Open Access

Fig. in **American Libraries** 26, no. 8 (September 1995): 784.

Open access (OA) is free, immediate, permanent, full-text, online access, for any user, web-wide, to digital scientific and scholarly material, primarily research articles published in peer-reviewed journals. An open-access article has limited copyright and licensing restrictions which means anyone, anywhere, with access to the Internet may read, download, copy, and distribute that article.[1] The only constraint on reproduction and distribution, and the only role for copyright in this domain, should be to give authors control over the integrity of their work and the right to be properly acknowledged and cited.[2]

There are two main currents in the open access movement:

1. In **OA self-archiving** (also known as the "green" road to OA), authors publish in a subscription journal, but in addition make their articles freely accessible online, usually by depositing them in either an institutional repository (such as the *Okayama University Digital Information Repository*) or in a central repository (such as *PubMed Central*). The deposit can be in the form of a peer-reviewed postprint or a non-peer-reviewed preprint. OA self-archiving was first formally proposed in 1994 by Stevan Harnad. However, self-archiving was already being done by computer scientists in their local FTP archives in the '80s, later harvested into *Citeseer*. High-energy physicists have been self-archiving centrally in *arXiv* since 1991.

2. In **OA publishing** (also known as the "gold" road to OA) authors publish in open access journals that make their articles freely accessible online immediately upon publication. Examples of OA publishers are *BioMed Central* and the *Public Library of Science*.[3] There are about 25,000 peer-reviewed journals in all across all disciplines, countries and languages. About 10% of them are OA journals.[4]

The first major international statement on open access was the *Budapest Open Access Initiative* in February 2002. This provided a definition of open access, and has a growing list of signatories. Two further statements followed: the *Bethesda Statement on Open Access Publishing* in June 2003 and the *Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge in the Sciences and Humanities* in October 2003.

Open Access has growing support worldwide and it is received with enthusiasm and high expectations in the developing world. Historically, the circulation of scientific information in developing countries has been impeded by a number of barriers including economic models, infrastructure, policies, language and culture[5].

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[1] "Open Access", **Wikipedia**, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open_access

[2] "Budapest Open Access Initiative", **Open Society Institute & Soros Foundation Network**, www.soros.org/openaccess

[3] "Open Access", **Wikipedia**, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open_access

[4] "Open Access", **Wikipedia**, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open_access

[5] "Salvador Declaration on Open Access: The Developing World Perspective", **9th International Congress on Medical Librarianship**, www.icml9.org/meetings/openaccess/public/documents/declaration.htm

OA has since become the subject of much discussion amongst researchers, academics, librarians, university administrators, funding agencies, government officials, commercial publishers, and society publishers. Although there is substantial (though not universal) agreement on the concept of OA itself, there is considerable debate and discussion about the economics of funding peer review in open access publishing, and the reliability and economic effects of self-archiving.[1] While the peer-reviewed journal literature should be accessible online without cost to readers, it is not costless to produce. However, experiments show that the overall costs of providing open access to this literature are far lower than the costs of traditional forms of dissemination. With such an opportunity to save money and expand the scope of dissemination at the same time, there is today a strong incentive for professional associations, universities, libraries, foundations, and others to embrace open access as a means of advancing their missions.[2]

Open access contributions must satisfy two conditions:

1. The author(s) and right holder(s) of such contributions grant(s) to all users a free, irrevocable, worldwide, right of access, and a license to copy, use, distribute, transmit and display the work publicly and to make and distribute derivative works, in any digital medium for any responsible purpose, subject to proper attribution of authorship, as well as the right to make small numbers of printed copies for their personal use.

2. A complete version of the work and all supplemental materials, including a copy of the permission as stated above, in an appropriate standard electronic format is deposited (and thus published) in at least one online repository using suitable technical standards (such as the Open Archive definitions) that is supported and maintained by an academic institution, scholarly society, government agency, or other well established organization that seeks to enable open access, unrestricted distribution, inter operability, and long-term archiving[3].

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[1] "Open Access", **Wikipedia**, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open_access

[2] "Budapest Open Access Initiative", **Open Society Institute & Soros Foundation Network**, www.soros.org/openaccess

[3] "Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge in the Sciences and Humanities", **Max-Planck-Gesellschaft**, http://oa.mpg.de/openaccess-berlin/berlindeclaration.html

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