



F.O.R.M.

OPEN SCIENCE RESOURCES

OPEN ACCESS PUBLISHING 101

UNDERSTANDING OPEN ACCESS

Open Access (OA) redefines how scholarly research is shared, ensuring that everyone can access and benefit from academic work or research outputs without financial barriers. Unlike traditional publishing models that often require costly subscriptions, OA makes research articles freely available online to anyone.

TYPES OF OPEN ACCESS PUBLISHING

Open peer review is considered a transformative approach to the traditional peer review process, characterized by its transparency. Open peer review promotes openness in several aspects:

Diamond Open Access

- Open Access journals that are not funded by either subscriptions or APCs.
- Most open model of research in the academic community
- Copyright is retained by the author with a choice of Creative Commons Licensing.

Green Open Access

- Provides authors the authority to place earlier versions of their published research in freely available repositories or archives.
- Known as self-archiving.
- No APCs applied.
- Publishers can place time limits on the accessibility of the manuscript - aka embargo period.
- Publisher usually retains the copyright.

Gold Open Access

- Applies Article Processing Charges (APCs) to the author.
- No cost to the reader.
- Most common kind of model in the industry.
- Copyright is usually retained by the author with a choice of Creative Commons Licensing.

BENEFITS OF PUBLISHING OPEN

There are many benefits to publishing your work through Open Access mediums, some of which include:

Stimulated ecosystem

More access means more people could be inspired to innovate due to your results.



Inclusivity

Includes researchers that are otherwise barred by paywalls, particularly those from low and medium income countries.



Citations

Increases your chances of being cited by fellow researchers and gaining exposure.



Increased interdisciplinary conversation

Researchers from varying fields can more easily cross reference each other and learn from multiple disciplines without paywalls and other exclusionary issues.



Stronger economies

Businesses can engage with the research faster and independently, benefiting the knowledge economy and increasing private innovation.



Public engagement

OA allows members of the public to engage with literature for more immediate implementation of results.



COMMON MYTHS ABOUT OA PUBLISHING

While Open Access can contribute so much to the development of healthy research ecosystems, many shy away from publishing Open due to common myths, including:

MYTHS

Authors always give away their copyrights.

Peer review is not a necessary part of open access.

You cannot get indexed if you publish with open access journals.

Open Access always preys on authors by charging them an APC.

Open Access only benefits readers and not the author.

FACTS

Unlike traditional journal models or the green open access model, the diamond model allows authors to retain their rights.

Reputable open access journal articles go through the same peer review process that articles published in traditional journals do.

Quality control remains a priority for open access journals. There are also indexing platforms dedicated to open access journals.

There are open access models - like the diamond model - that do not charge APCs at all.

Researchers benefit by gaining access to work published by experts in their field. Authors who publish in open access journals also have a higher chance of getting cited.

HOW TO AVOID PREDATORY JOURNALS

While OA can contribute significantly to the research ecosystem, predatory journals (fraudulent journals or journal websites that aim to profit off of researchers by promoting fake opportunities for publishing) can impede the progress of OA by tarnishing its reputation and harming the careers of researchers. Thankfully, there are many ways to avoid them, such as:

Understanding Predatory Journals

Predatory publishers or journals are those that charge authors a fee for publication with no intention of providing the expected services – such as editorial or peer review – in return.

Professional Reputation

Check to see if the journal is listed in reputable indexes and directories such as DOAJ, or referring to the latest IAP "Combating Predatory Academic Journals & Conferences" Report.

Ask Around

Check with colleagues and academics if they have heard of the journal, or if they know anyone who has engaged with their journal services.

The Diamond Model

While highly reputable journals do often engage with green or gold models of open access, you may want to consider opting for journals that adopt the diamond model - and do not require an APC - like KnE Publishing.

Use Resources

Take advantage of free and openly accessible resources like "Think. Check. Submit". These resources provide lists of credible journals and checklists for academics to utilise.

Double, Triple Check

If the reputation continues to be unclear, perhaps because they have been recommended by a colleague but are not listed in reputable indexes or directories: check the "Stop Predatory Journals" list.

RESOURCES

Learn more about Open Access publishing through our list of resources:

[JAMIA Open's "Why publish open access?"](#)

[Wellcome's "Open access policy"](#)

[Cornell University Library's "Open access publishing: What is open access?"](#)

[FORM's "Rise of the Predators: How to Identify & Avoid Predatory Journals and Conferences"](#)

ABOUT FORM:

The Forum for Open Research in MENA (FORM) is a non-profit membership organisation supporting the advancement of Open Science policies and practices in research communities and institutions across the Arab region.

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