

Answering your questions on open access publishing with Elsevier

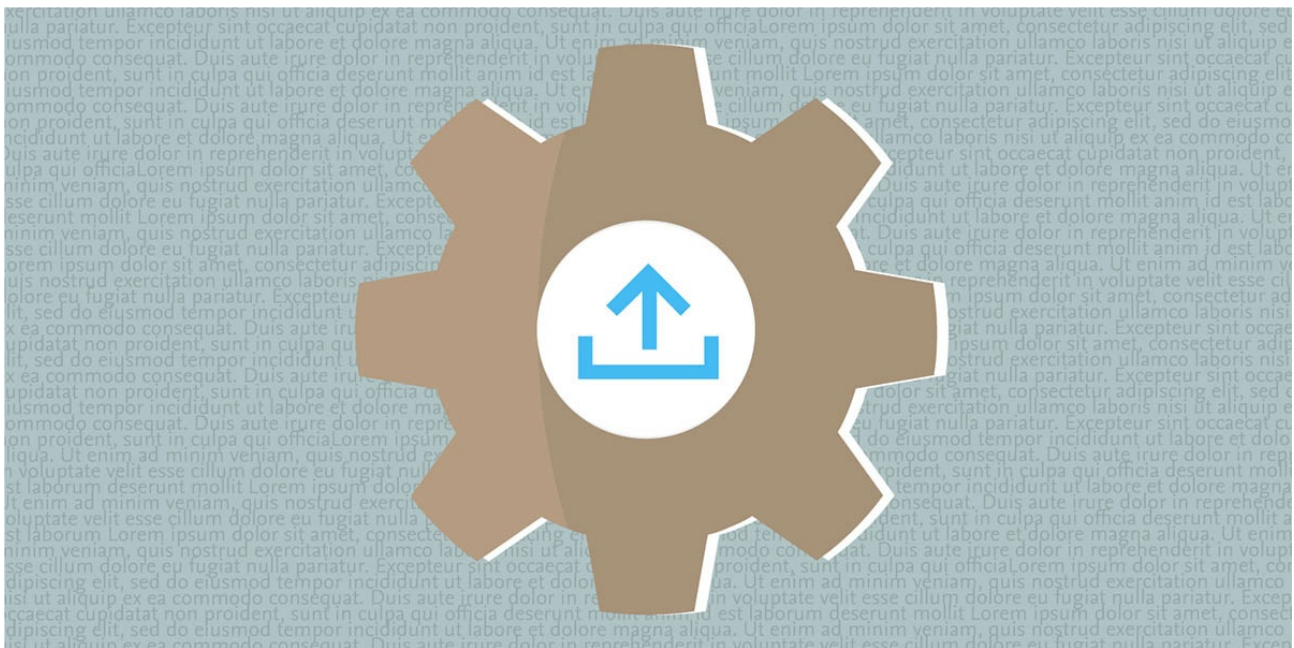
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An OA publishing expert and the editor of The Lancet Global Health answer questions about publishing in our open access journals

- By [Priyanka Kalra](#)
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When authors decide to publish in an open access journal, they are faced with multiple questions they might not have when publishing in a subscription journal. These questions could center around metrics, article publishing charges or the difference between gold and green open access.

To make things easier, Elsevier's [Researcher Academy](#) hosted a webinar on [publishing open access](#) during the recent Open Access Week, talking with [Lydia Tacx](#), Director of Open Access Enablement in Publishing at Elsevier, and [Zoë Mullan](#), Editor-in-Chief of the open access journal [The Lancet Global Health](#).

The spirited conversation during the webinar offered little time for all the questions to be answered, so we followed up with Lydia and Zoe to answer your remaining questions.

Questions on publishing open access

We'll start with the questions answered by Lydia:
Lydia Tacx, MBA



Can you please recap how green open access works?

Green open access involves sharing a version of a subscription article, usually the accepted manuscript, after the journal specific embargo period. This can include self archiving your accepted manuscript on an institutional repository or the publisher making the manuscript available on your behalf. Multiple ways in which you can share a version of your subscription article is available here.

