

## Welcome and introductory remarks by Dr. Jeffrey Pullicino Orlando, Executive Chairman, MCST

Dear Chairman,  
Rapporteur and Experts,  
members of the EU Commission,  
stakeholders,  
colleagues,  
ladies and gentlemen.

MCST has always been at the forefront in promoting Science and Technology in Malta. We take challenges as opportunities for improvement and progress. We had been planning to organise a closing event for this PSF exercise for months. As I'm sure you're aware, a 'traditional' meeting is – for the time being- not an option. I am sure that we're all looking forward to a time when it will be.

Despite the circumstances, we felt that rather than cancel or postpone this event and our commitment to disseminate the results of the hard work of the Panel of Experts, we resort to technology to overcome this challenge and forge ahead with our plans. I feel that this morning's event is a testament to what the Council stands for: embracing challenges and looking at technology as a means to overcome them. It may be wise to start considering such methods when our planet returns to normality – to avoid unnecessary travel with the resulting pollution.

MCST, as the national entity responsible for the Open Science dossier, is working towards Malta's National Open Access Policy. As most of you are aware, it is envisaged that this will be launched at the beginning of next year. Open Science is revolutionising and revalorizing the scientific world. Open Science is the means by which science is adapting to the challenges that humanity is facing in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The global challenges that the world is facing including, for instance, those associated with health - such as the Coronavirus pandemic - cannot be faced with old, traditional tools. Open Science provides the necessary guidance to arrive at solutions in a more agile and cost-effective manner.

Open Science bridges the geographical barriers between knowledge and science. Open Science is the key to future collaboration between scientists and researchers. As part of Open Science, Open Access makes it possible for researchers and academics to share and exchange the knowledge in their research publications without unnecessary barriers.

Open Access makes the work of local researchers more widely accessible beyond one's usual, limited, sphere, and - naturally - the local researcher has the potential to access a wider selection of research work. Of course, attention and focus on the quality is of **paramount** importance.

Today marks the passing of the baton from the PSF Panel to MCST. We celebrate the conclusion of an important project and the finalisation of a report which will be the bedrock for Malta's first ever national open access policy.

MCST would like to express its sincere appreciation to the European Commission for providing the necessary resources through the Horizon 2020 Policy Support Facility. We would also like to express our gratitude to the Chair, Rapporteur and the Experts appointed by the Commission, for their invaluable contribution in meeting the national stakeholders during their two visits and in developing the report that we are launching today.

A word of thanks also goes to all the stakeholders that participated during this exercise, who dedicated their time and resources to give their open, frank and inspirational feedback during the process.

And, finally, I would like to thank my own team for their enthusiasm and the excellent work they carry out, including and notably in this area, and for continuing the work and efforts of MCST without interruption even in the current critical situation that the world is facing.