



## **Instructions**

*NCN's Open Access Policy*

Version 1.0

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### **Abbreviations**

AAM – Author Accepted Manuscript

APC – Article Processing Charges

CC – Creative Commons

CC0 (4.0) – Creative Commons – No Rights Reserved (v. 4.0)

CC-BY (4.0) – Creative Commons – Attribution (v. 4.0)

CC-BY-SA (4.0) – Creative Commons – Attribution – ShareAlike (v. 4.0)

CC-BY-ND (4.0) – Creative Commons – Attribution – NoDerivatives (v. 4.0)

DOAJ – Directory of Open Access Journals

JCT – Journal Checker Tool

RRS – Rights Retention Strategy

VoR – Version of Record



## Glossary

**Article Processing Charges (APC):** costs of publishing an article in an open access journal

**Author Accepted Manuscript (AAM):** the final version of a manuscript, including any changes introduced after peer review, created by the author and accepted for publication in a journal

**Creative Commons licences:** legal licences that replace the traditional “All rights reserved” with a “Some rights reserved” model and respect the author’s copyrights (more information: [Licences compliant with NCN’s Open Access Policy](#))

**Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ):** a database of international peer-reviewed OA journals, established in 2003 (more information: [link](#))

**hybrid journals:** journals that publish articles both in open access and as part of a paid subscription

**Journal Checker Tool (JCT):** a tool supplied by cOAlition S, which allows the compliance of a given journal with an agency’s OA policy to be checked and indicates the compliant publication routes (more information: [Verification of journals’ compliance with NCN’s Open Access policy via Journal Checker Tool](#))([link to the Journal Checker Tool](#))

**NCN’s Open Access Policy:** “NCN’s Open Access Policy”, adopted in 2020, which applies to all grant agreements signed after 1 January 2021<sup>3</sup> ([link](#))

**open access journals and platforms:** journals and platforms that offer free access to publications, registered or pending registration in the [Directory of Open Access Journals](#)

**Persistent Identifier (PID):** a sequence of characters permanently assigned to an object so as to enable its unambiguous identification (one such commonly used identifier is DOI)

**postprint.** see: *Author Accepted Manuscript*

**Rights Retention Strategy (RRS):** a strategy designed to protect the intellectual property rights of researchers to their publications, allowing them to retain the freedom to decide about the publishing of their research results without an embargo period imposed by the publisher (more information: [Rights Retention Strategy \(route 2\)](#))

**subscription journals:** journals that provide access to articles as part of a paid subscription (regardless of whether all or only some of the articles published in the journal are paid)

**transformative agreements:** agreements between publishers and certain institutions (such as national or regional consortia, libraries), pursuant to which some subscription resources are redirected to provide open access publishing support for authors affiliated at the institutions covered by the agreement

**transformative journals:** subscription or hybrid journals that have committed to transitioning to fully OA (more information: [link](#))

**Version of Record (VoR):** a version of the manuscript published in a journal with the fonts and graphics consistent with its visual identity system



## 1. Open access

In accordance with the “NCN’s Open Access Policy” of 27 May 2020<sup>1</sup>, open access involves publishing articles that disseminate the results of publicly funded research in a digital format in order to make them available, free of charge, for use by other researchers, students, businesspeople and society at large.

Open access means free access to publications and authorisation to copy, disseminate, and use them in any way in accordance with the CC-BY (Creative Commons, authorship attribution) licence), provided that the author of the work, the source and the licence are specified.

NCN’s Open Access Policy applies to all kinds of scientific publications, except monographs, monograph chapters and peer-reviewed collected works.

## 2. Rationale for implementing NCN’s Open Access Policy

In accordance with the “NCN’s Open Access Policy” of 27 May 2020<sup>2</sup>, all grant agreements signed after 1 January 2021<sup>3</sup> require that any works resulting from NCN-funded projects (except monographs, monograph chapters and peer-review collected works) must be published in open access. This decision was motivated by several reasons. Specifically, the NCN:

1. believes that publishers should not limit the authors’ rights to freely use the results of their work,
2. wants to reinforce the impact of research conducted by Polish research performing organisations,
3. wants to increase the visibility and citation rates of researchers affiliated with Polish research performing organisations,
4. wants to ensure broad international access to the results of publicly-funded national research,
5. refuses to accept the practice of double-dipping, i.e. the practice by which publishers secure income from two public funding sources.

