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BELSPO Open Access Policy

Policy Foundations

In compliance with the Budapest Open Access Initiative¹;

in compliance with the Berlin Declaration, signed by Flanders, the Wallonia-Brussels Federation and the Federal Administration on January 18, 2008²;

in compliance with the European Commission's Recommendation of July 17, 2012 on access to and preservation of scientific information³;

in compliance with the Brussels Declaration on Open Access to Belgian publicly funded research, signed by the respective Science Policy Ministers of Flanders, the Wallonia-Brussels Federation and the Federal Administration on October 22, 2012⁴;

in compliance with the 2016 European Research Area (ERA) Roadmap⁵;

in compliance with the Government Agreement of October 11, 2014, which encourages digital diffusion and consultation;

in compliance with the Secretary of State for Science Policy's general policy document of October 19, 2017⁶;

in compliance with 2016-2019 BELSPO Administrative Agreement, which emphasises the execution of the Government Agreement⁷;

in compliance with the mission statement of the Federal Open Access Strategy Consultation Group, the purpose of which is to provide the Federal Administration with a clear policy for Open Access to publicly financed research;

and in consultation with the Interfederal Consultation Group CIS-CFS Open Science⁸;

... the Federal Science Policy Office institutes the following general Open Access (OA) policy and mandate for all of its organisations :

Policy Rationale

BELSPO is determined to make research results democratically available. As a public authority, it is committed to making society benefit from taxpayer funded activity. BELSPO is equally determined to support the sustainability and the development of scientific research as is stated by the International Council for Science.⁹ In order to achieve these goals, BELSPO pursues Fair Gold OA on one hand and requires Green OA on the other hand. Gold OA to scientific publications is publisher provided and Green OA consists of archiving digital copies of scientific publications in institutional or thematic repositories.

Green OA is not just about archiving research results. It is a complement to Gold OA when Gold OA does not rise to the purpose of dissemination and sustainability, either by not being available or by being too expensive. Compelling researchers to deposit their research publications in institutional repositories has proven effective and practical for both institutions and researchers as has been shown in several universities in Belgium and abroad. OA now not only boasts higher citation levels than traditional publication, but Green OA seems to be having a higher citation level than Gold OA.¹⁰ Moreover, ratings based on individual article citations are more valuable than journal based ratings. Green OA provides both researchers and institutions with visibility and excellent referencing with popular search engines such as Google Scholar. Indexing with Scopus, the reference citation and abstract portal, is guaranteed. Institutions moreover have a responsibility with regard to long term heritage conservation. State of the art sorting tools and the prospect of being able to produce up to date bibliographic lists at any time as well as the ability to publish post prints on line long before the publisher version is made available are considerable advantages. Increasingly, researchers and research institutions oppose overpriced journal subscriptions. Shifting business models to Article Processing Charges (APC)¹¹ for Gold OA might just pave the way to equally excessive pricing. Through the following mandate BELSPO therefore commits to achieving Green OA as a priority. See annexes for additional recommendations and BELSPO initiatives.

It should however be noted that the execution of this mandate will be gradual, as described by the annexed BELSPO Open Access Roadmap. Mandate application will initially be tolerant, negotiated and adapted to every individual project partner's specific needs and sensibilities. The mandate should therefore initially be considered as a target (See Annex II) rather than a set of strict regulations.

Open Access Mandate

Publications which emanate from research wholly or partially financed by BELSPO research programs or from research performed by the scientific staff as part of its assignment in federal science policy organisations will be made available in compliance with OA principles. The deposit of a copy of printed or on line publications in a (Green) institutional OA repository is compulsory (access to the content is optional). Journal provided (Gold) OA is strongly recommended if available, subject to the following conditions :

GOLD OPEN ACCESS

BELSPO will contribute to researcher APC requirements for publication in OA journals. These APC can be paid out of BELSPO research grants under the following conditions :

- Journals have to be listed in recognised online directories¹² that index high quality Open Access peer-reviewed journals.¹³
- In the case of books, collected volumes, proceedings and other academic publishing venues, basic technical information and peer review procedures have to be transparent on the website of the publishing venue.
- Journals must meet the Principles of Transparency and Best Practice in Scholarly Publishing adopted jointly by the Committee on Publication Ethics, the Directory of Open Access Journals, the Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association, and the World Association of Medical Editors on December 19, 2013.¹⁴
- The publisher must divulge the average APC paid for a specific journal to the funder.
- Maximum grant funds retrievable per article for full OA journals amount to 1300 €. ¹⁵ This amount can be adjusted per decision of the Federal Open Access Strategy Committee.
- Maximum grant funds retrievable for full OA monographs amount to 6000 €. ¹⁶ This amount can be adjusted per decision of the Federal Open Access Strategy Committee.
- No funds may be retrieved for hybrid journals¹⁷ unless the author can submit proof that 'double dipping' does not occur with any library under federal science policy administration.¹⁸ BELSPO will however support hybrid publishing of monographs.
- No funds may be retrieved for bundled APC deals at a fixed sum per timeframe.¹⁹
- Journals/publishers that have differential charges for Creative Commons (CC) licenses will not be eligible.²⁰
- In case a publication is co-funded with other research funders, fair sharing of publishing funding must be pursued where applicable.

