# **Open Access at the University: how you can contribute and benefit**

## **What is Open Access**

Open access (OA) means making a scholarly work available online, immediately upon publication, without cost to the user of the work and under liberal user rights. The broadest possible re-use rights include access, copying, distribution/transmission, public display as well as making and distributing derivative works, also for commercial purposes[[1]](#footnote-1). The user rights are usually communicated via Creative Commons (CC) licenses. Open Educational Resources (OER) is a subset of open access. While all CC-licenses can be considered OA-licenses, OER has stringent license requirements and only recognizes those CC-licenses that allow for derivatives.

## **OA for scientific articles**

### **The different types of open access in scholarly publishing**

There are currently three main types of OA-publishing: gold (fully OA and hybrid), diamond and green. [[2]](#footnote-2)

Gold open access: publishing in a fully open access journal or in a hybrid journal (=journal that publishes both open access and paywalled articles). There is usually a fee (article processing charge, “APC”) associated to this. The APC may be covered by one of our institutional open access agreements, by our library OA fund or by your research funder. For more information, contact your librarian.

Diamond open access: publishing via diamond journals/platforms. Typically, there are no APC’s associated with diamond journals, rather they are institutionally funded via subsidies etc.

Green open access: depositing the final manuscript after peer review in a trusted repository. At the university, we use our institutional repository [HELDA](https://helda.helsinki.fi/communities/dd82d7b0-61c2-4573-bea3-82c80e209ce6). Refer to your publishing agreement to see whether the green route is available to you and under what conditions.

### **Quality control of open access publishing**

When choosing your publication venue, please do your due diligence regarding the quality of the title/publisher. There are tools such as [Think.Check.Submit](https://thinkchecksubmit.org/) and [Journal Checker Tool](https://journalcheckertool.org/) to help you avoid predatory publishing venues.

### **National policies and funder mandates**

Note that our national open access policy requires that all new scientific articles and conference publications be immediately openly accessible with a CC-license (preferably CC BY) when the corresponding author is from Finnish institution, or funded by a Finnish funder[[3]](#footnote-3).

Also consider your research funder’s requirements. While all CC-licenses can be considered open access licenses, many funders such those participating in cOAlition S generally require the use of CC BY[[4]](#footnote-4).

### **Benefits of OA publishing**

There are many benefits related to open access publishing both as an author and reader. Open access articles are available for everyone with internet connection, without a subscription and with broad re-use rights. This means increased visibility and usage. Research also shows that open access articles receive higher citations[[5]](#footnote-5). Subsequently open access articles generally have more impact.

## **What are Open Educational Resources**

Education is in essence sharing of knowledge and ideas. The key elements of Open Educational Resources (OER) are that they

* are free to use
* come with permission to use, distribute, and adapt to make new works. They are either in the public domain or licensed in a way that permit the 5R activities (Retain, Reuse, Revise, Remix, Redistribute).

The digital environment gives us the technical ease to provide and use OERs. CC-licenses give us the legal ease to do so.

Note that it is particularly crucial that the materials can be built upon and those new works freely distributed. Therefore you should only use CC-licenses that permit the distribution of derivative works when licensing materials you’ve created.

### **Benefits of OER**

OER are beneficial for students because access to them is not dependent upon whether a copy can be obtained from the library or whether the library holds a electronic subscription to the material[[6]](#footnote-6). As a teacher you save time when you can use materials from others for your courses (either as such or as a basis for new materials you create). As both student and teacher you have broad selection of ways to use the resource.

### **National policies**

Note that our national policy calls for the creation and use of OERs[[7]](#footnote-7). Find OERs created by others and find out how to publish your own [here](https://www.helsinki.fi/en/helsinki-university-library/library-researchers/open-science-services/open-learning).

### **Sources**

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[5.2 OER, Open Textbooks, and Open Courses](https://certificates.creativecommons.org/cccertedu/chapter/6-2-oer-open-textbooks-open-courses/) by [Creative Commons](https://creativecommons.org/). [CC BY 4.0.](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

[5.3 Creating and Sharing OER](https://certificates.creativecommons.org/cccertedu/chapter/6-3-creating-and-sharing-oer/) by [Creative Commons](https://creativecommons.org/). [CC BY 4.0.](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

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[NWO](https://www.nwo.nl/en), [TUdelft](https://www.tudelft.nl/en/), [UKB](https://ukb.nl/english/ambitions/), [vsnu](https://www.universiteitenvannederland.nl/en_GB/), [SURF](https://www.surf.nl/en). [What is open access?](https://www.openaccess.nl/en/what-is-open-access) accessed (accessed 7.8.2023)

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[Open access to scholarly publications. National Policy and executive plan by the research community in Finland for 2020–2025 (1)](https://edition.fi/tsv/catalog/view/76/27/190-1) by [The Federation of Finnish Learned Societies](https://tsv.fi/en). [CC BY 4.0](http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

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Wang, X., Liu, C., Mao, W. et al. [The open access advantage considering citation, article usage and social media attention](https://doi.org/10.1007/s11192-015-1547-0). [Scientometrics](https://www.springer.com/journal/11192) 103, 555–564 (accessed 8.8.2023)

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[University of Helsinki](https://www.helsinki.fi/en). [Open Learning](https://www.helsinki.fi/en/helsinki-university-library/library-researchers/open-science-services/open-learning) (accessed 8.8.2023)

### **License statement**

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1. [Berlin Declaration](https://openaccess.mpg.de/Berlin-Declaration) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. [What is open access?](https://www.openaccess.nl/en/what-is-open-access) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. [Open access to scholarly publications. National Policy and executive plan by the research community in Finland for 2020–2025 (1)](https://edition.fi/tsv/catalog/view/76/27/190-1) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. [Plan S Part II: Guidance on the Implementation of Plan S](https://www.coalition-s.org/guidance-on-the-implementation-of-plan-s/) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. [The open access advantage considering citation, article usage and social media attention](https://doi.org/10.1007/s11192-015-1547-0) [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. In some countries the biggest benefit is that students don’t need to spend money on the resource. This is not a valid point in Finland, as the material are acquired by the institutions and students are not expected to spend their own money. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. [Open education and educational resources. National policy and executive plan by the higher education and research community for 2021-2025. Policy components 1 (Open access to educational resources) and 2 (Open educational practices)](https://edition.fi/tsv/catalog/view/421/355/955-1) [↑](#footnote-ref-7)