

## VUB OPEN ACCESS POLICY

Contact: [lucy.amez@vub.ac.be](mailto:lucy.amez@vub.ac.be)

### OPEN ACCESS DEFINITION

Open access refers to the online availability of research and scholarship, free of user charges.

### OPEN ACCESS MOTIVATION

Through free availability and consultation options, academic output is given **wider exposure** which is likely to increase impact. Researcher's commitment to open access is seen as a precondition for the development of a dynamic culture of knowledge exchange and science building on itself.

### ROAD TO OPEN ACCESS

There are different ways to put open access into practice. A traditional distinction is based on the so-called "golden road" versus the "green road".

With **gold open access**, a contribution is published in a journal or book that provides open access upon acceptance, by disclosure on the publisher's portal. Generally, copyrights remain with the original author(s).

In case of **green open access**, a contribution appears in a toll-access/subscription journal. The copyright transfer agreement stipulates the rights that are being transferred from the author to the publisher as well as the rights remaining with the author(s). In case of subscription based journals, copyright is often transferred from the author to the publisher. Increasingly, publishers grant the right to self-archiving a preprint version (author manuscript before peer review) or postprint version (after peer review and corrected for reviewer's comments) in an institutional repository and make it online available. Exceptionally, the publisher's version can be archived. The postprint and publisher's version differ mainly in copy-editing and type-setting.

Warning: terms as preprint and postprint are used interchangeably by publishers. It is recommended to consult your copyright transfer agreement in order to verify your rights.

An **institutional repository** is a digital library, managed by the university. When authorized by the author, the university will make the publication public available. Upon request of the publisher, the online exposure potentially respects an embargo period.

Some publishers may offer **hybrid models**, in between gold and green. A known case is when publishers of a subscription journal display a particular contribution on their portal, to be used free of charge, provided that the author pays an additional charge. Hybrid models come at high costs for universities as they simultaneously pay subscription as well as author fees.

### **OPEN ACCESS COSTS**

Open access publishing is faced with a changing business model. It is common practice that open access publishers levy a charge to be paid by authors, billed as review, processing or distribution charges. Those fees can be substantial, certainly when dealing with high reputation journals.

### **OPEN ACCESS QUALITY**

A new phenomenon in open access are the so called **predatory journals/publishers**. This type of journals does collect author fees without providing qualitative scientific peer review. Predatory publishers mainly operate by sending spam mails, inviting the researcher to make a contribution. Always check the provenance of the journal and see if the publisher/journal appears on *Beall's list*. This does not imply that open access equals low quality. A large number of open access journals do meet academic standards of peer review guaranteed by a supervisory scientific editorial board.

### **OPEN ACCESS USEFUL WEB ADRESSES**

Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) <http://doaj.org/>: An online directory indexing open access peer reviewed journals

Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association <http://oaspa.org/>: International community of open access publishers

Beall's list of predatory publishers and journals <http://scholarlyoa.com/>: Portal presenting lists of predatory journals/publishers based on number of pre-specified criteria

Sherpa Romeo <http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/romeo/>: Searchable database assembling publisher's self-archiving policies

## **VUB OPEN ACCESS POLICY**

The Vrije Universiteit Brussel does not favor either green or gold open access. However, there is no earmarked funding in support of author fees that come with the gold option. The VUB facilitates the green road by offering a repository infrastructure, allowing authors to deposit the publication and make it online available, conditional on the author's consent. Uploading a document in the institutional repository can be done using the PURE interface.

It is not mandatory to deposit your publication in a repository, even if the publisher does allow it, but it is highly recommended. Open access improves the exposure of your research and increases its use worldwide. It can be considered as a statement of the researcher in support of free availability of research, stimulating the dynamics of knowledge growth. Moreover, the repository is an institutional digital library, collecting and preserving all scientific output realized at your institution.

Funding organizations, such as FWO and the European Commission, made open access mandatory for the publication of research outcomes linked to their grants. The author is left with the choice between green and gold open access. When imposed by the funding organization, the author fee can be reimbursed as project cost.

## **WHAT CAN BE ARCHIVED IN PURE REPOSITORY**

Technically, you can upload a file for each publication category. However, the VUB recommends to restrict archiving in the PURE repository to **peer reviewed scientific publications**. Publications should have reached the status of **published** and the person who makes the deposit has to be copyright holder or must have been granted permission by the copyright holder.

If the publisher does not grant the green open access option, documents can be uploaded in PURE under the option "visibility BACKEND". In that case, the publication will not be exposed online, but can be consulted internally by other VUB PURE users. Additionally, it allows the university to create a digital library with a representative collection of the university's research output.

For green open access, the deposited version is **preferably a postprint or publisher's version**, but also preprints are allowed. Beware however that preprint implies before peer review, and may contain errors, potentially copied by readers. In case of gold open access, the VUB recommends to archive the publication, even if it is online available on the publisher's portal.

**Only pdf files are accepted.** When exposing the online document, PURE generates a frontpage with the final reference information and mention of the chosen version (preprint/postprint), that way meeting demands of a number of publishers.

### **ONLINE EXPOSURE OF THE VUB-PURE REPOSITORY**

In case of gold open access, the publishers expose the contribution on their portal. With green open access, the publication is made public by the university, after uploading in the repository and provided no embargo or legal restriction is stipulated by the author. The publication is shown on the VUB website through the PURE portal with the bibliographic information of your publication. Your online publication is also searchable through the library's catalogue.

The PURE repository will support the Open Archive Initiative Protocol for Metadata Harvesting which facilitates the search of VUB publications by external portals.

### **COPYRIGHT AND EMBARGO**

When uploading a journal contribution in the PURE repository, the information assembled by the database **Sherpa-Romeo** is shown. This information is linked to the journal by the ISSN and gives the user immediate advice about the self-archiving rights granted by the publisher. It is recommended however always to consult the copyright transfer agreement. It is the responsibility of the author to verify the copyright agreement before depositing in PURE.

PURE allows installing **an embargo** on the online exposure of your publication when requested in the copyright transfer agreement. The author can additionally explicit his/her copyright (owned by author(s) or publisher) as well as the rights/restriction for use, distribution and modification (see creative commons) in the **rights statement**.