GREEN OPEN ACCESS

PUBLICATIONS

Publications, or edited research results which are destined for dissemination, comprising articles (pre-prints, post-prints or publisher versions), books, book chapters, catalogues, conference proceedings, reports, bachelor, master and doctoral theses, reviews, working papers and lectures (See Implementation Note 1) will be deposited in an OA repository, such as BELSPO's central Orfeo repository²¹, on an ID/OA (immediate deposit – optional access) basis. (Green OA)²² : the deposit of the publication's reference, metadata²³ and full text is compulsory, even if true Open Access is not possible due to exceptional protection or embargoes as detailed below. Exceptional protection may be required for quality, strategic, security, commercial (patent-related) or privacy reasons approved

by the Orfeo Committee.²⁴ This will not prevent said deposits from being available in full text to the Orfeo administration staff at both BELSPO and implicated research institutions through intranet (with login and password) under the legal exception of public communication for teaching and scientific research.

If no protection or embargo applies, deposited publications will freely and irrevocably be made accessible to the public to be read, downloaded and printed, but also to be copied, distributed, searched, linked, crawled and mined and to make and distribute derivative works, in any digital medium for any responsible purpose, subject to proper attribution of authorship.

It is required that all said publications be deposited, either in BELSPO's central Orfeo institutional OA repository, in the author's research organisation's own institutional OA repository, or in the institutional OA repository of a co-funding research partner providing its content can be linked to Orfeo or harvested by Orfeo through the OAI-PMH protocol.

BELSPO final project reports will be deposited in Orfeo by BELSPO if no exceptional protection provisions apply. Such reports will have to consist of an introduction describing the scientific issue. The report's corpus will describe the methodology and sources, develop arguments and disclose evidence to substantiate the researchers hypothesis. The conclusion will provide a straight answer to the scientific issue put forward in the introduction.

PEER REVIEWED ARTICLES AND MONOGRAPHS

Scientific articles will be deposited together with their metadata within 3 months after acceptance for publication.²⁵ In order to make the full content of scientific articles publicly accessible, the depositing researcher will inquire whether the journal accepts OA to the article's publisher version, pre-print or post-print.²⁶ The researcher or organisations mandated to represent researchers will inform the journal that copyrights held by the Belgian State cannot be ceded completely and the Belgian State's rights to make the researcher's scientific article available in OA will be retained (See Implementation Note 2) notwithstanding applicable protection provisions and embargoes (see below). All articles will be published under the open license Creative Commons-Attribution CC BY or equivalent (See Implementation Note 3). The journal may however be granted an embargo on the access to the deposited article to allow for its commercial exploitation. Embargo periods of up to 6 months for scientific, technical and medical fields (STM) or up to 12 months for humanities, arts and social sciences (HASS) will be granted. Monographs will be published under the CC BY or CC BY-NC-SA licenses.²⁷ A monograph embargo duration will freely be negotiated with the journal. As soon as embargoes are expired, the researcher will complete the metadata in the repository without delay.

In Belgian contracts dating from before 1993, there are no legal obstacles to depositing digital copies of scientific articles in a repository and making them Open Access immediately. (See Implementation Note 4)

FURTHERING COMPLIANCE

In order to be taken into account for researchers' evaluations, career advancement, internal job applications or BELSPO research project funding, research results covered by this mandate and covered by this mandate only will have to be deposited (access to the content is optional) in the applicants' research organisation's institutional OA repository or in Orfeo. This mandate does not apply to other research output or services mentioned in the Ministerial Decree of 17 September 2012.²⁸ It is however recommended that the researchers' full bibliography, including research results not financed by BELSPO, be referenced and, if feasible, deposited in Orfeo in order to be able to

produce comprehensive and uniformised bibliographies. The date of deposit will be considered in assessing compliance with BELSPO OA policy. All referenced deposits will be taken into account, with or without full text accessibility.

Should conditions, independent from the author, prevent him or her from depositing research results in the above mentioned repositories, the evaluation committees will fall back on former evaluation practices.

In cases of noncompliance with the BELSPO APC, embargo, licence and copyright policies, concerned publications will not be taken into account. Exceptions may be granted by the Orfeo Committee.

On the other hand, Orfeo will gradually provide the depositing researcher with state of the art and permanently updated listing options, indicators and metrics, with increased visibility and referencing with popular search engines and with a professional, internationally recommended set of metadata describing his deposit. (See Annex IV-1.1.)