The NCN takes measures to promote open access publishing in collaboration with [cOAlition S](#), [Science Europe](#), and the [European Open Science Cloud](#), as well as aligning its efforts with other European research-funding agencies, such as the [European Commission](#) (including the [ERC](#)), [NWO](#) and [Wellcome Trust](#), so as to ensure that high-quality publicly-funded research will be disseminated internationally in accordance with the accepted practices.

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<sup>1</sup> Order No 38/2020 on the NCN’s Open Access Policy adopted by the NCN Director on 27 May 2020, [https://www.ncn.gov.pl/sites/default/files/pliki/zarzadzenia-dyrektora/zarzadzenieDyr-38\\_2020\\_ang.pdf#page=2](https://www.ncn.gov.pl/sites/default/files/pliki/zarzadzenia-dyrektora/zarzadzenieDyr-38_2020_ang.pdf#page=2) .

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> The agreements apply to calls announced after 15 June 2020.



### 3. Plan S

Plan S is a set of OA publishing principles, signed by the NCN in 2018. The principles are described in detail on the [website of cOAlition S](#).

### 4. Publications requiring open access

All grant agreements signed after 1 January 2021<sup>3</sup> require that any works (except monographs, monograph chapters and peer-reviewed collected works) that may result from NCN-funded research projects must be published in open access journals or platforms. The requirement applies to all NCN calls for proposals or research activities (including the MINIATURA scheme).

The requirement was included in agreements pursuant to the “NCN’s Open Access Policy”, adopted in 2020 ([link](#)).

### 5. Types of shared manuscripts

*Author Accepted Manuscript (AAM)*: the final version of a manuscript, including any changes introduced after peer review, created by the author and accepted for publication in a journal. Also known as: *postprint*

*Version of Record (VoR)*: a version of the manuscript published in a journal with the fonts and graphics consistent with its visual identity system. Also known as: published version or publisher’s PDF.

### 6. Open access routes in NCN’s policy

Research results of NCN-funded projects must be published under one of three routes compliant with the principles of Plan S. These are described in detail on pp. 3-4 of the NCN’s [Open Access Policy](#).

Publication routes compliant with the policy include:

- a) articles published in full open access journals registered or pending registration in the Directory of Open Access Journals ([DOAJ](#));
- b) manuscripts ([AAM](#) or [VoR](#)) of articles published in subscription journals and shared openly via repositories;
- c) articles published in transformative journals or journals covered by a transformative agreement (hybrid journals, which have committed to transitioning to full open access).

The table below compares between the three routes in terms of manuscript type, required copyright licence and cost eligibility.



	Route 1	Route 2	Route 3
<b>Journal type</b>	<b>Full-open access</b>	<b>Subscription-based</b>	<b>Transformative journal and journal covered by a licence under a transformative agreement</b>
<b>Manuscript type</b>	Article published on the journal's website + additionally (as an option), AAM / VoR published in a repository	AAM or VoR published in a repository	Article published on the journal's website + additionally (as an option), AAM / VoR published in a repository
<b>AAM embargo period</b>	N.A. if the article is published in accordance with the requirements of route 1	No embargo – the AAM must be published along with the publication of the online version on the journal's website	N.A. if the article is published in accordance with the requirements of route 3
<b>Required licences (more about licences <a href="#">here</a>)</b>	CC-BY 4.0 (authorship attribution)	CC-BY 4.0 (authorship attribution)  (at least AAM or VoR)	CC-BY 4.0 (authorship attribution) or CC-BY-SA 4.0 (authorship attribution – under the same conditions)
	optionally, CC-BY-ND (authorship attribution, no derivatives)		
<b>Eligible publishing costs</b>	Article Processing Charges (APC)	The costs are not eligible	Article Processing Charges (APC)  (as long as the article is accepted for publication or published before 31 December 2024)
<b>Other conditions</b>	None	The repository in which the manuscript (AAM or VoR) is published must be registered in <a href="#">openDOAR</a>	The costs are eligible before 31 December 2024  The journal must be covered by an agreement from the <a href="#">ESAC</a> list  Virtual Library of Science licences for 2021 are available <a href="#">here</a> (available in Polish only)  A list of transformative journals can be found <a href="#">here</a>

