

## **Response from The Swedish Association of University Teachers and Researchers (SULF) on Plan S to the cOAlition S**

The Swedish Association of University Teachers and Researchers, SULF, is the association for university teachers, researchers and doctoral candidates and has approximately 21 000 members in Swedish higher education and research institutions. SULF has local bodies and representatives at all the universities and major colleges.

As the union for the individual researchers, we agree with the overarching aims of Plan S. We support the aim to make a transition to open access for academic work so that citizens, social actors, and industry can get free and easy access to the results of publicly funded research in various fields. Open access to the latest research is also an important part in the development of open and democratic societies. We agree with cOAlition S that the current publication system has flaws that has to be addressed. The high costs for access to research journals is one, the race for high impact factors is another. These are contributing factors to the large number of insecure employments, especially for early stage researchers.

But, as a democratic organisation, we know that change has to be thoroughly discussed and processed in all the levels of our union. The elected representatives has to get time to analyse the consequences of the implementation of Plan S if it is to be successful, not least when it comes to career paths, academic freedom and copyright issues. Even though we agree with the main aim of Plan S, there are other ways to address the same problems, for example to make sure that researchers retain copyright of their publications, unlike today where the journal receives copyright in return for publishing. This practice could be implemented without a Plan S, and would allow researchers the right to archive their articles in a repository of their choice, thus giving public access to results.

The time frame of 2020 is the main challenge, not least for the individual researcher. We fear that the speed of the implementation process might be harmful to the career of early stage researchers. What if they, for example, wish to pursue a career in the US, Japan or another country where a Plan S is non existing? Also, different fields of research has different traditions when it comes to publication. Too many questions remain unsolved, for example when it comes to the publication of monographies or books, which mainly concerns the humanities and social sciences. These traditions have to be respected if the transition to open access is going to work for the individual researcher.

**The Swedish Association of University Teachers and Researchers agree with many of the concerns raised by the *Young Academy of Sweden* and urge the cOAlition S to slow down the process so that both universities and civil society will get time to reflect upon the consequences of the implementation of Plan S.**



Dr Mats Ericson  
President  
[me@sulf.se](mailto:me@sulf.se)



Dr Karin Åmossa  
Head of Research and International Affairs  
[ka@sulf.se](mailto:ka@sulf.se)