

Open Access: a Guide for Authors

What is Open Access?

Open Access is a type of online publishing in which:

- Access is free to all readers with an Internet connection
- Readers are free to redistribute material in any way, provided they acknowledge the author
- Articles are stored in a digital archive for long-term preservation
 - Source: Bethesda Statement on Open Access Publishing (<http://www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/bethesda.htm>)
- Publication charges are typically paid by authors or funding bodies

Note: These definitions apply to individual articles. It is possible for open access and non open access articles to appear in an issue of the same journal.

Who are the Key Players in Open Access?

Organization	Online at	Scope
Biomed Central	www.biomedcentral.com	Over 100 open access journals, emphasis on niche publishing
Company of Biologists	www.biologists.org	Offers author option to publish Open Access in their journals
Eprints.org	Eprints.org	Assists authors and institutions with self-archiving of papers, ideally in tandem with journal publication
Directory of Open Access Journals	www.doaj.org	Directory of over 1,800 open access journals in numerous fields
Public Library of Science	www.plos.org	Trying to compete with major science weeklies
PubMed Central	www.pubmedcentral.gov	Authorized archive for NIH Manuscript Submission Policy

What are the goals of Open Access?

The goals of Open Access are to provide...

- Unhindered dissemination of scientific papers via the Web
- Fast turnaround of new papers
- An alternative business model to traditional publishing
- The possibility of federated searching via author self-archiving
- Rigorous peer review
- Ability for authors to retain copyright over their own materials

What concerns or issues are there with Open Access?

- Unproven model
- Quality of new journals as opposed to existing titles
- Tenure and promotion questions for individual scientists
- Accreditation issues for schools and departmental programs
- Loss of print archive

Questions on getting started

- What steps will you need to follow?
- What obligations will you have?
- What benefits can you hope to receive?
 - Tenure system still favors publishing in traditional journals, although open access journals continue to gain prominence

Requirements for Electronic submission

- Instructions for Authors available on web sites or in print copies
- Author must have email account set up and working
- Paper to be sent electronically according to publisher requirements
- Computer must have all necessary hardware and software requirements
- Publishable formats to be followed for manuscript, tables, graphics, datasets, and other relevant files
- Similar to traditional electronic publication

Peer review

- Does publisher require author to submit a list of peer reviewers?
- Make sure peer reviewers are not invested in the publication of the paper

Copyright and licensing agreement

- To be signed by author(s)
- **Author retains copyright**
- Publisher to be identified as original publisher of work
- Creative Commons (CC) may apply for reproduction and re-use of material (creativecommons.org)
 - Set of pre-written licenses available
 - Copyright is retained
 - Provides free use for scholarly purposes

Publication fees

- Each publisher sets own fee
- Goes beyond traditional “page fees”
- Payment may be required whether or not article is accepted

Funding support for authors

- Determine whether you have funding support
 - Biomed Central tells you on their web site
 - Contact library to see whether agreement is in place
 - Contact publisher or relevant society
- How does this work?
 - Institutional memberships paid by libraries in lieu of subscription fees
 - NYU is a member of Biomed Central
 - PLoS now offers institutional memberships
 - Howard Hughes Medical Institute provides budget line for its investigators to publish in Open Access journals
 - As of October 2005, Wellcome Trust grantees (United Kingdom) *must* deposit articles in PubMed Central
 - NIH grantees are requested, but not required, to deposit articles in PubMed Central