## 7. Rights Retention Strategy (route 2)

The Rights Retention Strategy (RRS) protects the freedom of authors to freely use their intellectual work by including the following clause in manuscripts submitted for publication:

"This research was funded in whole or in part by [Funder] [Grant number]. For the purpose of Open Access, the author has applied a CC-BY public copyright licence to any Author Accepted Manuscript (AAM) version arising from this submission".

The clause should be added before any agreement with the publisher is signed. For this reason, we recommend that it should be placed in the *Acknowledgements* section of the manuscript, as well as in the cover letter accompanying the submission of the first version of the article. The clause must be placed on the AAM version of any publication resulting from an NCN-funded project.

More about the Rights Retention Strategy:

- [Helping researchers retain rights and share their work in Open Access](#),
- cOAlition S: [The Rights Retention Strategy and publisher equivocation: an open letter to researchers](#).

## 8. Licences compliant with the NCN's Open Access Policy

- the NCN recommends the use of a **CC-BY 4.0. (authorship attribution)**<sup>4</sup> licence,
- for journals covered by transformative agreements, a **CC-BY-SA 4.0. (authorship attribution – under the same conditions)**<sup>5</sup> may be used alternatively,
- optionally, a **CC-BY-ND 4.0 (authorship attribution, no derivatives)**<sup>6</sup> licence may also be used for works published in compliance with all three routes,
- the data underlying the publication must be published under a **CC0 4.0**<sup>7</sup> licence.

The articles should clearly (graphically or verbally) indicate the licence applied to specify under which conditions they can be used.

## 9. Persistent identifier

All OA articles (both the VoR and the AAM) must have a persistent identifier, which is designed to make them easy to find and access. The NCN recommends the use of commonly accepted machine-readable identifiers (preferably [DOI](#)). If an AAM work shared via repository differs from its VoR version, the AAM should have a separate PID assigned.

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<sup>4</sup> Under a CC-BY 4.0. licence, the article may be copied and distributed in any medium and format, for any (including commercial) purposes; at the same time, the user must clearly state the author(s), provide licence information, reference the article and include a liability disclaimer.

<sup>5</sup> Under a CC-BY-SA 4.0. licence, the article may be modified with the reservations that apply to CC-BY licences, and only as long as the work is published under the same licence as the original.

<sup>6</sup> A CC-BY-ND 4.0. licence maintains all the conditions of a CC-BY licence, with an additional caveat that modified content based on the original article may not be distributed.

<sup>7</sup> Under a CC0 licence, all copyrights are transferred to the public domain and the authors waive their rights to data, but only within the scope permitted by national legislation; the licence does not affect patent-related rights, or the right to image and privacy.



## 10. Article Processing Charges (APC)

APC represent the costs of publishing an article in an open access journal. APC may vary across different journals and should be clearly stated on the journal's website. At the NCN, APC are recognized as eligible costs under route 1 and 3 (more about routes: [OA routes in NCN's policy](#)), but can be avoided under route 2, where the article is published in closed (paid) access, accompanied by a manuscript (AAM) deposited in a repository.