¹ <http://www.budapestopenaccessinitiative.org/read>

² <https://openaccess.mpg.de/Berlin-Declaration>

³ https://ec.europa.eu/research/science-society/document_library/pdf_06/recommendation-access-and-preservation-scientific-information_en.pdf

⁴ <https://openaccessbelgium.files.wordpress.com/2012/11/signedbrussels-declaration-on-open-access.pdf>

⁵ <https://www.belspo.be/belspo/coordination/doc/scienPol/20160428%20National%20ERA%20Roadmap%20VF.pdf>
(See p. 26)

⁶ In that document it was stated that the creation of the Orfeo federal Open Access repository allows for savings, more citations, visibility and impact, but also counters excessive journal demands. Furthermore having different institutions use a joint publication platform favours durability, excellence and diffusion and prevents redundant spending. (<http://www.lachambre.be/FLWB/PDF/54/2708/54K2708012.pdf>)

⁷ The Administrative Agreement calls for the implementation of an Institutional Open Access Repository for Scientific Institutions of all federal departments, for its transfer to the Royal Library where it will be merged with the Legal Depot. It furthermore calls for the drafting of a federal Open Access policy in consultation with internal, federal, intergovernmental and international stakeholders. (http://www.belspo.be/belspo/organisation/managagree_en.stm)

⁸ The Interfederal Consultation Group CIS-CFS Open Science consists of representatives of the Belgian Federal level, of the federated entities and of the Belgian advocacy group 'Open Access Belgium' (Specialists of the University libraries of UGent and ULg, Creative Commons, Electronic Information for Libraries and the EC's OA repository helpdesk). ([http://www.belspo.be/belspo/coordination/addgrp.asp?l=en&group=CFS-CIS Open Science](http://www.belspo.be/belspo/coordination/addgrp.asp?l=en&group=CFS-CIS%20Open%20Science))

⁹ "Business models for scientific publishing should be built for the benefit of the scientific enterprise" - International Council for Science (<http://docplayer.net/51643464-Open-access-to-scientific-data-and-literature-and-the-assessment-of-research-by-metrics.html>)

¹⁰ Éric Archambault, Didier Amyot, Philippe Deschamps, Aurore Nicol, Françoise Provencher, Lise Rebout & Guillaume Roberge. Proportion of Open Access Papers Published in Peer-Reviewed Journals at the European and World Levels—1996–2013. European Commission, 2014.

¹¹ Article Processing Charges (APC): 'Author pays' is the publishing model whereby the author, the author's institute, or the research-funding agency, pays a fee to the publisher to place the publication in immediate and complete OA. This is opposed to the 'user pays' model, which is applied in traditional scientific publishing.

¹² In 2015 these are : Directory of OAJournals/DOAJ (<http://doaj.org/>), Web of Science (<http://ip-science.thomsonreuters.com/mjl/>), Scopus or PubMed (<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/nlmcatalog/journals>)

¹³ In the case of an OA venue that has been founded very recently (in the last 12 months) and is therefore not yet registered in the DOAJ, it has to be clear from the journal's website that the DOAJ criteria are fulfilled.

¹⁴ <https://doaj.org/bestpractice>

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- ¹⁵ 1300 € is the median expense for APC in Austria, the Netherlands and the UK. See : Bo-Christer Björk and David Solomon, Developing an Effective Market for Open Access Article Processing Charges. Espoo, Finland and Haslett, Michigan, USA, 2014.
- ¹⁶ With regard to Open Access to monographs, see : A project exploring Open Access monograph publishing in the Netherlands : Final Report. OAPEN Foundation, The Hague, 2013.
- ¹⁷ A hybrid OA journal is a subscription journal in which some of the articles are OA.
- ¹⁸ Publishers practice 'double dipping' if they receive money twice: through subscriptions paid by libraries and APC paid by authors. Double dipping is too laborious to track.
- ¹⁹ This kind of APC 'subscription', brings down prices but it also binds earmarked APC funds to those deals, much to the detriment of smaller and innovative publishers. BELSPO will not support such deals.
- ²⁰ e.g. APCs for CC-BY licenses are higher than those for CC-BY-NC licenses.
- ²¹ The 'Open Repository for Federal Organisations' (Orfeo) (<https://orfeo.kbr.be>) is BELSPO's institutional OA infrastructure at the service of 13 research and administration institutions (BELSPO, SIST-DWTI, Belnet, Botanic Garden Meise, MRAC-KMMA, IRBSN-KBIN, MRAH-KMKG, AGR-ARA, KBR, IRM-KMI, IASB-BIRA, ORB-KSB). Eventually, it will serve institutions from other federal departments as well, hence the heading.
- ²² Should students be made to participate in BELSPO funded research projects by their dissertation director (promoter), their scientific publications should be deposited.
- ²³ Metadata will be Dublin Core compatible, consistent with the metadata description provided by the Orfeo manual.
- ²⁴ In case of doctoral theses the dissertation director (promoter) will be an ad hoc default member of the BELSPO Orfeo Committee.
- ²⁵ This will enable search engines to index the metadata and make the existence of the article known.
- ²⁶ The SHERPA-RoMEO website provides information about journal tolerance towards Green OA. This is the case two times out of three.
- ²⁷ Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike. This license lets others remix, tweak, and build upon your work non-commercially, as long as they credit you and license their new creations under the identical terms.
- ²⁸ For this purpose the only bibliography to be considered will be one drawn from Orfeo.