

The Research Council's Principles for Open Access to Scientific Publications

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1) Objective

It is an important research policy objective to ensure that the results of publicly funded research are available to the public. While scientific results may be said to encompass both scientific publication and data generated by research activity, this document is limited to scientific publications. The Research Council's principles for open access to research data are presented in a separate policy document.

Open access to scientific publications is a means of securing an open, quality-assured pool of research and knowledge. Scientific publications based on R&D projects funded wholly or partially by the Research Council must therefore be made openly accessible to all interested parties. To achieve this objective, the Research Council will work to take full advantage of the potential found in digital media and infrastructure to disseminate and quality assure research results. The principles for open access to scientific publications also largely apply to open access to research data.

The principles for open access to scientific publication meet key research policy needs by a) enhancing scientific quality, as many more researchers may easily comment and expand on published research results, b) providing trade and industry and other interested parties with easy access to published research results, c) informing government authorities and public administration of research results relevant to their activities, d) ensuring future access to today's published research results, and e) providing researchers at institutions that have limited funding, not least in developing countries, with access to the latest findings.

There are two main methods of providing open access to scientific articles:

1. Self-archiving of previously published, peer-reviewed articles in institutional or subject-specific digital archives with unrestricted public access.
2. Peer-reviewed electronic journals that are free of charge and publicly accessible from the time of publication. The costs of publishing open access journals are covered by means other than subscriptions, often through some form of publication fee.

Open access publishing is not limited to articles in scientific journals. Articles in anthologies and monographs are examples of other peer-reviewed publications that may be viewed in the context of open access. However, as journal articles are the primary form of publication both internationally and across subject areas, it will be most constructive at this time to restrict the Research Council's open access principles to this type of publication.

2) The Research Council's requirements for open access to scientific publications

The Research Council requires all scientific articles resulting from research wholly or partially funded by the Research Council to be openly accessible. All articles with such funding must be self-archived.

In the period 2014–2019 the Research Council will implement a funding scheme to cover fees incurred by Norwegian research institutions for publication in open access journals. After 2019,

the Research Council expects that costs related to publishing fees will be incorporated into the institutions' indirect costs for R&D projects.

An important aspect of academic freedom is the right of researchers to choose the channel by which to publish their own scientific results, but researchers also have an academic duty to publish in a manner that gives their peers and the general public easy access to these results. The Research Council therefore encourages researchers who receive funding to choose open access journals.

Self-archiving of published scientific articles

Scientific journal articles resulting from projects wholly or partially funded by the Research Council must be stored in an open electronic repository, either at the institution with which the researcher is affiliated or in an open, subject-specific archive. The version stored must be an accepted version/post-print version, and the content must be identical to the final published version. The requirement of self-archiving also applies to articles published with gold open access.

The Research Council will permit a delay in open access to self-archived articles from the original publication date by six months for journals in medicine, health sciences, mathematics, natural sciences and technology and by 12 months for journals in the humanities and social sciences. This is in accordance with international guidelines in the field, including in the EU's Horizon 2020 and recommendations from Science Europe.

The Research Council's requirement that project administrators store and make copyrighted material openly accessible in institutional repositories is based on the presumption that such open access does not infringe on the rights of authors and publishers to this material.

If articles resulting from projects wholly or partially funded by the Research Council are not self-archived in accordance with these open access principles, the Research Council may withhold funding until the relevant articles are self-archived.

Funding of publication fees for articles

An increasing share of scientific articles is being published in open access journals. The Research Council will help to fund the publication of such articles through a time-limited funding scheme. Approved research institutions ([link](#)) may seek funding from the Research Council to cover some of the cost of publication fees incurred. To be eligible for funding, universities and university colleges must have established an internal publication fund.

The Research Council seeks to encourage the use of gold open access to scientific articles. The Research Council therefore recommends that the institutions only cover the cost of publication fees in journals registered in the Directory of Open Access Journals and that satisfy current international open access requirements, including licenses for free use. The Research Council expects research institutions to approve only the publication fees for journals registered at levels 1 or 2 in the registry of publication channels from the Norwegian Association of Higher Education Institutions.

In the view of the Research Council, the cost of publication fees must in the long term be given the same status as the cost of journal subscriptions, e.g. as operational costs independent of projects or individuals. The Research Council therefore expects that after 2019 such costs will be incorporated as part of the institutions' indirect costs in grant applications for project funding.

3) Cooperation and advice

Publication patterns and practices in research and academia are moving ever more rapidly towards open access. It is crucial that the Research Council's principles reflect this development and are open to adaptation should circumstances call for it. To ensure that the principles promote the objective of open access to scientific publications at all times, the Research Council will engage in productive dialogue about the principles with relevant institutions and partners. In particular, the Research Council will cooperate with the publication funds at the research institutions as well as with the CRISTin Current Research Information System in Norway, which is responsible for coordinating the national effort to promote open access to research results.