

Open Access Policy

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100% OPEN ACCESS

Since 2013, the Dutch government has expressed the ambition to make all publicly funded scientific publications openly accessible¹. Vrije Universiteit (VU) Amsterdam is also strongly committed to the accessibility of research output², as this benefits the distribution of scholarly knowledge among researchers, teachers, students and society.

The VU wants all scientific publications from VU authors to be openly accessible. This policy summarises the principles, responsibilities and multiple routes to Open Access at the VU.

¹ Letter of State Secretary for Education, Culture and Science, Sander Dekker (15 November 2013). Kamerstuk [Parliamentary Document] 31288, no. 354. <https://zoek.officielebekendmakingen.nl/kst-31288-354.html>

² VU Strategy 2020-2025. https://issuu.com/vuuniversity/docs/vu_instellingsplan-eng

PRINCIPLES

Scientific publications from VU employees must:

- be registered by recording their metadata in the university Current Research Information System (CRIS/Pure).
- be made immediately openly accessible under an open licence (Creative Commons, preferably CC-BY) whenever possible, to promote the accessibility, use and reuse of the publications.
- be kept under the copyright of the author, whenever possible.
- be deposited in the university repository, taking into account the following conditions:
 - For publications that are made Open Access *immediately under an open licence through a publisher*, the version of record (final published PDF version) must become immediately available through the VU institutional repository. If a publication is already openly available in another trusted repository, employees only need to supply a link to the publication by its persistent identifier (e.g., DOI) as long as it refers to that repository.
 - For publications where the *copyright is owned by the publisher (closed access)*, the version of record must become freely available through the VU institutional repository after the publisher's embargo period has ended. Please note that embargoes on monographs might be perpetual. Short scientific works that are wholly or partly funded by the Dutch government must be made freely available to the general public through the institutional repository after a reasonable period, as per Article 25fa of Dutch Copyright Act. This procedure contains an opt-out clause.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- VU employees must follow the above principles when publishing their work, whenever possible.
- The VU Library helps VU employees to comply with government, funder and institutional demands for Open Access. To that end, the VU provides multiple routes to Open Access (e.g. golden/green/diamond routes, see below). VU employees are not limited in their choice of outlet for their work.
- The VU Library facilitates the Open Access process for VU employees and continually optimises this process to make it as easy as possible for employees, e.g. by harvesting content, verifying copyrights including legal approval, making VU output accessible in the institutional repository and providing support.
- The available routes to Open Access are clearly communicated on the VU website. Furthermore, the University Library maintains an Open Access support desk (openaccess.ub@vu.nl), where employees can ask any questions and advice about the routes to Open Access available to them.
- The VU takes part in national and bilateral negotiations with a variety of publishers to make deals that allow VU authors to publish their work Open Access with those publishers with discounts or without extra costs (*golden route*).
The available deals and discounts for VU authors are updated regularly and findable on <https://journalpublishingguide.vu.nl/>.
- The VU maintains a CRIS and an institutional repository in which VU authors (or the VU Library) can register and deposit their publications and accompanying metadata, making them openly accessible (*green route*).
The VU Library makes the green route as easy as possible for VU employees by depositing their work in the institutional repository for them. Each employee grants the VU the non-exclusive right to make any short scientific work that the employee publishes while employed by the VU, and that meets the conditions set out in Article 25fa of the Copyright Act, publicly available in the institutional repository for no consideration. The employee has the right to request an opt-out for each individual short work from being made available.
The VU Library works on expanding the possibilities of the green route (e.g. the Rights Retention Strategy) to make the green route compliant with the above principles and funder demands.
- The VU is committed to supporting sustainable, cost-constrained Open Access options. The VU actively contributes to the development of alternative Open Access publication platforms

(e.g. not-for-profit and publicly-governed platforms; also called the *diamond route*) and other community-driven initiatives/services/infrastructure that increase academic sovereignty over scholarly knowledge and work towards a more durable publication system.

The VU encourages employees to contribute to these innovations of the publication system, for example by preregistering their work, sharing their results early as a preprint and engaging in open (post-publication) peer review.

GLOSSARY

Article 25Fa Auteurswet (Taverne Amendment)

Article 25fa Aw is an amendment to Dutch copyright that was passed in 2015, also known as the Taverne amendment. The law grants researchers a personal right to publish their short scientific work in open access irrespective of the right of publishers and/or co-authors. The published research should be at least partially funded by Dutch public funding.

The verbatim text of article 25fa Dutch Copyright Act (Auteurswet):

'The author of a short scientific work funded either wholly or partially by Dutch public funds is entitled to make that work publicly available for no consideration following a reasonable period of time after the work was first published, provided that clear reference is made to the source of the first publication of the work.'

Article Processing Charge (APC)

An article processing charge (APC), also known as a publication fee, is a fee which is sometimes charged to authors to make a work available open access in either an open access journal or hybrid (*golden route*) journal. This fee may be paid by the author, the author's institution, or their research funder.

Author-accepted manuscript

The author-accepted manuscript version is the post-peer review draft, accepted by the journal, prior to the typesetting by the publisher. In some cases, it can be used as an alternative to the final published PDF version (also known as the version of record) to comply with funder demands on Open Access.

