



## Factsheet No. 1

# Article Processing Charges

### Tips for successful gold open-access publishing involving an APC

Making your work open access via a journal is known as “gold open access (OA)”. Some OA journals charge authors and/or their funders a fee to publish. These fees are known as article processing charges (APCs). They support the publisher’s business model and allow publishers to break even or, in the case of commercial publishers, make a profit.

Although OA journals may cost less to produce than subscription-based journals, the APCs may be substantial.

To ensure that you get a ‘good deal’ when paying an APC for your accepted manuscript and don’t fall prey to an exploitative or low-quality publisher, keep the following in mind.



Image credit: scielo.org

### Preliminary considerations (before considering paying an APC)

- Check that the publisher/journal is reputable (see for example, [Think, Check, Submit](#)) and check with your librarian
- Check if there is an APC. The majority of journals listed in the [Directory of Open Access Journals](#) do not charge any APCs
- Ensure that the journal is a fully open-access journal to avoid inadvertently supporting double-dipping —that is paying for open access in a journal that also charges subscription fees.
- If you have to pay a fee, look for APC-funds:
  - find out if your institution maintains agreements with certain publishers which allow you to publish with this publisher for free or at a discounted rate
  - check with your Library or Research Office if your university maintains an institutional APC-fund for staff and check their policies on which APCs they will support
  - if your publication is related to a grant, find out if there is grant money to pay for the APC; both [NHMRC](#) and [ARC](#) allow reasonable amounts of grant funds to be spent on publication fees.
  - If you don’t have access to institutional or grant-related publication funding, find out if the publisher offers an APC-waiver or discount. Most fee-based OA journals are prepared to lower or waive their publishing fees in cases of economic hardship. Be prepared to negotiate!



## Upon acceptance of your manuscript and BEFORE committing to pay an APC ensure that:

- the copyright of the article stays with you and or your co author/s (ideally, grant the publisher a non-exclusive license to publish)
- your article—including any appendices, supplements and/or post-publication corrections—will be made FREELY available in the final type-set and copy-edited version on the publisher's site immediately upon publication
- your article is licensed under a [Creative Commons license](#) (ideally letting you, or your funder, choose the license type), with the license information being clearly visible and machine-readable as part of the article on both, the HTML and the PDF article versions. For details on license types, see Creative Commons.
- your article is allocated a unique, persistent identifier (preferably a [DOI](#))
- the journal is indexed by Google Scholar (you can test this by searching an already published article from the journal in Google Scholar; if GS does not bring the article up, the journal is probably not indexed)
- the publisher has a transparent policy and process regarding APC payments
- the APC-invoice contains, as a minimum, information on the article title, all author names and affiliations, article DOI and license type.

## Don't forget:

Gold open access is only one option for making your research output freely accessible. You can also choose 'green' open access in which your research paper is submitted to an online repository (also called 'self-archiving') where it can be accessed for free by anyone with an Internet connection. For more information on green OA, talk to your university librarian or look for information on Self-Archiving FAQs.

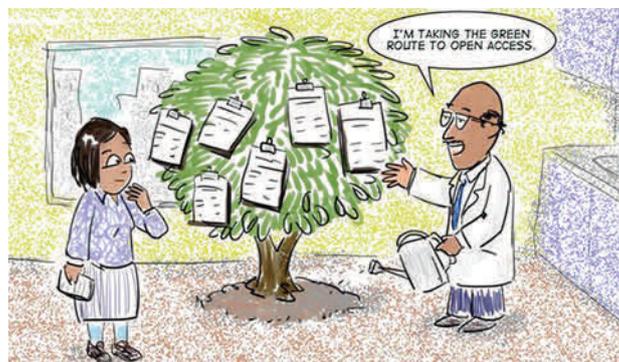


Image credit: Raymond K. Nakamura

## Further reading:

Think, Check Submit <http://thinkchecksubmit.org/>

Björk, B-C. & Solomon D., March 2014, *Open access publishing - Developing an Effective Market for Open Access Article Processing Charges*.

<https://wellcome.ac.uk/sites/default/files/developing-effective-market-for-open-access-article-processing-charges-mar14.pdf>

The Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) [www.doaj.org](http://www.doaj.org)

Lawson S., 2015, Fee Waivers for Open Access Journals *Publications*, 3, 155-167; [doi:10.3390/publications3030155](https://doi.org/10.3390/publications3030155)

University of Cambridge, How much do publishers charge for Open Access? <http://osc.cam.ac.uk/open-access/paying-open-access/how-much-do-publishers-charge-open-access>

Angelo A. & Lund, P., *An evolving business model for scholarly publishing: exploring the payment of article processing charges (APCs) to achieve open access*, LIANZA Conference 2014, 12-15 October, Auckland

<http://www.ir.canterbury.ac.nz/handle/10092/9730>

Helmholtz Open Science Coordination Office, Open Access Publication Funds, <http://doi.org/10.2312/allianzoa.007>

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