

PUBLISHING OPEN ACCESS JOURNALS – AN INTRODUCTION

What is open access?

Open access publishing makes articles published in a journal freely and permanently available online. Open access journals operate in the same way as traditional journals, including stringent and thorough peer-review. The only difference is the business model, whereby a fee is levied upon publication. Articles are then freely available and can be redistributed and reused as long as the article is correctly attributed.

What is happening in open access?

Open access has gained tremendous support from authors, who appreciate the increased visibility of their articles, as well as science institutions and funders, who value the societal impact of freely available research results.

- ▶ More than 160 institutions and 50 funders all over the world have made open access to publications mandatory ¹. Many more institutions have signed open access initiatives including the Berlin declaration, which is endorsed by more than 270 leading research organizations and universities worldwide ².
- ▶ The Directory of Open Access Journals currently lists more than 6,700 open access journals ³, a number that has doubled in the last three years. Twenty-two percent of these journals are already indexed by ISI, a share which will increase further as journals mature. Open access publishers such as Hindawi report that their numbers of submitted and published articles doubled within two years ⁴.
- ▶ Some of the world's most prominent scientists have supported open access from the beginning. 41 Nobel laureates have expressed their support, emphasizing the need for public access ⁵.

The entire landscape of open access publishing has gathered a huge momentum. Open access is an advantageous way of publishing science with the biggest impact possible. Springer has the vision to enhance its rich portfolio of subscription-based journals by offering open access journals of the highest quality to all research communities.

What are the benefits of publishing in an open access journal?

- ▶ **Freely available articles**
Research published in open access journals are freely available online to anyone, which maximizes the visibility, and thus the uptake and use of articles.
- ▶ **Authors retain copyright**
Articles are published under the Creative Commons Attribution License and can be reused and redistributed as long as they are correctly attributed.
- ▶ **High quality and rigorous peer review**
Open access journals run through a thorough electronic peer-review process the same way traditional journals do.
- ▶ **Rapid publication**
An easy to use online submission and efficient production process enable the immediate publication on acceptance.

¹ <http://roarmap.eprints.org>, Status 21 July 2011

² <http://oa.mpg.de/lang/en-uk/berlin-prozess/berliner-erklarung>

³ <http://www.doaj.org>, Status 21 July 2011

⁴ Growth of Hindawi 2008/09: <https://mx2.arl.org/Lists/SPARC-OAForum/Message/5326.html>

⁵ http://www.taxpayeraccess.org/supporters/scientists/nobelists_2009.shtml

► **Compliance with funders' open access mandates**

Articles can comply with open access mandates in the fastest and easiest way. Final articles can be deposited into bibliographic databases and institutional repositories without any embargo periods.

► **Citation tracking and inclusion in bibliographic databases**

Open access journals can be tracked for Impact Factors and are included in bibliographic databases just as traditional journals.

How does the business side of open access work?

Open access journals operate under a reversed business model to traditional journals. While the traditional model relies on restricting access to published research in order to recoup the costs of the publication process, the open access publishing model treats publication as the last phase of the research process. Instead of charging users a fee to read the content, an article-processing charge (APC) is levied at the beginning of the process. This flat charge covers the cost of publication and allows free and immediate access to the research articles.

The author who submits the manuscript is responsible for making or arranging the payment. Usually the authors do not have to pay the fee themselves but can rely on institutions and funders, who take on the involved fees in various ways:

- By establishing a **central open access fund** (e.g. Harvard University)
- By making open access fees part of their **general funding** (e.g. National Institutes of Health, US)
- By paying open access fees as part of a **membership model** (e.g. Max Planck Society)

About Springer's Open Access Membership Program

Our Open Access Membership Program enables academic and research institutions, societies and funders to actively support open access by removing some or all of the financial cost from the individual author. Together with BioMed Central, we offer different Membership packages to suit every institution and their individual needs:

- **Prepay Membership** – the whole cost of publishing is covered by the institution with no additional fees paid by the author
- **Supporter Membership** – the institution pays a flat rate annual fee and the author is given a 15% discount on the APC
- **Shared Support Membership** – the APC is split equally between the institution and the author

About SpringerOpen

SpringerOpen

In June 2010, SpringerOpen was launched as a response to the growing interest in open access publishing. SpringerOpen is our new range of fully open access journals, which covers all disciplines within the science, technology and medicine (STM) fields, giving authors in all areas of science the opportunity to publish open access.

Springer's high level of author and production services applies to our SpringerOpen journals in precisely the same way we care about titles with the traditional model. Furthermore, Springer has acquired a premier open access publisher, BioMed Central, which publishes more than 200 open access journals, including some of the most highly-ranked journals in their respective fields. BioMed Central has more than 10 years of experience with publishing open access journals, and will continue to grow its portfolio while providing its expertise and infrastructure to SpringerOpen.

Publishing in a SpringerOpen journal enables authors to comply with open access mandates, retain copyright and benefit from Springer's trusted brand. Get involved with us!

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