## 11. Eligible (+) and non-eligible (-) costs

Publication route	Submission costs	APC	Publisher's costs of additional editing
Route 1 <b>Full Open Access journal</b>	-	+	-
Route 2 <b>Subscription-based (incl. hybrid) journal, manuscript (AAM or VoR) published in a repository</b>	-	-	-
Route 3 <b>Transformative journal or journal covered by a transformative agreement</b>	-	+	-
		as long as the article is accepted for publication or published before 31 December 2024	

The above eligible costs (APC) may be covered under the additional **indirect costs of open access**, which may represent up to 2% of the total indirect costs of the project, as well as under **other indirect costs**. **Direct costs** may include the costs of services involved in preparing the text for submission (e.g. proofreading), provided by entities other than the publisher. **Non-eligible costs** (classified as both direct and indirect project costs) include publication fees (e.g. editorial fees, fees for translation, editing, copies, colour prints, submission fees). The NCN does not accept any fees paid to closed access and hybrid journals (unless the latter are transformative journals or covered by transformative agreements). The NCN has adopted its OA policy because it believes that publicly funded research should also be publicly available and is firmly opposed to the practice by which journals accept income from two public-funding sources: subscription and publication fees.

## 12. Verification of journals' compliance with NCN's Open Access Policy via Journal Checker Tool

When creating their publication strategy, researchers might want to use the [Journal Checker Tool](#), which shows whether a given journal complies with the NCN's OA policy, as well as indicates the route under which that compliance exists. The Journal Checker Tool verifies compliance under the following categories:



Journal Checker Tool search result:	Compliance with NCN's OA policy	Additional information
Full Open Access	Route 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>APC are recognized as eligible costs</li> <li>the author must make sure that the article will be published under a CC-BY<sup>8</sup> licence</li> <li>optionally, a CC-BY-ND<sup>9</sup> licence may be used</li> </ul>
Self-archiving	Route 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the title is a hybrid or transformative journal/journal covered by a transformative agreement</li> <li>once the publisher has published the paper, the AAM version may be published in a repository under a CC-BY<sup>8</sup> licence, without an embargo period (the VoR will be available on the paid website of the journal); if, after negotiations, the journal refuses to waive the embargo period (even when the author points out that it is a condition required by the research-funding agency), please <a href="#">contact the NCN</a></li> <li>under this route, APC are not recognized as eligible costs</li> <li>optionally, a CC-BY-ND<sup>9</sup> licence may be used</li> </ul>
Compliance through self-archiving using rights retention	Route 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the title is a hybrid or transformative journal/journal covered by a transformative agreement</li> <li>under this route, APC are not recognized as eligible costs</li> <li>the manuscript's Acknowledgements section and the cover letter submitted to the journal should include the following RRS clause: "This research was funded in whole or in part by [Funder] [Grant number]. For the purpose of Open Access, the author has applied a CC-BY public copyright licence to any Author Accepted Manuscript (AAM) version arising from this submission"</li> <li>before signing an agreement with the publisher, the author must make sure that the copyrights will be retained by the author (if the agreement transfers the copyrights, it is necessary to point out that the grant agreement under which the research is funded requires their retention; if the publisher still refuses to comply, <a href="#">please contact the NCN</a>)</li> <li>once the publisher has published the paper, the AAM version may be published in a repository under a CC-BY<sup>8</sup> licence, without an embargo period (the VoR will be available on the paid website of the journal); if, after negotiations, the journal refuses to waive the embargo period (even when the author points out that it is a condition required by the research-funding agency), <a href="#">please contact the NCN</a></li> <li>optionally, a CC-BY-ND<sup>9</sup> licence may be used</li> </ul>
Transformative Journal	Route 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>APC are recognized as eligible costs</li> <li>the author must make sure that the article will be published under a CC-BY<sup>8</sup> or a CC-BY-SA<sup>10</sup> licence</li> <li>optionally, a CC-BY-ND<sup>9</sup> licence may be used</li> </ul>
Transformative Agreement	Route 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>please make sure that the institution at which the corresponding author is affiliated is covered by a licence under a transformative agreement (a list of national transformative agreements, including consortium licences, can be found <a href="#">here</a>, available in Polish only)</li> <li>APC are recognized as eligible costs</li> <li>the author must make sure that the article will be published under a CC-BY<sup>8</sup> or a CC-BY-SA<sup>10</sup> licence; a CC-BY-ND<sup>9</sup> licence may also be used</li> </ul>

All articles published in journals from the [Journal Checker Tool](#) list, in accordance with the indicated compliance principles, will be accepted by the NCN as meeting the OA publishing requirements (also if the information in the tool is not up to date).

