



The American Anthropological Association (AAA) has been publishing scholarly content since 1889. Today, our publishing portfolio consists of 22 peer-reviewed titles, a popular news magazine, an open access compilation of previously published materials, and a free, publicly accessible repository that will launch in the next several months. The publishing portfolio is guided by four core values—quality, breadth, accessibility, and sustainability—each of which is just as important as the others. The recent Plan S proposal from Europe’s cOAlition S enhances accessibility of published scholarship at the expense of the portfolio’s sustainability, and potentially threatens the quality as well as breadth of content.

Plan S states, as part of its [ten principles](#), that any scientific publication resulting from research supported by national and European research council and/or funding body grants must be published within compliant open access journals or in compliant open access platforms. Upon first reading this seems reasonable, and in fact appears to be similar to the U.S. legislation regarding grant-funded research. However, the other nine principles make the expectations more explicit and some are in direct opposition to the four core values of the AAA publishing portfolio.

The hybrid model (whereby a journal publishes both open access and traditional subscriber-only content) is not considered compliant under Plan S. All AAA journals offer this option and between 2015 and 2018 more than half of AAA’s journals (12 out of 21) published at least one article as hybrid open access. Additionally, AAA has a broader definition of hybrid—it doesn’t simply apply to a journal that offers both traditional and gold open publishing options. Instead, the association has opened up various other avenues of scholarship as part of its own hybrid model that work within the aforementioned four core values, including ungating a substantial portion of back content and the development of an open access discipline-specific repository.

Plan S lauds the use of open archives and repositories for hosting research because of the “long-term archiving function” and “potential for editorial innovation.” AAA has been interested in moving open access forward via a repository for some time, first with its partnership with the Social Science Research Network, which resulted in the Anthropology and Archaeology Research Network. After SSRN’s acquisition by a commercial venture, the AAA looked elsewhere to launch a new repository for anthropology (and anthropologists) across the globe. The Open Access Research Repository (OARR), launching in mid-2019, has a global and discipline-wide advisory group to ensure the repository is meeting the needs of anthropologists everywhere, including those in practicing and applied settings.

Although AnthroSource is available as a AAA member benefit and through institutional subscription, the AAA seeks to expand the availability of content in a sustainable way. Content that is greater than 35 years old (currently 1983 and older) is completely open access. Historically black colleges and universities, tribal colleges, and Palestinian institutions are provided complimentary access to the entire AAA portfolio, a program that the association is looking to expand further. Additionally, through our publishing partner, AAA’s content is included in [Research4Life](#), which provides complimentary or low-cost access to institutions in developing economies.

To further open up content, in 2013 AAA launched *Open Anthropology*, a curated collection of new and archive content on a singular theme, which is published three times a year and content remains open for one year from publication. AAA also periodically opens articles when there is a broad interest beyond the traditional anthropology community, such as “[Signaling Safety: Characterizing Fieldwork Experiences and Their Implications for Career Trajectories](#),” by Nelson et al.

In addition, AAA has a liberal reuse policy as part of its author agreement. Authors can currently use the article for educational or other scholarly purposes of the author's own institution or company; post the manuscript draft post peer-review on the author's personal or institutional or company website; post the manuscript draft post peer-review on a non-commercial, discipline-specific public server; and publish the article or permit it to be published by other publishers, as part of any book or anthology, of which he or she is the author or editor, subject only to his or her giving proper credit to the original publication.

Although Plan S advocates that “open access is foundational to the scientific enterprise” and that “researchers and the research funders have a collective duty of care for the science system as a whole,” with which the AAA is in complete agreement, some of its principles are problematic to the health of anthropology research and researchers in general.

Authors are encouraged to use a CC-BY license under Plan S, the least restrictive of all Creative Commons licenses, which allows for derivative works to be created for commercial use. This is just another way the proposal limits an author's choice—he or she is unable to monitor who is reworking the article, perhaps for a profit.

By only allowing publication in fully open access journals, Plan S is actually restricting where authors may publish. The AAA's journals, some of which are ranked highly, as noted before, offer hybrid open access options across the entire portfolio which covers the many subfields of anthropology. The breadth of the portfolio is not only related to its content areas but also submissions from across the globe. Plan S would limit the array of content and diversity of voices within the AAA portfolio, a threat to the AnthroSource core value of breadth.

As Plan S limits a researcher's choice in submitting to the best possible venue, the core value of quality is called into question. The AAA portfolio prides itself on high-quality submissions across the discipline; however, as fewer European-funded authors are able to submit to AAA journals, the overall quality could suffer.

In sum, the AAA feels the current proposal from cOAlition S is too broad for all disciplines and is harming those fields outside of the biological and hard sciences. The association requests further examination and refinement of Plan S to ensure all disciplines are considered, particularly the humanities and social sciences.