SPECIFIC SUPPORT TO MALTA
UNDER THE HORIZON 2020 POLICY SUPPORT FACILITY

WORKSHOP ON OPEN ACCESS POLICY IN MALTA
PART I – HIGH LEVEL WORKSHOP, DECEMBER 11, 2019 9:00-10:30

MEMBERS OF THE GROUP

NIELS STERN (CHAIR):

NATALIA MANOLA (EXPERT)

DANIEL SPICHTINGER (RAPPORTEUR)

ROBERT VAN DER VOOREN (EXPERT):

AGENDA

- **09:00-09:10** Welcome and introduction to the project and the programme (Niels Stern)

- **09:10-09:15** Tour de table

- **09:15-09:45** Presentation of high level recommendations (Daniel Spichtinger, Robert van der Vooren)

- **09:45-10:05** Premortem exercise part I (Niels Stern)

- **10:05-10:25** Premortem exercise part II (Niels Stern)

- **10:25-10:30** Wrap-up and next steps (Niels Stern)

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

MANDATE RE-CAP

Malta has requested support in developing a tailor-made Open Access policy. The aim of this PSF Specific Support is to

- provide external advice and operational **recommendations** on defining the vision, goals and scope of the national Open Access policy, and on clarifying the requirements for its implementation.

- These include setting up the key infrastructure, such as a national platform and repository, and its governance, including fair use of data.

- The PSF experts will also provide guidance on the investments and resources involved, as well as how it can be linked to other European and international platforms.

DRAFT STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

1. **Visions, goal and scope** (lead: Niels)
2. **Open access to publications** (lead: Daniel)
3. **Open Research data and relevant infrastructure** (lead: Natalia)
4. **Assessment practices** (lead: Daniel)
5. **Skills and training (**lead: Daniel, with input from Natalia)
6. **Governance and sustainability** (lead: Robert, Daniel)
7. **Roadmap & Milestones**

- Chapter 2-6 are each subdivided into:
  - Baseline
  - Scenarios/Options and engagement with European initiatives
  - Recommendations

VISION & GOAL

Vision

- It is our vision for Malta that the country as a EU Member State aligns itself with the recommendations of the Open Science Policy Platform and thereby will find itself harvesting the full value of an open approach to science and innovation. As a small country with an open economy this is even more advantageously and therefore we would expect Malta to become an active advocate for open science in a foreseeable future

Goal

- Our goal is to come up with recommendations for a national open access policy that fits well for Malta and links the country to the European open science vision and current developments such as EOSC, Plan S, DORA and other initiatives. The recommendations have to be realistic, actionable and embraced by all the relevant actors in Malta.

TOUR DE TABLE

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OPEN ACCESS TO PUBLICATIONS

BACKGROUND

Open access (OA) can be defined as the practice of providing on-line access to scientific information that is free of charge to the user and that is re-usable. Two main models for open access to publications have been developed:

- **Open access publishing**, (**'gold' open access):** an article is immediately provided in open access mode when published. In this model, there is often – but not always - a one-off charge, a so called 'Article (sometimes 'Author') Processing Charge' (APCs). These are usually borne by the university or research institute to which the researcher is affiliated, or to the funding agency supporting the research. In other cases, the costs of open access publishing are covered by subsidies or other funding models; in these cases no APCs arise. Such models are sometimes referred to diamond or platinum OA.

- **Self-archiving**, also referred to as **'green' open access**, means that a copy of the article published in a traditional subscription journal is archived (deposited) by the author - or a representative - in an online repository where it is made available openly, usually after a so called embargo period, which is often requested by the publisher in order to protect the value of the journal subscriptions they sell.

BACKGROUND: PLAN S

- A prominent recent initiative to effect the change to an open access system is **Plan S:**

  - launched in 2018 by a coalition of national research agencies and funders ("cOAlition S"). The umbrella organisation Science Europe coordinates the initiative.

  - The plan is structured around ten principles. The key principle states that by 2021, research funded by public or private grants must be open access (published in open access journals or platforms, or made immediately available in open access repositories without an embargo).

HIGH LEVEL RECOMENDATION/AMBITION

- Upscale open access to scientific publications **in a Plan S compatible way** including by

  - implementing a mandatory requirement for all researchers to deposit their scientific publications (including all thesis)

  - in a national repository

  - investigating a special APC fund for providing support for gold open access

  - Liasoning with European consortia to obtain best practice for including open access in journal subscription deals

OPEN DATA AND INFRASTRUCTURE

BACKGROUND

- Research data refers to resources which the researcher produces or uses during the research process. It is needed to validate the research

- The 2016 'FAIR Guiding Principles for scientific data management and stewardship' is a globally accepted set of principles intended to provide guidelines to improve the **F**indability, **A**ccessibility, **I**nteroperability, and **R**euse of digital assets. The principles emphasise machine-actionability (i.e., the capacity of computational systems to find, access, interoperate, and reuse data with none or minimal human intervention)

- **Open vs. FAIR:** FAIR data and open data are different, although there are similarities.