<sup>8</sup> default recommendation: CC-BY 4.0

<sup>9</sup> default recommendation: CC-BY-ND 4.0

<sup>10</sup> default recommendation: CC-BY-SA 4.0



### 13. Open access and top-quality journals

NCN supports strict standards of scientific excellence. Articles that present research results should be published in international journals that ensure diligent peer review. Attached to end of project reports, these publications will undergo a merit-based evaluation, followed by the Expert Team decision whether to approve the project as completed.

When submitting an article for publication, please pay close attention to aspects such as the composition of the editorial board and the details of the peer-review system. Articles published in predatory journals shall not be accepted: [NCN Director's Letter on predatory journals \(available in Polish only\)](#).

### 14. Open access and major international journals (e.g. "Nature", "Science", "Cell")

The availability of three optional publication routes under Plan S is designed to give researchers the freedom to choose the journals in which they wish to publish their results and allow them to retain their copyrights through the [Rights Retention Strategy \(route 2\)](#).

The largest international publishers now publish articles with an accompanying RRS clause. These include Elsevier, American Chemical Society, Taylor & Francis, Wiley, IEEE, Springer Nature (including: Nature Publication Group). The clauses are used both in physical sciences, life sciences, social sciences, and the humanities<sup>11</sup>.

Detailed information on which [open access route](#) can be used for a given journal is provided by the [Journal Checker Tool](#). Articles published in journals from the Journal Checker Tool list, in accordance with the conditions indicated for a given venue, will be deemed by the NCN compliant with the NCN's Open Access Policy.

The Journal Checker Tool list also includes subscription-based journals such as "Nature", "Quarterly Journal of Economics", "Science", "Cell", "Journal of Political Economy", "Lancet", "Physical Review Letters".

The Journal Checker Tool always indicates the route that complies with the NCN's OA policy. **For example, "Nature" is a transformative journal, and as such complies with route 3. In addition, the conditions of OA are met by an AAM published in accordance with the [Rights Retention Strategy, RRS](#) (route 2). According to the data provided by the [Journal Checker Tool](#), "Science" is compliant with route 2 that includes the RRS.**

If the author exhausts all available measures and the publisher still attempts to enforce a copyright transfer agreement, please [contact](#) the NCN to devise an optimal solution, with the best interests of the project and the author(s) in mind.

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<sup>11</sup> R. Mounce, *Observing the success so far of the Rights Retention Strategy*: <https://www.coalition-s.org/blog/observing-the-success-so-far-of-the-rights-retention-strategy/>.



## 15. Publication of underlying data

Grant agreements signed after 1 January 2021<sup>3</sup> require that all the underlying data included in publications resulting from NCN-funded projects should be documented in a machine-readable and manual search format to ensure findability, accessibility, interoperability and reusability (FAIR data). Where possible, the data should be published in a repository under a Creative Commons Public Domain licence ([CC0](#)). Citations should follow the standards specified in the [Declaration of Data Citation Principles by FORCE 11](#), as well as the [TOP Guidelines](#). The metadata must meet the [OpenAIRE](#) guidelines.

## 16. Contact

Dr Aneta Pazik-Aybar  
E-mail: [aneta.pazik-aybar@ncn.gov.pl](mailto:aneta.pazik-aybar@ncn.gov.pl)  
Tel. + 48 12 341 91 78

## 17. Useful links

1. [NCN's OA policy](#)
2. [Journal Checker Tool](#) - to check whether a journal complies with the NCN's OA policy
3. [FAQ: Open access](#)
4. [Plan S](#)