



UKRI Open Access Policy – Frequently Asked Questions

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Purpose of this FAQ

This FAQ provides supplementary information about the UKRI Open Access Policy. Please also refer to the core requirements and guidance on UKRI's website at:

- [UKRI Open Access Policy](#)
- [Publishing your findings](#)

Information about the implementation of the policy can be found at [shaping our open access policy](#).

This FAQ will be updated regularly with new questions and current information.

Scope of the policy

Publications in-scope of the policy are defined in the [UKRI Open Access Policy](#).

1. Does the policy apply to UKRI staff?

Yes, when the research publication acknowledges funding from UKRI and its councils, this includes in-scope outputs from staff at UKRI institutes, units and facilities.

2. Does the policy apply to UKRI-funded studentships?

The policy applies to in-scope research articles arising from [UKRI Training Grants](#) as these need to acknowledge our funding. Monographs, book chapters and edited collections arising from training grants are exempt, as detailed in the [UKRI Open Access Policy](#). Training grants include grants for studentships and funding specifically for the training and development of researchers.

3. Does the policy apply to publications from grants awarded before the policy start date and closed grants?

The policy applies to a publication arising from pre-existing and closed awards if it is an in-scope research article submitted for publication on or after 1 April 2022, or an in-scope monograph, book chapter or edited collection published on or after 1 January 2024.

4. If a publication is co-authored with collaborators who are not funded by UKRI, or the research being reported was only part-funded by UKRI, does it need to comply with the policy?

Yes. In-scope publications that need to acknowledge UKRI funding are required to comply with the policy. UKRI award holders should be clear on funder requirements they are subject to when agreeing collaborations.

5. Are data articles or articles that are focused on describing a protocol or method in scope of the UKRI Open Access Policy?

No. The scope of the policy applies to: *“Peer-reviewed research articles, including reviews and conference papers, that are accepted for final publication in either a journal, conference proceeding with an International Standards Serial Number (ISSN), or publishing platform.”* Whilst they are not in scope UKRI recognises that research data, research methods and protocols are important elements of research. The “peer-reviewed research articles” that the policy applies to, however, discuss the outcomes of a research project.

6. Do researchers based in non-UK research organisations need to comply with the policy?

In-scope publications that need to acknowledge UKRI funding are expected to comply with the policy. This includes publications arising from UKRI Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) funding.

However, UKRI recognises that there are different open access contexts internationally, and it may be that an author based at a non-UK research organisation does not have access to a repository or immediate open access options. Therefore, UKRI may permit a policy exception for an author based at a non-UK research organisation. To request an exception the grant holder should contact UKRI.

UKRI funds international partnerships directly, for example through the Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF). In most cases these research grants are made via a UK-based research organisation and it is anticipated that all publications in-scope of the UKRI Open Access Policy will have a UK based author and compliance is required. Most UK-based research organisations receive a UKRI block grant to support open access costs.

UKRI also contributes to bilateral and multilateral international partnerships, for example through the Newton Fund or the Fund for International Collaboration. Here UK researchers are supported through a UKRI research grant, with overseas researchers supported by their local funding organisation. In these circumstances the Open Access policy of each funding organisation applies.

Where UKRI research grant funding is directly allocated to a non-UK based research organisation it is permissible for open access costs to be part of the research grant.

7. How does UKRI’s policy relate to future research assessment exercises?

As part of their Future Research Assessment Programme (FRAP), the four UK higher education funding bodies (Research England, [Scottish Funding Council](#), [Higher Education Funding Council for Wales](#) and [Department for the Economy, NI](#)) will develop the open access policy for any future national research assessment exercise. Decisions about a future research assessment open access

policy will be made by the four UK higher education funding bodies based on consultation with the sector and evaluation of open access in REF 2021.

At the launch of the UKRI Open Access Review, the UK higher education funding bodies agreed that any open access policy within a future research assessment exercise would seek commonality with the UKRI open access policy position. It is the intention that the UK higher education funding bodies will consider a UKRI open access compliant publication to meet any future national research assessment open access policy without additional action from the author and/or institution. Both UKRI and the UK higher education funding bodies note that the scope of an open access policy for the future national research assessment exercise is much broader than the UKRI Open Access Policy. This will be considered when developing the future national research assessment position.

Research articles - routes to compliance

Compliance routes are defined in the [UKRI Open Access Policy](#). Additional guidance for authors is available at [making your research publications open access](#).

8. Are there restrictions on which journals researchers can publish in so they comply with the policy?

Researchers can publish in the journal or platform they consider most appropriate for their research, provided UKRI's open access requirements are met. This can include fully open access journals or publishing platforms, or 'hybrid' subscription journals that offer an open access option, and which offer a compliant route.

However, only hybrid journals that are included in transitional open access arrangements (i.e. transformative journals or transitional agreements) that meet the requirements of the research sector, and as set out in the [Jisc requirements](#), are eligible to receive UKRI open access funds.

If you intend to publish in a hybrid journal that does not meet these requirements, you will need to find an alternative source of funding to meet the publication costs.

UKRI will provide an online tool for authors and research organisations to use to make it easy to check if a journal offers a compliant open access route, and whether it meets the sectors requirements for transitional agreements / transformative journals. This tool is currently being developed and will be available by the policy start date. UKRI and Jisc will provide regular updates on the development of the tool.

9. What should an author do if a journal rejects a submission because they do not offer a compliant route?

Publishers may not always offer compliant routes to the UKRI Open Access Policy. If this is the case researchers should seek advice from their research organisation.

