

Association for Library Collections and Technical Services

Statement on Open Access

Background

The Internet and digital technology have profoundly changed the nature of scholarly communication and publishing, making possible worldwide access to scholarship in ways never before possible and changing published scholarship into both a common good and a public good.¹ Open access contributes to the advancement of scholarship worldwide as scholars build on their colleagues' work. The 2001 Budapest Open Access Initiative (BOAI) (www.soros.org/openaccess) was the first initiative to use the term "open access" and to define it, the first to call for open access journals and open access archives as complementary strategies, and the first to call for open access in all disciplines and countries.² The BOAI states,

There are many degrees and kinds of wider and easier access to this literature. By "open access" to this literature, we mean its free availability on the public Internet, permitting any users to read, download, copy, distribute, print, search, or link to the full texts of these articles, crawl them for indexing, pass them as data to software, or use them for any other lawful purpose, without financial, legal, or technical barriers other than those inseparable from gaining access to the internet itself. 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.

A key component of open access is the management of copyright to remove traditional use restrictions. The 2003 Berlin Declaration states:

The author(s) and right holder(s) of such contributions grant(s) to all users a free, irrevocable, worldwide, right of access to, 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 (community standards, will continue to provide the mechanism for enforcement of proper attribution and responsible use of the published work, as they do now), as well as the right to make small numbers of printed copies for their personal use.

In practice, open access may be either *gratis* or *libre*. *Gratis* means "for zero price" and *gratis* open access materials have no price barriers, but do have permission barriers. *Libre* means "with little or no restriction," thus *libre* open access materials remove both price barriers and unnecessary copyright and licensing restrictions. The BOAI states,

gratis access is better than priced access, *libre* access is better than *gratis* access, and *libre* under CC-BY [Creative Commons attribution license, the most open and accommodating of Creative

Commons licenses] or the equivalent is better than libre under more restrictive open licenses. We should achieve what we can when we can. We should not delay achieving gratis in order to achieve libre, and we should not stop with gratis when we can achieve libre.³

Two methods support open access to scholarly journal literature: archiving individual articles (called the “green” road) in open access digital repositories, which may be institutional or disciplinary, and publishing open access journals (called the “gold” road). Both offer access without cost to the readers, but are not without cost to sustain. Many academic and cultural institutions maintain institutional repositories into which members of their communities may deposit their works. Authors make no payments and the institution provides and maintains the depository. Repositories that comply with OAI-PMH (Open Archives Initiative-Protocol for Metadata Harvesting) make records for their holding available for harvesting and discovery through the Internet, thus improving discovery. Authors may deposit preprints or postprints. *Library Resources and Technical Services* currently grants authors the right to self-archive articles in digital repositories, and has provided this green open access for some time.

Directives from granting agencies (the National Institutes of Health in the U.S.) and the Office of the U.S. President have mandated open access to the results of publicly funded research.⁴ Numerous colleges and universities have implemented open access policies. For the most part, these directives and policies see green and gold open access as equally acceptable.

Gold open access journals are not without cost to produce and their publication requires new business models designed to replace subscription revenue streams. Although publishing open access journals costs less because publishers do not have to manage subscription lists or pay for printing and mailing, production costs remain similar. Commercial publishers usually charge an article processing fee (sometimes called the “author pays model”). The average article processing fee across all journals listed in the Directory of Open Access Journals averaged \$900 in 2010.⁵ Most grant-funded research supports article processing fees and many higher education institutions offer campus-based open access funds to assist in paying article processing fees (assuming the journal meets certain conditions). Some journals are hybrids—they are subscription-based but authors may pay a fee to open their specific articles. Some journals provide open access after an embargo period. Most experts on open access agree that neither hybrids nor embargoed journals are truly open access.

Scholarly journals in the humanities and social sciences face greater challenges than those in the sciences in the transition to gold open access. The articles they publish are seldom the result of grant-funded research, thus eliminating one source for article processing fees. Many continue to be published by small societies and professional organizations with modest operating budgets that cannot subsidize a gold open access journal. Many authors who publish in these journals are practitioners without ready access to open access funds and few can personally afford article processing fees.

