



Open access policy 2021

Our open access (OA) policy is changing.

The new OA policy will apply to any article that includes original, peer-reviewed research and is submitted for publication from 1 January 2021.

It won't apply to:

- research articles submitted before 1 January 2021 – until then researchers must continue to use our [current policy](#)
- monographs and book chapters – we aren't changing [our policy](#) for these, but we are keeping it under review.

The overarching aim of our OA policy is to make sure that knowledge and discoveries resulting from our funding are shared and used in a way that maximises their benefit to health.

We expect our researchers to publish their findings freely online as high-quality, peer-reviewed research articles, monographs and book chapters.

Providing free, online access to published research will:

- maximise the availability and usability of publications
- make sure the research we fund can be built upon.

Our new OA policy is in line with the key principles of [Plan S](#). Wellcome is a member of [cOAlition S](#) and is committed to working in partnership with other funders to make all research articles OA.

1. All research articles supported in whole or in part by Wellcome must be:

- made freely available through PubMed Central (PMC) and Europe PMC by the official final publication date

and

- published under a Creative Commons attribution licence (CC-BY), unless we have agreed, as an exception, to allow publication under a CC-BY-ND licence.

2. We will provide grantholders with funding to cover reasonable article processing charges (APCs) for articles published in fully OA journals or platforms that:

- are indexed by the [Directory of Open Access Journals](#) and comply with the technical guidance and requirements set out by [cOAlition S](#)

and

- have an [agreement](#) with the National Library of Medicine (NLM) to deposit the [version of record](#) in PMC and allow that content to be shared with Europe PMC.

3. We will no longer cover the costs of OA publishing in subscription journals. Grant applicants cannot ask for these costs in their grant application, and grantholders will not be allowed to use their grant funds to pay for these costs.

However, from 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2024, organisations can use Wellcome OA funds for publication costs associated with [transformative OA arrangements](#). These costs must be in proportion to the number of OA articles supported by Wellcome.

We will publish a list of approved arrangements before 1 January 2021.

4. We will no longer provide funds for non-OA publication costs (for example colour, page charges etc).
5. Wellcome-funded authors or their institutions must retain copyright for their research articles and hold the rights necessary to make a version of the article immediately available under a compliant open licence.

We will amend our grant conditions before 1 January 2021, and develop or adopt a model licence for our grantholders in partnership with cOAlition S.

6. All research articles supported in whole or in part by Wellcome must include a statement explaining how other researchers can access any data, original software or materials underpinning the research, in line with our [policy on data, software and materials management and sharing](#).
7. All Wellcome-funded researchers are strongly encouraged to:
 - post [preprints](#) of their completed manuscripts
 - publish them under a CC-BY licence.
8. When there is a significant public health benefit to preprints being shared widely and rapidly, such as a disease outbreak, these preprints must be published:
 - before peer review
 - on an approved platform that supports **immediate** publication of the complete manuscript
 - under a CC-BY licence.

We will publish a list of compliant preprint platforms before 1 January 2021.

9. We are committed to making sure that when we assess research outputs during funding decisions we consider the intrinsic merit of the work, not the title of the journal or publisher.

All Wellcome-funded organisations must publicly commit to this principle. For example, they can sign the [San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment](#), [Leiden Manifesto](#) or equivalent.

We may ask organisations to show that they're complying with this as part of our organisation audits.

10. Researchers and organisations who do not comply with this policy will be subject to appropriate sanctions. These may include Wellcome:
 - not accepting new grant applications
 - suspending funding to organisations in extreme cases.

More information

[Frequently asked questions](#)

[Policy on data, software and materials management and sharing](#)