



European Research Council
Scientific Council

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**Statement of the ERC Scientific Council on the Berlin
"Expression of Interest in the Large-scale Implementation of Open Access to Scholarly
Journals"**

From its inception in 2006, the European Research Council has strongly supported the move towards open science, including open access to scientific publications. Throughout the years we, the ERC Scientific Council, have urged our grantees to make use of open access publication policies whenever possible, and worked with various stakeholders to enlarge the possibilities for scientists everywhere to provide open access to the published output of their research.

Given this perspective, the ERC strongly endorses the policy that informs the Expression of Interest. Since ERC resources are not used directly to fund subscription costs, we are not in a position to subscribe to the pledge formulated in the document. However, via its own policies, the ERC aims to contribute to the goals set out in the Expression of Interest.

The ERC views the specific target of the Expression of Interest, viz., changing the dominant business model of existing, commercially published scientific journals, as part of a larger and more diverse set of challenges.

In particular, the ERC sees an important role for communities of researchers, who not only contribute to commercially published journals, but also increasingly play a leading role in initiatives to establish new forms of publication, some outside the commercial space. This is an important complementary way of realising the general goals of open access to scientific publications. In general, we consider it important not to equate 'open access' with the 'author pays' model and to remain open to alternative approaches, provided they adhere to high-quality standards.

Also, the ERC attaches much value to the extension of its open access policy to all forms of scientific publications. Whilst the journal article is the most important form of publication in many scientific disciplines, in many others monographs, conference proceedings, collections of papers, and other forms of publication also play an important, in some cases even the most important, role. The ERC Scientific Council considers that these forms of publication should be integrated in an overall policy.

Furthermore, the ERC is concerned that for some scientific communities the change from the subscription model to the open access model may turn out to be less advantageous, as in some cases it may result in higher charges that these communities cannot afford. One of the goals of the drive to open access must be to include also those scientists who have to work with limited budgets. Special care should be taken not to exclude them.

The ERC looks forward to working with all those supporting the Expression of Interest to realise the goals set out there in a way that meets these and other challenges.

– [*"Expression of Interest in the Large-scale Implementation of Open Access to Scholarly Journals"*](#)