

Discussion Guide for
Roundtable Discussion on Open Access (in Africa)

Mar 31, 2020 04:00 PM - 6:00 PM Nairobi (via Zoom)

Consent for recording & sharing of data

This discussion will focus on the politics of Open Access publishing, paying particular attention to the potential effects a mandate like Plan S could have on the publishing socio-technical systems on the continent.

This discussion is being conducted over Zoom. With everyone's oral consent, I would like to record this session. **Are you okay for us to record? *[All agreed verbally]***

After this discussion, I would like to post the audio, and/or text transcript to an online ethnographic data repository called "Research Data Share".

Do I have your consent to have the audio recording published? *[All agreed verbally]*

Do I have your consent to have the transcript of the discussion published? *[All agreed verbally]*

Once published, you are invited to reuse the published data under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial license.

How did you first get involved in Open Access? What was your motivation for becoming involved in OA?

Do you mind sharing some of the key moments - highlights and low points - in your personal history of being involved with Open Access?

What do you (still) see as the promise/potential of Open Access?

On OA landscape on African continent:

What has characterized Open Access in your national/regional context?

Who have you found to be major players working on Open Access across the African continent?

What have you observed are their interests?

[Probing Qs]:

- *Is the focus on compliance with a particular model of Open Access or building out Open Access around African scholarly needs and resources?*
- *Is a primary concern about having Open Access for reading research materials or Open Access publishing to make one's research more accessible to others? Other concerns?*

Who do you think should be part of the OA conversation on the continent that isn't currently?

Why do you think that is?

What kinds of support are available for Open Access (from gov't, universities, development donors, others?)?

On Plan S:

Has Plan S come up as a topic of discussion amongst you and your peers at all? What are your/their understandings of it?

Plan S is a set of 10 principles and 1 target determined by Coalition S, which was launched in late 2018 by a group of national research funding organisations primarily in Europe. According to their website, Plan S was initiated to make "full and immediate Open Access to research publications a reality." Proponents of the plan say it signals commitment to implement the necessary measures to fulfill its main principle which is that, "with effect from 2021, all scholarly publications and the results from research funded by public or private grants provided by national, regional and international research councils and funding bodies, must be published in Open Access Journals, on Open Access Platforms, or made immediately available through Open Access Repositories without embargo." Critics argue that it has a narrow view of the social justice and development ethos behind Open Access and completely ignores those who do not work in prescribed institutional settings like universities.

Based on what you know of Plan S, do you have any thoughts on what the effects of the Plan S model of Open Access might have on your everyday work? Do you expect it to influence where and how you and your colleagues publish? How might you see this impacting academic freedom on the continent or the voices of African researchers in scholarly debates?