
SW Europe Regional Workshop for Research Funders

Host institution / Location: FECYT, Madrid

Date: September 28, 2015

Participants from Portugal, Spain, Italy and Malta

On September 28th, 2015, FECYT hosted a full-day workshop for Research Funders of the South West Region (including Portugal, Spain, Malta and Italy). The workshop was part of a **series of events**, funded by PASTEUR4OA project, for research-performing organisations and research funders held in each of five regions of Europe.

The purpose of the meeting was to bring together research funders from those four Member States allowing the exchange of ideas and policy practices among participants and more importantly discussing ways to improve existing or develop new Open Access policies aligned with the Commission's Recommendation and the H2020 requirements.

The **20 attendees** represented relevant national research funders, including the National Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT) from Portugal, the National Research Council (CSIC) and the Ministry for Economy and Competitiveness (MINECO) from Spain; the Malta Council for Science and Technology (MCST) and finally, the National Research Council (CNR) from Italy.

The **agenda** began with an overview of the PASTEUR4OA Project by Victoria Tsoukala. Participants then were introduced by each Key Node. An expert panel followed, with Eloy Rodrigues, who presented the overview of Open Access Policies (numbers and types (from ROARMAP), and the policy effectiveness study), Patricia Clarke of Health Research Board Ireland, who presented the definition and implementation of the HRB Open Access policy, and Victoria Tsoukala, who briefly presented the ten RECODE project policy recommendations for Open Access to research data.

In the second part of the meeting, two representatives were invited to present the policy developments in Portugal and Spain. Vasco Vaz described the policy and implementation strategy of the Open Access Mandate of Portugal National Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT), and Pilar Rico Castro presented the Spanish legal framework.

Following those presentations all participants were invited to report the current situation and developments concerning Open Access in their own institutions and countries, and identify the critical points for policy advancement. From the discussion three themes have clearly emerged as critical aspects needing further discussion and work:

1. Monitoring compliance and measuring impact of OA policies
2. APCs (how to consider them in OA policies)

3. Embargo periods (how to deal with longer embargo periods)

Participants expressed their concerns about monitoring publications and compliance during and after the end and formal evaluation of the project/grant. There is a need to do further research on different ways to monitor Open Access policies, considering strategies, tools, sanctions, and ways to track publications.

Regarding APCs the main issues were about the existence (or not) of specific funds to support APCs, the definition (or not) of a cap value for APCs, and the payment of APCs for publication in hybrid journals. How to deal with long embargo periods, and the move of some publishers to extend the embargo periods, was another issue discussed.

On policy development, the representative of the Malta Council for Science and Technology (MCST) informed the project that the national OA policy will be based on institutional OA policy of University of Malta, which has been developed by the university with support from the PASTEUR4OA project. At this time, the draft policy is waiting for approval of the legal officer of the University of Malta. MCST will prepare a paper with recommendations for the Council, in the hope that work on a national OA policy will start soon.

The National Research Council (CNR) from Italy is also developing an OA policy for Open Science with focus on Research Data. PASTEUR4OA will be in touch with CNR's Open Access policy officers very soon.

In conclusion, the discussion at the workshop identified gap areas for project research along with the need to focus and move forward on:

- **ADVOCACY** resources about different ways to implement and monitor Open Access policies: describing different experiences from countries, and clarifying issues such as: how to monitor publications after the end and formal evaluation of the project? How to achieve high levels of compliance? How to measure the impact of a policy?
- **ALIGNMENT** of existing Open Access policies to strengthen those policies, making them more clear and precise in order to achieve high levels of effectiveness (in Portugal, Spain and Italy).
- **ACTION ORIENTATION** towards a common vision for Open Access policies aligned with EC Recommendations and H2020 Open Access policy (in Malta and Italy).
- **ON-GOING DIALOGUE** to continue to engage policymakers in order to develop and implement Open Access policies (in Malta and Italy).
- **SUPPORT** in terms of dedicated resources and expertise taking advantage of PASTEUR4OA advocacy materials and partners knowledge.

The Regional Coordinator, along with the Key Nodes of each Member State, are committed to creating an action plan for the coming months to promote further discussion with policymakers, including a potential development of Open Access policies in Malta and Italy, and also checking the alignment of existing Open Access policies in Portugal, Spain and Italy.