society covers the whole spectrum of pharmacology, including laboratory, clinical, toxicological and regulatory aspects.
16. Clinical pharmacology is the medical speciality dedicated to promoting safe and effective use of medicines for patient benefit. Clinical pharmacologists work as consultants in the NHS and many hold prominent positions in UK Universities.

Declaration of interests:

17. BPS wholly owns two journals – *British Journal of Pharmacology* and *British Journal of Clinical Pharmacology* which are hybrid journals and published by Wiley
18. BPS joint owns, with Wiley and the American Society of Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics (ASPET) *Pharmacology Research and Perspectives*, a fully open access journal.