How can junior and early-career researchers differentiate between predatory and non-predatory journals? As we know, the Beall's list of predatory journals has made researchers confused.

We would advise using the [Think. Check. Submit](#) checklist. The guidelines help authors ensure they are submitting to a credible journal. Another good resource is Elsevier's white paper [Supporting Value: How Rigorous Processes & Collaborations Help Ensure Research Integrity](#), which gives an in-depth explanation on how you can distinguish between a predatory and a reputable publication. You might also consider Elsevier's Researcher Academy module on ["Finding the right journal."](#)

Is there any relation between open access and the Impact Factor of a journal?

The access model that journals operate under is separate from the Impact Factor they may receive. The wide variation in the quality of open access journals also negatively affects the overall image of OA publications; however, as the market has developed, there are now very strong, impactful, high quality gold open access journals for researchers to choose from. In some cases, gold open access journals are new journals, so they may take time (up to 3 years) to build up an Impact Factor.

If it is open access, how will the journal sustain itself?

Usually open access journals are APC-based. This means an Article Publishing Charge is paid, either by the author or on their behalf, to cover the cost of publication.

Why do we need open access publishing other than to comply with some funding agencies?

Authors have different motivations for publishing and for choosing which journal to publish in. The business model may not always be important, but gold open access does provide free access to your final published article immediately on publication. If this is important to you and you have the funding to support it, this may be the right option for you.

For ERC-funded works, do I need to make sure we have an addendum signed to decrease the embargo period to 6 months, or will this be taken care of without signing any additional documents?

Elsevier's embargo periods are set per journal and are available on journal homepages and through our journal embargo finder. Where your journal does not support your funder's proposed embargo period, you will need to publish open access to make sure you comply with their requirements. Or you can consider publishing in a different journal that meets your funders' requirements.

When using data, images, etc, from a gold open-access article and providing a citation, is there a need or protocol for indicating that the publication is OA?

No, the citation provided via the DOI will do this for you.

What is the difference between open access and gold open access journals?

The terms are often used interchangeably, so there may be little to no difference between open access and gold open access journals.

How much are the charges in general for open access publishing?

APCs can vary and typically correlate with quality. Elsevier's APCs range from ~\$150~\$5000. A full list is available [here](#).

Questions about publishing open access in *The Lancet Global Health*

Here are the questions answered by Zoë:

How long does the general peer review process take on average?

The peer review process varies a lot depending on the journal, the topic and even the time of year (reviewers may go on vacation, for example). At *The Lancet Global Health*, we aim to acquire a full set of reviews within six weeks.

Does *The Lancet Global Health* generally have key themes of interest per quarter or on an annual basis?

No, we do not have key themes of interest. We aim to publish the best science on any global health topic.

How do open access journals get measured against the Impact Factor?

Zoë Mullan



Impact Factors are generated in the same way as for subscription journals. Therefore, the publishing model should not have any influence on the Impact Factor.

What does *The Lancet* do in the case of independent authors who do research by themselves without being funded by anyone?

If the authors are from a [HINARI](#) country, then they would be eligible for a fee waiver. If not, then it would be best to choose a journal that supports green open access rather than a journal that publishes only gold.

Have more OA questions?

Quick question for you

Which terms do you most associate with Elsevier? (check all that apply)

Data and analytics

Research platforms

Technology

Decision support tools

Publishing

Books and journals

Scientific articles

Healthcare content

Tags

Contributors

Priyanka Kalra

As a Marketing Communications Manager at Elsevier, Priyanka Kalra manages content creation and researcher engagement for the [Researcher Academy](#). Through Researcher Academy, Priyanka aims to provide early career researchers with the tools they need to do better research. She holds three master's degrees in the fields of International Law, Journalism and Communications. Other than being indecisive with her educational route, she likes to travel, read and work towards a more sustainable world with her [No Straws Attached](#) campaign.



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