

HOUSE OF COMMONS SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE  
LEAVING THE EU: IMPLICATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR SCIENCE AND RESEARCH

EVIDENCE FROM THE PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION

**Introduction**

1. The Publishers Association welcomes the opportunity to submit written evidence to the Committee's inquiry into the implications and opportunities of leaving the EU for science and research.
2. The Publishers Association is the leading trade organisation serving book, journal, audio and electronic publishers in the UK. Our members represent over 80% of the UK publishing industry and include academic journal publishers such as Elsevier, Wiley, society publishers and University presses.

**Academic Publishing**

3. The UK punches above its weight in the production of world-class research. Despite making up less than 1% of the world's population and 4.1% of researchers, the [UK accounts for](#) 9.5% downloads 11.6% of citation and produces 15.9% of the world's most cited journal articles, more than any other country after the US.
4. The academic journal market is worth £1.1bn, making a significant contribution to the UK economy. Approximately 90-95% of this revenue comes from exports. The UK journal publishing industry is also a world-leader in itself, with UK publishers responsible for five thousand journal titles and a fifth of the articles published globally each year. In addition, academic publishing plays an important role in investing in innovation, helping academics build on and scrutinise the work of others and helping them share and refine their own work.

**Main areas of concern:**

**Loss of funding from EU grants**

5. According to figures from the [Royal Society](#), in total the UK received £8.8bn of funding for research from the EU between 2007 and 2013, making it the second largest recipient of EU funds. To put this into context, the [UK spent](#) £4.6 billion on research and science in 2012/13, meaning EU funds make up a substantial percentage of the overall funding on the sector.
6. Therefore access to funding, including that provided by the Horizon 2020 project, is one of the major concerns academic publishers have following the vote to leave the European Union. In a survey of our members 53% of academic publishers said that reduced funding for research and higher education institutions was the main challenge posed by Brexit.
7. Although publishers do not receive funding directly from the EU themselves, if such funding is lost without being replaced the damaging effect it would have on science and research in general would most likely trickle down to academic publishers, for example in the number of articles produced and journals published.

8. This means that as well as any impact on science and research, which is a significant concern in itself, a loss of funding could also have a knock on effect on the £1.1bn journal market, the export revenues it generates, and the ability for UK research to receive as wider audience as possible.
9. Increased pressure on funding will also inevitably reduce the time that researchers can devote to book-writing, which could lead to fewer academic books being published from UK-based authors.
10. A loss of funding could also impact the UK's [good progress](#) towards open access, as article processing charges are paid out of research budgets. If these budgets were shrunk, there may also be an impact on Gold open access, with more authors having to publish via the Green route.

### **Higher Education funding**

11. Higher education institutions are at risk of losing the income they receive from international students following the Brexit vote. According to Universities UK, international students contribute around one-eighth of universities income and around £7 billion a year to the economy.
12. If the number of international students falls as a result of Brexit, either because of onerous visa requirements or a perceived lack of attractiveness of studying in the UK now it does not also provide easy access to Europe, this would reduce funding for higher education, which could again reduce how much money could be invested in research.

### **Freedom of movement**

13. Ensuring free movement of staff and students between higher education institutions in the UK and EU is important. Restrictions would also make it difficult for universities to attract world class researchers and international students which would hamper the UK's position as a leader in this field.
14. This issue also concerns academic publishers who employ specialised non-UK EU nationals in their UK offices, as well as who employ UK staff in their EU offices. For example one large academic publisher said EU citizens make up 5% of its UK staff, while UK nationals made up about 15% of its staff in the EU.

### **Loss of UK influence**

15. Brexit could also reduce the UK's influence across both the European Union and the rest of the world. If a drop in research funding leads to a reduction in the number of journal articles published this could reduce the impact of UK research. Meanwhile scientific books are vital in illuminating the studies of students and researchers around the world. If researchers have less time to devote to writing these books this influence risks being lost.
16. Additionally, there is a danger that the UK could lose its influence in important policy debates and developments, such as those being developed in many other Member States on open access. The UK currently has developed a strong open access system, encompassing both Gold and Green options. To date, being part of the EU has enabled the UK to be influential in assisting other member states in the development of their own policies and systems, and given us the

opportunity to demonstrate the benefits of our approach. There is a concern that this influence could be lost as other countries develop their policies.

**What the government should do**

17. We welcome the government's commitment to safeguard the EU's Horizon 2020 grant and would urge the government to develop new strategies for domestic investment and negotiate access to the successor funding package to Horizon 2020 in order to give UK research the funding and support it needs to remain a world leader.
18. We would also ask the government to give assurance over the status of EU nationals currently living in the UK, and seek to protect the status of UK-nationals living in the EU. Any immigration policy post-Brexit should also preserve the ability of EU nationals to freely work and study in UK higher education institutions and in academic publishing houses.
19. A lot of the concerns from academic publishers surrounds the uncertainty created by the Brexit vote, such as over the future UK trading relationship with the EU and the new government's priorities. The government should therefore outline a clear plan and timetable for negotiating a new relationship with the EU.