

Starting an Open Access Journal

General Principles for New Open Access Journals

Organizations such as the Directory of Open Access Journals (www.doaj.org) have specific criteria for which titles to include in their database. Researchers starting their own journals could use these criteria to determine the likelihood of acceptance within the Open Access publishing community.

Information coverage:

1. All scientific and scholarly subjects included
2. Journals publishing research or review papers in full text
3. Academic, government, commercial, non-profit private sources are all acceptable
4. Level: the target group for included journals should be primarily researchers
5. Content: a substantive part of the journal should be research papers; All content should be full text

Access:

1. Cost: Journals that use a funding model that charges users or their institutions are **not** included.
2. Registration: **Free** user registration online is acceptable.
3. Journals that have an **embargo** period will not be added.

Metadata:

1. Granularity: Resources will be catalogued on journal title level.

Quality:

1. Journal should exercise quality control on submitted papers through an editor, editorial board and/or a peer-review system.

(From DOAJ Selection Criteria, <http://www.doaj.org/articles/about#criteria>.)

Starting a new Open Access journal with BioMed Central

At present, **BioMed Central** (www.biomedcentral.com) is the publisher offering the most developed, clear plan for launching a new Open Access journal. They have launched over 40 new OA journals over the past few years. Individuals are invited to apply to BMC to start a new journal. Scientific societies may also apply. BMC seeks to publish new journals to serve as a home for new branches of a specialty.

Steps:

1. Editor agrees to accept BioMed Central policies regarding:

- a) Copyright and licensing agreement
(Creative Commons Attribution license: <http://creativecommons.org/>)
- b) BMC's article-processing charges for authors
- c) BMC will be the sole publisher and owner of the journal
- d) BMC will not pay journal or its officers

2. Editor's Role:

- a) Sets the scope of the journal, determine type of content that will be published
- b) Recruits the editorial board
- c) Sets policy on type of content and on peer review
- d) Decide type of material, including research articles, editorials, letters, etc.

3. BioMed Central provides:

- a) A complete publishing system, including online submission system, digitization of accepted articles and publication in .pdf and web formats
- b) Publication of accepted articles in XML format (important for Open Archives)
- c) Editorial guidance and technical support
- d) Maintain and host the journal, and ensure Open Access availability
- e) Works with editor on electronic “Calls for Papers”

For more information:

General Information about starting a new, open access journal

<http://www.biomedcentral.com/info/authors/startajournal/>

Email: newjournals@biomedcentral.com

See also BMC's list of launched and forthcoming journals

<http://www.biomedcentral.com/info/authors/newjournals/>

The SPARC Initiative

The Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC) seeks partners in finding common ground to make scientific communication responsive to the goals of science.

SPARC Initiatives:

- Endorsing specific journals
- Building advocacy and education campaigns
- “Gaining Independence”: manual on how to publish non-profit electronic publications

For more information

Web: <http://www.arl.org/sparc/>

Phone: (202) 296-2296