

CALJ Position Paper on Journal Open Access Policies

Funders' open access mandates

In the last few years funding agencies worldwide have begun requiring researchers to make their research outputs freely available to the world. Most major funders, including SSHRC, CIHR, and NSERC, require authors to make their manuscript freely available within 12 months after publication (a few European funders insist on a shorter embargo period of 6 months). The researchers can comply by ensuring either the accepted manuscript or the final version of record is freely available either in a repository or on the journal's web site.

The following three paragraphs are from the Canadian Tri-Agency (SSHRC, CIHR, NSERC) Web site:

Grant recipients are required to ensure that any peer-reviewed journal publications arising from Agency-supported research are freely accessible within 12 months of publication. Recipients can do this through one of the following routes:

a. **Online Repositories**

Grant recipients can deposit their final, peer-reviewed manuscript into an institutional or disciplinary repository that will make the manuscript freely accessible within 12 months of publication. It is the responsibility of the grant recipient to determine which publishers allow authors to retain copyright and/or allow authors to archive journal publications in accordance with funding agency policies.

b. **Journals**

Grant recipients can publish in a journal that offers immediate open access or that offers open access on its website within 12 months. Some journals require authors to pay article processing charges (APCs) to make manuscripts freely available upon publication. The cost of publishing in open access journals is an eligible expense under the [Use of Grant Funds](#).

CALJ's Position on Journal Open Access Policies

CALJ recommends that all journals have an easily discoverable open access policy that meets the Tri-Agency requirements, maximizes the public dissemination of knowledge and takes into account journal sustainability. Note that the Tri-Agency policy speaks to "peer-reviewed journal publications," in other words, material that carries an investment of journal time and resources that are essential to maintain. While the Tri-Agency policy applies only to research that the agencies fund, we recommend that journals enact a policy that meets the requirements of the Tri-Agency but that is consistently applied for all content.

Examples of Journal Open Access Policies

Open access journals, by definition, meet the requirements of the Tri-Agency policy. The following examples, therefore, apply to subscription-based journals and journals that delay the open accessibility of what they publish.

Green Open Access

One policy that meets the Tri-Agency requirements is to allow authors to deposit their accepted manuscript in an open access institutional or disciplinary repository and to link the manuscript back to the published version on the journal's web site. Journals can specify whether this deposit can be made immediately or after a defined embargo period (maximum 12 months to comply with the Tri-Agency requirements). Note that the Tri-Agency policy requires the deposit of the **accepted manuscript** (the version that has been accepted for publication and revised by the author(s) to incorporate suggestions by peer reviewers) rather than the submitted manuscript (the version prior to peer review).

Benefits: This policy is less likely than others to have a negative impact on subscription revenues, as the repositories become populated with "accepted" manuscripts of only "funded" research rather than final versions of all journal articles.

Drawbacks: The "free" version does not contain the publisher's value-adds.

Delayed Open Access

Delayed open access, or making journal content freely available on the journal's web site within 12 months of publication, is another policy that meets the criteria of the Tri-Agency.

Benefits: Delayed open access ensures that the final published version, in which journal value-adds are included, is the one that widely circulates. This maximizes the journal's presence and perceived value. It also takes into account where researchers commonly go to find relevant research – to known, reputable journals.

Drawbacks: Some journals that have implemented this policy have found that library subscriptions fall off as they "make do" with one-year-old material. It also eliminates potential revenue from selling old content. Another drawback is that it is easy for anyone to download the published year-old or older material and post the article to whatever database or course pack they might want, making usage difficult to track.

Creating a journal open access policy

What should a journal do to help its authors comply with funders' policies?

1. Have a journal open access policy that defines what version of the author's manuscript can be made freely available in a repository, whether an embargo must be applied, and if you are requiring an embargo, define its length (to a maximum of 12 months after publication). You may also wish to insist on having a link from the repository version back to the published version.

2. Make your policy easily found on your journal web site and record its details on the SHERPA/Romeo web site (<http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/romeoupdate.php>). Librarians often refer to the latter when helping authors understand their rights and if publishing in a journal allows them to comply with their own funder's open access requirements.

What factors should you take into consideration when creating your journal's policy?

1. Your journal's policy should be consistent with your author contract; for example, that you require an exclusive one-year licence and a perpetual, non-exclusive licence to maintain your status as the official record.
2. If you publish an open access journal, you **might** want to require that authors deposit the final published version with a professional appearance and the correct citation information included.
3. If you publish a subscription journal, carefully consider whether to allow the final published version of an article to be freely available on a repository, even after an embargo. The potential to jeopardize your journal subscription revenue is always there, even if, at this time, it seems weak.
4. Consider whether immediate open access is important to your authors when deciding whether to require an embargo for manuscripts posted in a repository.
5. If you decide to allow authors to have their manuscripts available immediately in a repository with no embargo, you might want to restrict them to the accepted manuscript rather than the final published version. If readers realize the final version is available freely there might be no incentive for them to subscribe to your journal.
6. If you allow the accepted manuscript to be the version that is deposited in a repository, consider insisting that the author includes your journal's name on the pdf with a link back to the published version. It is good policy to have the citation information of the published version included in all versions of the article.
7. If you are considering making your own journal content open access after 12 months, consider whether that will have an impact on subscription sales or affect agreements you have with any aggregators. Some aggregator agreements state that the royalties paid out to a journal will be decreased or eliminated if the journal content is free.

Summary

Your current business model and the needs of your community should help you create your journal's open access policy. At a minimum, you need to allow authors in receipt of grant funds to deposit the accepted manuscript into an institutional or subject repository and set a maximum embargo period of 12 months post publication. That will ensure that authors can publish in your journal and still comply with their funder's open access requirements.