

21 April 2020

Updated guidance on the use of the UKRI open access block grant for transformative agreements

We have recently received requests from research organisations to use the open access block grant (OABG) to contribute to transformative agreements (TAs). Our initial response to early queries was that this was permissible but that the amount used for TAs should be limited to 25% of the total OABG award.

We understand that the costs attributed to the OABG will be for the open access proportion of a TA or what is sometimes referred to as the 'publish' element of a TA. UKRI supports TAs and recognises that these new forms of agreements help raise the level of immediate open access to UKRI funded research and to manage costs borne by research performing organisations as well as funders.

After further consideration, we have reviewed our position on TAs and confirm that it is permissible to support TAs from OABG with no upper limit given that following conditions are met:

1. Transformative agreements must meet the requirements specified here: <https://www.jisc.ac.uk/content/open-access/our-role#collections> within the 'Requirements for transitional open access agreements' drop down.
2. TAs must be negotiated and verified by Jisc Collections.
3. The cost of a TA charged to OABG must be based on an organisation's UKRI funded output or previous UKRI spend with that publisher using the publisher's methodology to calculate the 'publish' element of the agreement.
4. Expenditure from the OABG must be auditable and kept separate from open access expenditure paid from other sources of funding.

It is our policy that research organisations may use the OABG in the manner they consider will best deliver the current RCUK policy on open access:

<https://www.ukri.org/files/legacy/documents/rcukopenaccesspolicy-pdf/>.

As part of the usual reporting process, organisations will need to report the contribution made to an individual transformative agreement. However, details of the specific papers published as part of an agreement will be supplied directly to UKRI by Jisc.

UKRI is currently reviewing and developing its policy on open access, including **a consultation on a proposed open access policy which is open until noon on 29 May 2020**. The review will consider the amount, mode, purpose and duration of funding. Further information on the UKRI open access review and consultation is available here: <https://www.ukri.org/funding/information-for-award-holders/open-access/open-access-review/>