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How did the opt-in policy come about?

Since the passage of the faculty policy, other groups of authors at MIT have asked whether a similar license could apply to them. The faculty policy applies only to papers that are authored or co-authored by an MIT faculty member. Thus, a significant portion of the scholarly work produced by the MIT community — articles by graduate students, post-doctoral associates, and research scientists where there is no faculty coauthor — is not covered by this policy.

Former MIT graduate student Cara Manning spearheaded an effort to create an OA policy for these authors. The Libraries worked with graduate students, faculty, and the administration on the wording of an opt-in version of the policy. The policy launched in April 2017.

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