


# Plan S: China, petitions, events & a GDCh statement

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Plan S, the plan initiated by a coalition of European funders (cOAlition S) and supported by the European Commission to encourage a rapid transition to open access publishing continues to make waves within the scientific community.

In an unexpected move, Chinese officials have said that China also intends to make publicly funded research open access on publication. They also pledged support for Plan S although what this actually means in terms of adopting all the Plan S policies remains unclear, [reports Nature](#).

At the same time, a [petition in favour of Plan S](#) has also been circulating, and has collected a similar amount of signatures as the recent [petition against the plan](#).

On 29 November, EuChemS attended the Frontiers and SwissCore event “Enabling the Open Science Modus Operandi in Europe” which sought to demonstrate the possibilities and positives of open access publishing, as well as of discussing Plan S in more detail. Whilst most panellists were strongly supportive of Plan S, a more nuanced view was expressed by ULB Professor in Microeconomics Alexis Walckiers who stressed the importance of recognising significant differences between disciplines as well as the differences between for-profit and not-for-profit publishing methods. Stephan Kuster, Secretary General of Science Europe, one of the major Plan S designers, recognised that there had been a lack of debate with stakeholders, including learned societies.

Speakers also addressed whether the policy debate would effectively lead to a changing research culture, a conversation which rapidly led to a more general discussion on the role of research impact factors, and how to attain the principles of the DORA declaration. Gareth O’Neill, President of the European Council of Doctoral Candidates and Junior researchers (Eurodoc) labelled Open Science a paradigm, and one in which scientists and researchers would need to be trained, supported and rewarded.

The German Chemical Society (GDCh) adopted on 6 December a statement on Plan S. Whilst the society “supports the fundamental intention of Plan S, and

explicitly welcomes some of the principles formulated”, it highlights the need for clarification and expresses concern that “some of the key issues will have significant adverse effects on the researchers involved, and on Europe as a centre for innovative research”. The statement concludes by asking that Plan S supporters recognise the society’s concerns and those of its members, and that the “legitimate aim of making scientific results freely accessible to all [...] not be thwarted by unintended, science-damaging consequences”. You can read the GDCh statement [online here](#).

A [public consultation](#) has now been opened on the Plan S guidelines.

EuChemS is currently preparing a Position Paper on the topic.