HIGH LEVEL RECOMENDATION/AMBITION

- Follow a phased approach to anticipate the national and institutional infrastructure development, while bringing a shift in research culture for openness:

  - Phase 1: Voluntary Open Research Data (promote and awareness)

  - Phase 2: ORD *pilot* with opt out

  - Phase 3: ORD default for *all* subject areas with opt out

- In the latter stages a data management plan will become mandatory

ASSESSMENT PRACTICES

BACKGROUND

- Review, promotion, and tenure processes are often tied to the number of publications in high impact factor journals ("publish or perish")

- The **Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA)** proposes *inter alia* to "consider the value and impact of all research outputs (including datasets and software) in addition to research publications, and consider a broad range of impact measures including qualitative indicators of research impact, such as influence on policy and practice"

- The **OS-Career Assessment Matrix** (CAM) that has been developed by the European Commission's expert group on Rewards explicitly integrated (1) Research Output, (2) Research Process, (3) Service And Leadership, (4) Research Impact, (5) Teaching and Supervision, and (6) Professional Experience into researcher evaluation.

HIGH LEVEL AMBITION/RECOMMENDATION

- An OA policy should also help increasing the transparency of the evaluation criteria for researchers, for instance through the gradual application of DORA and piloting OS-CAM.

SKILLS AND TRAINING

HIGH LEVEL AMBITION RECOMMENDATIONS

- Training and certification in OS / OA should be done at the latest at the postgraduate level, for example by implementing corresponding modules in existing curricula.

- The goal is the development of data skills (including, ethical, legal and social aspects) for researchers, research administrators and students.

GOVERNANCE AND SUSTAINABILITY

BACKGROUND

open access and open science are multi actor challenges:

- **research performing organisations** such as universities and research institutions have a central role.

- **Individual researchers' choices** of publication and data management venues do matter. However, researchers are bound to an ecosystem of competition and rewards that too often keep researchers from making decisions in the interest of open access and open science.

- **Leadership** in research performing organisations is important.

- There is a **wide variety in research practices and publication cultures** among different disciplines.

- Open access and open science have **no one size fits all** solution (see PlanS guidelines and documentation).

- Research funders in many countries have adopted mandatory policies for open access publishing. With regard to research data many funders require for instance data management plans.

- **Governments can have different roles**. In some member states governments are directly involved in open access negotiations, either through funding or policy (for instance Hungary, Czech Republic or France). In other member states governments financially support national open science programs (for instance Germany and Netherlands).

	Malta	Iceland	Luxembourg
GDP	12.319M (2018)	21.706M (2017)	58.869M (2018)
Inhabitants	~ 475.000 (2018)	~ 385.000 (2017)	~ 600.000 (2018)
Public universities	1	3	1
% open access	37% (2018)	?	51% (2018)
National OA policy	No	No, but endorsement	Yes
Research funder OA policy	No	Yes, mandatory Organisation: Rannis	Yes, mandatory Organisation: FNR
OA fund	No	Yes	Yes
OA repositories	1	5 (2 reg. in DOAR)	2 (1 reg. in DOAR)
PlanS signatory	No	No	Yes
Central (national) coordination	No	Yes National Librarian Steering committee OA	Yes FNR Working group OS
International coorperation (policy focus)	N/A	Nordic Council of Ministries (open science)	Universities of Luxembourg and Liege (green open access)
Main type of publisher contract	Subscriptions	Subscriptions	Subscriptions
Consortium entity	No	Yes (hvar.is)	Yes (consortium.lu)
Consortium participants	N/A	~ 200 academic, school, public, government	18 academic, school, public, government
Consortium staff	N/A	1.0	4.0

COUNTRY COMPARISON

HIGH LEVEL AMIBITON/RECOMMENDATION

- The preferred governance structure starts with the formation of **a steering committee** with a national mandate to foster open access and FAIR data, including higher education institutions (MU, MCAST, National library), industry and government institutions (e.g. national archive).

- The steering committee would also coordinate Malta's input on the European level, such as the NPR or EOSC. MCST will have an important role to coordinate the necessary additional funding to staff this governance and open access funding.

PREMORTEM EXERCISE

WHAT IS A PRE-MORTEM?

- The premortem technique can be seen as a deep risk analysis but played in a way that forces the participants to be more imaginative than in usual discussions

- The premortem – as opposed to the post-mortem – identifies and analyses the potential critical problems of a given project before it's too late.

- The core of the premortem in our context is to imagine a situation one year after the Maltese national policy on Open Access was launched. We play that it turned out to be a disaster.

- Why did it become a disaster? That is the essence of this exercise.

HOW DOES THE EXCERCISE WORK?

The premortem exercise falls in three steps:

- **I. Brainstorm.**

First part of the exercise is to **brainstorm all imaginable reasons for the failure**. The point is to get as many explanations as possible. No matter their probability and without thinking about solutions. The brainstorm input is prepared individually (per institution represented).

- **II. Categorization**

All the results are written on a large screen for everyone to see. In step II the brainstorm input is categorized into two groups:

  - A) Things we can do something about and
  - B) things we cannot influence or do anything

. This exercise is performed as a plenary session.

- **III. Solutions**

At the end – not before – we search for solutions to the issues that are placed in category A. This exercise will be performed in the expert's workshop.

WRAP-UP AND NEXT STEPS