The number of gold open access journals continues to increase and many agree these journals should be the ultimate goal, but the most common road to open access today is through self-archiving.

One misconception about open access journals persists—that they are lower quality. The peer review process, which authorizes and accredits scholarship, is completely consistent with both green and gold open access.

Most of the focus of the open access movement has been and continues to be on the scholarly, peer-reviewed journal literature. Open access is increasingly being provided to other scholarly communication formats, including book chapters and books in total. One of the more successful models for books is to provide the monograph open access online and charge for the print version (often print-on-demand). The challenge is to generate enough income to support production and generate some royalties for authors and/or copyright holders. Many societies, professional organizations, and individuals make non-scholarly materials openly available with various copyright and licensing restrictions—or use Creative Commons licenses—to make their use more or less open.

ALCTS Open Access Statement

- ALCTS supports the transition to open access and endorses making scholarly works freely accessible, with minimal if any limitations on how they can be used, in order to generate the full benefits that can come from open access to these works.
- ALCTS endorses both the green and gold roads to open access.
- ALCTS encourages authors, whose articles are published in *Library Resources and Technical Services*, to deposit these works in institutional repositories that are OAI-PMH-compliant, thus providing green open access.
- ALCTS encourages authors, whose articles are published in *Library Resources and Technical Services* **and other publications**, to use a CC-BY license to grant the rights 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.
- ALCTS is working toward transitioning *Library Resources and Technical Services* into a gold open access journal with no embargo period. However, doing so requires developing a sustainable business model that allows us to both reduce production costs and offset the loss of subscription income without increasing member dues or charging article processing fees. Until such a business model can be developed, *Library Resources and Technical Services* will continue as a subscription-based green open access journal that actively encourages self-archiving and continues the use of a one-year embargo on free access to the online version of the journal.
- Because they are valuable tools for practitioners, ALCTS endorses and will continue to provide freely via the Internet certain publications (e.g., *ALCTS News*, Z687 white papers, Preservation Statistics) and other resources (e.g., webinar recordings and e-forums; syllabi for functional areas).
- ALCTS will publish selected ALCTS monographs libre open access (freely available online with little or no access and use restrictions). These materials will be available print-on-demand for a standard price, plus shipping.

- Because not all authors have access to institutional repositories, ALCTS has spearheaded establishment of the American Library Association institutional repository (ALAIR) in partnership with the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. The initial phase of the project will house ALA resources and digital archives. Longer term objectives include creating a discipline based digital repository that will focus on library and information science, The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign houses the American Library Association archives, both a print collection and a digital collection (part of the ALA Archives collection that has been digitized).

¹ A common good is a specific "good" that is shared and beneficial for all (or most) members of a community. A public good is a "good" that is non-rivalrous and non-excludable—consumption of the good by one individual does not reduce the amount of the good available for consumption by others, and no one can be effectively excluded from using that good.

² Peter Suber, "Happy Birthday BOAI!," *Open Access News: News from the Open Access Movement*, (blog), Feb. 14, 2008, www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/2008/02/happy-birthday-boai.html.

³ Budapest Open access Initiative, "Ten Years on from the Budapest Open Access Initiative: Setting the Default to Open" (Sept. 12, 2012), www.budapestopenaccessinitiative.org/boai-10-recommendations.

⁴ National Institutes of Health, "The Omnibus Appropriations Act of 2009 Makes the NIH Public Access Policy Permanent," <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-09-071.html>; Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies by John P. Holdren, Director Office of Science and Technology Policy, "Increasing Access to the Results of Federally Funded Scientific Research," Feb. 22, 2013, www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/microsites/ostp/ostp_public_access_memo_2013.pdf.

⁵ David Solomon and Bo-Christer Björk, "Publication Fees in Open Access Publishing: Sources of Funding and Factors Influencing Choice of Journal," *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology* 63, no. 1 (2012): 98-107.