

Open Access Publication

Open Access (OA) publication ensures that research outputs are freely available online, removing paywalls and enabling global access. In Ireland, OA is strongly supported by national initiatives, institutions, and funding agencies, aligning with global efforts to democratise knowledge and enhance research impact. Whether you're a researcher in the sciences, arts, or humanities, understanding Ireland's OA landscape can help you navigate the opportunities and challenges of publishing openly.



Benefits of Open Access

- **Global Reach and Impact**

Open Access removes barriers to readership, ensuring your work can reach a worldwide audience, including policymakers, educators, and practitioners.

- **Enhanced Collaboration**

Free and open availability of research fosters interdisciplinary and international collaboration.

- **Increased Citations**

Publications tend to receive higher citation counts, thanks to their broader accessibility.

- **Funders' Compliance**

Publishing OA aligns with the requirements of funders globally, including those in Ireland, who expect publicly funded research to be openly accessible.

- **Equity in Knowledge Sharing**

OA eliminates paywalls, enabling researchers from underfunded institutions or low-income regions to access cutting-edge findings.



Open Access Routes

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Articles are immediately available on publication in OA journals. Costs, such as Article Processing Charges (APCs), may be covered by institutions or funders (e.g., through IReL agreements).

- **Green Open Access**

Authors deposit preprints or Author Accepted Manuscripts (AAMs) in institutional or discipline-specific repositories like [DRI](#) or [TARA](#). Access may be subject to an embargo period set by publishers.

- **Diamond/Platinum Open Access**

Articles are freely accessible without any cost to authors or readers. Ireland is exploring a Diamond OA publishing platform via initiatives like [Publish OA Ireland](#).

- **Hybrid Open Access**

Subscription-based journals allow individual articles to be published as OA for a fee.



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When should I preprint my work?

This is a great question, and the general answer is, "whenever it suits you best". The important thing is that your work is out there, unpaywalled, and accessible to the world. So the specific timing might be more down to individual preferences, journal policies (like time-limited embargos) or some other factors.

But, by and large, there is nothing to stop you preprinting your own work, and at a time of your choosing. There may be exceptions, but they will represent a tiny minority of cases. Here's a nice intro to preprinting https://osf.io/preprints/osf/m4zyh_v1 - covering motivations and advice for how to start preprinting your work.

So when and why do people decide to preprint? Let's look briefly at different stages of the research/publication cycle and think why you might want to preprint your work at each point.

At the draft stage?

You can preprint your work before or after your first submission to a journal to get your fully formed ideas out as soon as possible, with time-stamped confirmation! It provides opportunities for early feedback, increased exposure, and let's you claim precedence for your ideas.

After a round of reviews?

When you've revised a paper, you can preprint what is likely to be an almost final version that you know has had peer feedback. So, it's still being released well before it appears "in print", but with the knowledge that you've had input from your peers.

When it's been accepted for publication?

Although later in the publication process, preprinting at this point can still be months before a journal version appears online, so it's still really worthwhile doing it. And has perhaps gives authors added confidence knowing it's been formally accepted having gone through full peer-review.

Post-publication?

Even if your paper has been published, you can still "Preprint" (or postprint) your non-formatted manuscript version. This has the advantage that your work will remain freely accessible through "green open access", even if it is behind a journal paywall.

More important than when you preprint, is that your work is open and accessible to all. If you haven't preprinted before, make this the year that you do! And if you're looking for a place to preprint your work, there are lots of options from very general repositories like Zenodo or OSF Preprints, discipline-specific ones like the ArXiv, BodoArXiv, or AgriArXiv (see here for lots more preprint communities), or even region-specific repositories like AfricArXiv.

