Key Messages

1. RCUK Open Access FAQs

OAPG highlighted a number of areas that need clearer guidance and pointed out that there were inconsistencies with the RCUK Policy on Open Access.

Actions:

- OAPG to send Pam Hicks details of any proposed new FAQs
- Pam Hicks to revise FAQs in light of the feedback received and circulate updated list of FAQs by mid-February
- Pam Hicks to check FAQs against the RCUK policy on open access for inconsistencies and update the policy to reflect changes that have occurred since it was first written.
- Pam Hicks to investigate ways of communicating any changes to research organisations e.g. via social media, the web site and mailings to OA contacts.

2. What can the RCUK Open Access Block grants be used to fund?

OAPG discussed the different ways research organisations treat page and colour charges. Pam Hicks to liaise with Andrew Gray to look further into this issue and report back to OAPG at a future meeting. OAPG considered that charges for subscriptions that reduced the cost of APCs so that the total spent by RCUK on the journal(s) concerned was less than the total would be without the subscription, was an acceptable use of funds. The justification for charging membership costs for ORCID and Researchfish would vary depending on the size of the research organisation.

Actions:

- Pam to take on board feedback and produce further guidance on what the block grant can be used to fund.

3. OA reporting from December 16

Pam Hicks thanked everyone for sending in their returns. To date approximately 50% have been returned with the majority of research organisations reporting they will have used up all of their grant by the end of March 2017.

4. Update on Standard Methodology of reporting

Andrew Wright has been working with several members of OAPG to look at the OA reporting template. It was felt that there were several fields which had been included for historical reasons and may not be required going forwards. The disparity in reporting periods was discussed and OAPG agreed that both the compliance and the finance reporting could cover the period from 1 April to 31 March with immediate effect. OAPG asked if the payment of OA block grants could be brought forward and it was suggested that one of the ways to achieve this was to only ask for finance
reporting in April 2017. OAPG confirmed they were happy for the full reporting template to be completed with RCUK allowing additional time for research organisations to complete compliance data when they required it.

Actions:

- Andrew Wright to update reporting template with new date ranges
- Pam Hicks to investigate the possibility of either bringing forward the date when the main block grants can be paid or whether a proportion of the grant can be paid at an earlier date
- Andrew Wright to continue to work with Researchfish to investigate ways RF can be used to assist OA compliance reporting.

5. AOB

Pam hicks highlighted that a few of the research organisations that have received grants for the first time are struggling to get open access off the ground and asked for possible mentors to assist them. It was suggested they be put in touch with local open access groups and Andrew Gray offered to have a chat with them.

Valerie McCutcheon brought to the attention of OAPG that the Sherpa web site requires updating.

Alex Vincent informed OAPG that Sam Cutting was moving to a new role and that Pam Hicks would cover in the interim period. She welcomed Claire Fraser as the new HEFCE representative as Ben Johnson was moving to a new role in the organisation.