By way of opening remarks, I want to note that today's event is titled "moving towards full open access in higher education". We are holding this event, though, within the United Kingdom in 2018, which has a set of very specific geographic and temporal coordinates for our consideration of what "full open access in higher education" might mean.

I would like to note the geographic specificity of our call for "full open access in higher education", for in some regions of the world, this has close to already been achieved. The proportion of research that is openly accessible in Latin America, for instance, is far far higher than in the UK. Without the prestige systems of assessment to which we cling in the Global North, Latin America has found ways, though platforms such as SciELO to allow equitable access to its research. So, first of all, what we mean when we say "full open access in higher education" is both locally contingent upon thorny social issues of prestige and scarcity (that is, it's a problem for the Global North, but not so much for Latin America) but also upon a locally insulated context of the United Kingdom.

That is to say: what we're probably mostly going to be thinking about today are the ways in which the United Kingdom, as an "early adopter" among the Global North nations, can achieve full open access for its research outputs, even as the global environment moves at a very different pace (in some places faster, but in many, slower). For the economic problems of this case are vast. The move to open access assumes, in many cases, that money from subscriptions will be diverted to money for publishing as a service. However, if the international environment is such that research that we care about still appears within subscription venues, then such offsetting is simply not possible. While it remains the case that the UK punches above its weight in terms of global research output, our withdrawal is not sufficient to cause a collapse of the subscription venues on its own.

It is also the case that the UK is at a point of utter political turmoil. As the current government grapples, somewhat ineffectively, with Brexit, the political momentum for open access that was instigated by the Willetts era has wilted. What was once a tectonic shift in policy is now entering a bedding-in phase. It is at the top of neither ministerial nor vice chancellor's worries. And so, just at a time when we need to be considering the international environment for open access, the UK enters a phase of political withdrawal, of isolationism from our European neighbours and a seeming cosiness with the currently troubling politics of the United States. This politics, of course, is not hospitable to open access. Just at a time when we need strong support for open access to "finish the job", our politicians are concerned elsewhere and universities are anxious about their post-Brexit financial situation.

Yet there are signs of optimism. Despite the UK's isolation, we have achieved much. Although many bemoan the entanglement of open access with the REF, a recent report for Research England showed 80% of outputs to be in line with the OA mandate. This is a phenomenal achievement, but for some it is not enough. What about books or monographs? What about data? What about software? What about the liberatory potential of open access and its anti-corporate elements?

The challenge, perhaps, is that we want the words "open access" to do too much. And different people want them to do different things. Some want to see vast cost savings and the destruction of the mega-publishers. Others are happy with the current, or even more, expenditure, so long as we achieve near-universal dissemination of research material. This means that there is also a lack of shared understanding by what it means to achieve "full" open access. Who measures the length of the road down which we are meant to be travelling. Does this mean 100% CC BY licensing, for instance, to get to "full" open access? Or does it mean that our outputs are 100% available to read? But which outputs?

We also have the question of the limits here of open access research coming from higher education. At a time when the research councils have been restructured to include industry partners, the I for Innovation in UKRI, should we not be thinking more broadly about research, and from wherever it might come? Why should it be the exclusive prerogative of higher education to openly share its research, while the same might not be incumbent on industry?

There is, of course, an easy answer to that question: it is because education is *different*. It is supposed to be for the benefit of humankind, not for shareholders. The research that takes place within universities is supposed to help everyone, not just those who paid in. But there is confused thinking on this from the UK government, who want HE to be a marketised system that works for individual gain and benefit, rather than the collective good. Open access works against that, but it is *not* predicated on a clear government ideology. For their ideology is that the marketised sale of teaching is fine and for individual gain, but the research that takes place in the university should be open for all, but it should be so in order that others can commercialise and profit, individually, from it. There is an incoherent mix of public and private discourses therein that structure the possibilities of what we can achieve, for they determine the political will towards OA.

It is, of course, a chair’s privilege that I am allowed, at the start of the day, to frame a set of problems and questions to which our speakers must then turn. I hope, though, that today’s talks will prove enlightening for all, on our path to openness, and that I can return at the end of the day with a sense of hope about our direction of travel.