Corresponding author

The corresponding author is the person or persons who is / are listed as the author to be contacted in the PDF of the (online) article. Each corresponding author's name is preceded by an envelope icon.

The corresponding author can - but not always will - be the same person as the submitting author, i.e. the person who submits the article to the journal and who is contacted during the peer-review and production processes. Please note that often only the *submitting* author can make use of the VU agreements to publish Open Access at no costs or with a substantial discount.

Creative Commons

Creative Commons (CC) licences give every person and organisation in the world a free, simple, and standardised way to grant copyright permissions for creative and academic works (publications); ensure proper attribution; and allow others to copy, distribute, and make use of those works. The CC-BY licence posits that others may copy, distribute, display, perform the work and make derivative works and remixes based on it, provided they credit the original author or licensor (attribution).

Current Research Information System (CRIS)

A current research information system (CRIS) is a database or other information system to store, manage and exchange contextual metadata for the research activities conducted at a research-performing organisation. At the VU, *PURE* is used as CRIS.

Diamond route to Open Access

Journals that make publications Open Access without charging authors article processing charges are sometimes referred to as diamond journals. Since they do not charge either readers or authors directly, their publishers often require funding from external sources such as the sale of advertisements, academic institutions, learned societies, philanthropists or government grants. Diamond OA journals are available for most disciplines: a recent study of the diamond OA landscape found more than 29000 journals³.

DOAJ

The Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) is a community-curated online directory that indexes and provides access to high quality, open access, peer-reviewed journals⁴.

³ The Open Access Diamond Journals Study: <https://www.operas-eu.org/projects/the-oa-diamond-journals-study/>

⁴ Directory of Open Access Journals: <https://doaj.org/>

Golden route to Open Access

In the golden route to Open Access, publishers make the publication freely and immediately available on their website. They charge Article Processing Charges (APCs) for this service, which are paid by the author, the author's institution (through negotiated agreements with the publisher), or the funding body.

Green route to Open Access

In green Open Access, a publication is published in a traditional subscription magazine (not Open Access), but a version of the same publication is also deposited in a trusted Open Access repository. If a publisher has the copyright to a publication, they may set an embargo period during which the version of record may not be deposited through the green route. In some cases, the author-accepted manuscript may then be used as a substitute.

Hybrid route to Open Access

In this variant of gold Open Access, publishers of traditional (non-Open Access) subscription journals may offer a gold Open Access-option to authors. By paying APCs, Open Access is then offered to all readers immediately as articles appear on-line. Most funders do not fund APCs for hybrid journals.

Metadata

Metadata is descriptive information about data / information. Metadata allows humans and programmes to more easily understand and interpret the information or data. For publications, examples of relevant metadata are the title, abstract, authors, affiliations, journal, publisher, volume, and key words.

Persistent identifier

A persistent identifier is a permanent reference to, and unique label for a digital object that is independent of the storage location. An example is the widely used DOI (Digital Object Identifier) for publications.

Preprint

A preprint is a draft version of a paper that has not been peer reviewed (yet). You can share your preprint on a preprint server or trusted repository even before you have submitted it to a journal.

Preregistration

Preregistration means specifying your research plan in advance of your study and submitting it to a registry. Preregistration separates *hypothesis-generating* (exploratory) from hypothesis-testing (confirmatory) research.

Peer review

Many publications are subjected to the review of scientific peers (also: refereed) of the publication's author. This is generally seen as a quality check: once a publication has passed peer review, it is deemed of sufficient quality to be added to the scientific literature. Peer review can occur before publication (this is common at many journals) or post-publication (e.g. review of publications on preprint servers).

Rights Retention Strategy

Policy that ensures that authors retain the right to share their work in Open Access immediately and under an open licence, even in case of restricting policies of publishers, by granting a non-exclusive licence to the [funder](#) or [institution](#).

Scientific publication

A scientific publication is defined as academic works aimed at the forum of (academic) researchers, whereby the publication satisfies features, such as an emphasis on the research process, a sound methodological basis and reference to earlier research results⁵.

⁵ Definitieafspraken Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek: https://www.universiteitenvannederland.nl/files/documenten/Feiten_en_Cijfers/VSNU_Definitieafspraken_onderzoeksinzet_en_output_KUOZ.PDF

Short scientific work

Short scientific work is a term mentioned in article 25fa of the Dutch Copyright Law. This term includes journal articles, as well as conference papers and individual chapters in 'edited collections'. It does not include monographs or chapters of monographs.

Trusted repository

A repository is a digital archive of academic publications. 'Trusted' repositories are registered with and satisfy the conditions of OpenDOAR. The repositories of universities and reputable publishers are on this list. The VU institutional repository is trusted and is called *Pure*.

Version of record

The version of record of an article is the fully copyedited, typeset and formatted copy of a manuscript as published[†].

[†] Haustein et al. (2015) When is an article actually published? An analysis of online availability, publication, and indexation dates. [arXiv:1505.00796](https://arxiv.org/abs/1505.00796)

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