

24th October 2016

Bob Löwenberg

Editor-in-Chief, *Blood*
American Society of Hematology
2021 L Street NW, Suite 900
Washington, DC 20036

Dear Dr Löwenberg,

As you know, research funders in the United Kingdom, as well as in many other countries, require publications to be made open access. This is both a public good and government policy. [Research Councils UK](#) (RCUK) and the [Charity Open Access Fund](#) (COAF, which includes the Wellcome Trust) require their researchers to make publications available as soon as possible, and will pay for 'gold' open access when (a) the publication is freely available immediately on publication and (b) the work is published under the terms of a [Creative Commons Attribution](#) (CC BY) licence.

Blood offers neither option. According to information we have received from authors who have completed the *Blood* manuscript submission process, RCUK and COAF funded authors are presented with the option, which they are told is compliant with their funders, of paying \$1000 to deposit their manuscript in an 'approved' repository, which will only then become publicly available six months after publication. This form of open access would only be compliant with RCUK and COAF requirements if it was offered for free. The \$1000 fee you charge is not an eligible expense for either RCUK or COAF funded authors and therefore the information you currently present to authors is misleading.

This would not typically be a problem if *Blood* also provided a compliant 'green' open access option. Yet you do not. Therefore, all RCUK, Wellcome Trust and COAF funded authors who publish in *Blood* are failing to meet the open access requirements of their funders. In the case of the Wellcome Trust, this can have serious consequences for a researcher's present and future funding eligibility.

Given this situation, we feel compelled to advise our researchers and academics in receipt of RCUK and COAF funding that they should look to publish in alternative compliant journals in preference to *Blood*. There is simply no way that they can comply with their funders' open access policies if they publish with *Blood*.

There are two ways that *Blood* could facilitate compliance with these open access policies. Either (a) allow authors to self-archive their work in open access repositories for free with a maximum embargo of six months from publication or (b) provide a gold open access route with a CC BY licence. We are more than willing to work with you in this endeavour.

We hope that you will reconsider the open access options available to authors in *Blood*. Other publishers, such as Elsevier, Wiley, SpringerNature and the National Academy of Sciences all have open access options that comply with the RCUK and COAF policies. Your publication is being left behind as the world embraces open access. Don't be the last journal to switch.

Sincerely,

Dr Arthur Smith

Open Access Research Advisor
Cambridge University Library
as2507@cam.ac.uk

Dr Danny Kingsley

Head, Office of Scholarly Communication
Cambridge University Library
dak45@cam.ac.uk

Professor Richard Farndale

Professor of Matrix Biochemistry, and BHF
Programme Grant Holder 1999-2018
University of Cambridge
rwf10@cam.ac.uk

Dr Corina Logan

Department of Zoology
University of Cambridge
cl417@cam.ac.uk

Dr Lauren Cadwallader

Open Access Research Advisor
Cambridge University Library
lc340@cam.ac.uk

Kevin Sanders

Research Support Librarian
St Mary's University
kevin.sanders@stmarys.ac.uk

Professor Martin Bennett

Department of Medicine
University of Cambridge
mrb@mole.bio.cam.ac.uk

Dr Ross Mounce

Software Sustainability Institute Fellow
University of Cambridge
rcm61@cam.ac.uk

Dr Joyce Heckman

Open Access Team
Cambridge University Library
jh967@cam.ac.uk

Rosie Higman

Research Data Advisor
Cambridge University Library
rh667@cam.ac.uk

Dr Stephen Eglen

Department of Applied Maths and Theoretical
Physics
University of Cambridge
sje30@cam.ac.uk

Dan Holden

Faculty Librarian
Queen's University Belfast
d.holden@qub.ac.uk

Professor Victor Tybulewicz

Senior Group Leader
The Francis Crick Institute
Victor.T@crick.ac.uk

Professor Michael Blackman

The Francis Crick Institute
mike.blackman@crick.ac.uk

Dr Laurent Gatto

Department of Biochemistry
University of Cambridge
lg390@cam.ac.uk

If you would like to sign this letter please contact info@osc.cam.ac.uk