

## Submission: Response to the Proposal for a National Open Access Strategy

To Dr Cathy Foley, Chief Scientist of Australia,

[Wikimedia Australia](#) is the Australian chapter of the international Wikimedia Foundation which has a mission to disseminate open knowledge effectively and globally. We support contributors to Wikipedia, Wikidata and other Wikimedia platforms through events, training and partnerships. We work with libraries, universities, NGOs, government and industry across Australia to enhance access to knowledge and are members of related organisations including [Open Access Australasia](#), Australian Digital Alliance and Creative Commons Australia.

Wikimedia projects such as Wikipedia and Wikidata rely on access to credible sources such as academic journal articles, books and research reports for verification and citations for content posted to its platforms which are viewed by millions of people around the world everyday. We therefore welcome the Australian Chief Scientist's call to expand access to published research to all Australians and support a national approach to open access that will ensure research supports innovation, education and the public interest. We appreciate the opportunity to provide input into the open access strategy and provide the following recommendations for consideration. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss this further.

### **Wikimedia Australia recommendations for a national open access strategy:**

1. Principles of public interest, transparency and rights retention by Australian researchers and institutions underpin the strategy.
2. A Multistakeholder and multisector model is implemented.
3. 'Requisite varieties' of genres and formats produced for research communication are considered.
4. Investment in multiple business models is prioritised to prevent monopoly control of research publishing and protect the public interest.
5. Investment in national publishing infrastructure is made.
6. That an Australian strategy aligns with international approaches

### **1. Principles of public interest, transparency and rights retention by Australian researchers and institutions underpin the strategy.**

A national open access strategy must operate on principles including full transparency in management and pricing, national benefit and data sovereignty, copyright retention in favour of researchers and institutions, access to publications without exclusions. It should adopt a knowledge commons approach, in line with the Research Data Alliance (RDA) approach to data, aiming for outcomes of equity, efficiency, sustainability, credibility, effectiveness; and be shaped by values that underpin Indigenous research and community ownership, such as the CARE principles, which do not align with commercial publishing models and copyright



transfer. To comply with funder requirements, most publishers no longer require copyright assignment of journal articles, only a non-exclusive licence to publish. The Royal Society has been a trailblazer in adopting such policies, for example. These changes facilitate copyright retention for researchers and institutions for both fully-open access journals, and repository-based open access to other versions. A rights retention strategy similar to those established by Harvard and Plan S that are tried and tested, combined with approaches taken in several institutional open access policies (see CAUL report for examples) would greatly benefit from a harmonised, national approach applicable to all Australian researchers.

## **2. A multistakeholder and multisector model is implemented.**

A national open access strategy needs a multisector perspective that encompasses universities and research institutions, non-government organisations and associations, government departments and agencies, industry and business. This means that all publicly funded research outputs should be subject to the policy produced by any sector and monitored for compliance. It should also consider the different roles involved in providing management, discovery, access and use including national, state, and public libraries, special libraries, university owned publishers and databases such as Informit, digital collections such as Analysis & Policy Observatory, and institutional repositories, and integration with global systems such as search engines, aggregators and knowledge systems like Wikipedia, Wikicommons and Wikidata.

## **3. Requisite varieties of genres and formats produced for research communication are considered.**

Peer reviewed journal articles are a key form of communication in most disciplines, however monographs and edited book collections, conference papers, research reports, evaluations and systematic reviews are just some of the other forms that play a critical role in research communication. Many Australian researchers are major contributors and users of Wikipedia, Wikidata and other platforms. A national strategy needs to ensure all research publications are managed efficiently and effectively for long term access and use and that diverse formats and contributions are given due credit.

## **4. Investment in multiple business models is prioritised to prevent monopoly control of research publishing and protect the public interest.**

Transformative agreements are one approach among many: Many publishers have not yet offered transformative agreements in Australia and publisher conditions even in countries with long-standing agreements only cover a portion of article outputs. In addition to commercial research publishing models there are many successful not-for-profit (NFP) publishing models for journals, books and reports including Informit, APO, AustLii and ANU ePress as well as many international examples. The Wikimedia Foundation has demonstrated what is possible with a collective, social enterprise approach and now sells data and content services to commercial technology companies while still ensuring open knowledge for all.

## **5. Investment in national publishing infrastructure is made.**



Repositories, discovery systems, persistent identifiers, and preservation are necessary enabling infrastructure to ensure that research is FAIR (findable, accessible, interoperable, and reusable) for current and future generations of researchers and all other research end-users. These infrastructures operate at international, national, disciplinary, and institutional levels, and are tied together through interoperable standards and metadata. All of these critical infrastructures require ongoing investment and resourcing to ensure sustainable access to research, and open access outputs that publishers do not support. A national open access strategy should build on Australia's leadership in open access to culture and research, institutional and subject repositories, National and State Libraries and Archives, and our robust repository landscape and steer institutions towards best practice, innovation and global interoperability. Often metadata from publishers is not reliable or uses bespoke systems which are not interoperable for global data integration. For example, Research Graph, a NFP academic network platform developed by Australian researchers, works with Wikidata as the most reliable source to verify citations and disambiguate authors and organisations. Investments in innovative public infrastructure will allow a level of experimentation and access to data that would otherwise be impossible or prohibitively expensive.

## **6. That an Australian strategy aligns with international approaches**

There is overwhelming support for adopting open access policies from International organisations including recommendations from the OECD, UNESCO, International Science Council, the G7 and APEC. Access to information is also included in many of the Sustainable Development Goals. In developing a national open access strategy Australia should ensure our content is interoperable with global systems and that we have the skills, control and flexibility of our intellectual outputs to support Australian industry and national research priorities effectively. Consideration of and interoperability with both commercial and public or community knowledge platforms is essential for an Australian OA model. As well as the large commercial publishers there are many smaller publishers internationally and in Australia to consider. There are also significant international public and community-led initiatives which provide useful models: Europe has major aggregators Base and OpenAIRE as well as open publishing platforms such as Zenodo, Open Editions and Lodel; the UK Core aggregator run by JISC; Latin America's SciELO, Redalyc and AmeliCA platforms; many US systems—Public Knowledge Project's Open Journal System (OJS), the Internet Archive, Wikipedia and Wikidata, the Open Science Framework (OSF), and discovery systems such as Semantic scholar, Meta, Google and Google scholar. Many international organisations are able to provide support and guidance on open access models and open platforms including Invest in Open Infrastructure (IOI), the Global Sustainability Coalition for Open Science Services (SCOSS), Force11, the Open Access Scholarly Publishing Association (OASPA), the Research on Research Institute (RoRI), and the Coalition for Open Access Repositories (COAR) and the Wikimedia Foundation.

Prepared on behalf of the Wikimedia Australia Committee,

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