UKRI has funded Jisc to work with publishers and research organisations to help increase the adoption of open access agreements that comply with the policy and to increase open access options that are eligible for UKRI open access funding.

10. How do authors find out if a journal/publishing platform offers a publication route that is compliant with UKRI's policy?

Authors should check with the publisher to see if a journal or publishing platform offers a compliant route to the policy.

UKRI will provide an online tool for authors and research organisations to use to make it easy to check if a journal offers a compliant open access route. This tool is being developed and will be available by the policy start date. UKRI and Jisc will provide regular updates on the development of the tool.

11. How do authors find a suitable institutional or subject repository to use to follow the self-archiving route in the policy?

Authors should check with their research organisation for advice on what repository to use.

Suitable repositories can be found via the [Directory of Open Access Repositories \(OpenDOAR\)](#).

Research articles – licensing

Licensing requirements are defined in the [UKRI Open Access Policy](#). Additional guidance for authors is available at [making your research publications open access](#).

The process and guidance for applying for a no-derivatives (CC BY-ND) licence exception is available at [apply for a no-derivatives licence exception](#).

12. Can a different statement to the wording provided by UKRI be used when submitting a manuscript to a publisher?

We provide wording (see [UKRI Open Access Policy](#)) to authors seeking to comply with our policy via Route 2 for inclusion in their articles to give the publisher notice of UKRI's licensing requirement.

Other funders, or your research organisation, may provide equivalent wording to that supplied in UKRI's policy which intends to achieve the same result of immediate open access via deposit of the author's accepted manuscript with the appropriate license. Provided the wording achieves compliance with the policy, authors may use wording provided by another funder (e.g. Wellcome) or their research organisation.

13. Is a Creative Commons CC0 licence permitted?

UKRI recommends using a CC BY licence for research publications and this is the core requirement for research articles. However, authors are permitted to use a [CC0 licence](#).

Monographs, book chapters and edited collections – routes to compliance

Compliance routes and exceptions are defined in the [UKRI Open Access Policy](#). Additional guidance for authors is also provided at [making your research publications open access](#).

UKRI will be publishing further guidance on its open access requirements and funding for long-form publications later in 2022; for more information see [shaping our open access policy](#).

14. How are policy exemptions for monographs, book chapters and edited collections applied?

UKRI's open access requirements for monographs, book chapters and edited collections will apply to outputs published from 1 January 2024. We will develop our approach for managing exceptions to the open access requirements for longform outputs by working collaboratively with stakeholders and provide an update later this year. This will include advice on the policy exception relating to third party materials where permissions cannot be obtained and there is no suitable option available to enable open access publication.

Open access funding

Funding information, including eligible costs for the UKRI open access block grant for research articles, is available at [shaping our open access policy](#).

Authors should contact their research organisation to find out about available open access funding.

15. When will the UKRI open access block grant allocations be announced?

As set out on our web pages UKRI has substantially increased the open access block grant to support the new UKRI Open Access Policy for research articles. Eligible research organisations will be notified of their open access block grant allocations in February 2022.

16. When will the full terms and conditions for the open access block grant for research articles be published?

Information about the eligible costs for the open access block grant and the reporting requirements are detailed at [shaping our open access policy](#). The full terms and conditions will be made available to research organisations with their open access block grant letter in March 2022.

17. The description of eligible costs for the open access block grant for research articles states that when publishing via a hybrid journal that journal must meet the Jisc requirements for transformative journals or transitional agreements to be eligible for UKRI open access funding. Why is this?

This restriction on the use of the UKRI open access block grant is to help support the transition to, and affordability of open access. Hybrid journals include both open access articles that receive a fee to publish and articles that are available under a paywall via a subscription fee. The requirements for transformative journals and transitional agreements help to deliver cost effective open access by putting in place mechanisms that progress full and immediate open access whilst enabling publishers to transparently manage the transition from subscription to open access. The Jisc requirements have been developed in consultation with the research sector and governed by the UUK Jisc content negotiation strategy group. Further information is set out on the [Jisc open access web pages](#).

18. Can the UKRI open access block grant be used for staff costs?

Yes. The UKRI open access block grant can be used to cover costs that enable research organisations to meet the aims of our open access policy. This includes staff costs and UKRI does not set any specific limits for staff costs. Research organisations may have a variety of different activity that supports the implementation of the policy. Research organisations will need to ensure the costs meet the aim of the funding and are auditable as part of our funding assurance processes.

19. How will UKRI's open access funding for monographs, book chapters and edited collections be allocated, and what can it be used for?

UKRI has committed to providing a dedicated fund of £3.5M per year to support the monographs, book chapters and edited collections open access policy from 1 January 2024. The process for allocating the funds and the definition of eligible costs is being developed. The funding will be held at UKRI in a central pot and it is anticipated that the funding will be available via an application process. It is UKRI's intention that a diversity of monograph business models will be supported, for example book processing charges and membership models that support open access.

20. Prior to finalising the details of the new funding mechanism for open access monographs, book chapters and edited collections, can open access costs continue to be included in research grants?

Publication costs for monographs, book chapters and edited collections can continue be included in research grant applications. UKRI will provide updated guidance in due course. UKRI's open access requirement only applies to monographs, book chapters and edited collections published on or after 1 January 2024.



Version Control

Version Control				
Version Number	Status	Revision Date	Author(s)	Summary of Changes
1.0	Complete	February 2022	UKRI Open Research Team	New document created