

# Max Planck Open Access Policy

## Definition of Open Access

In the scientific field, the term "open access" refers to unrestricted and free access to scientific information on the Internet. Accordingly, users should have the right not only to read a publication, but also to pass it on to a wider audience and use it for teaching purposes, for example. Of course, the original author must always be credited. A more precise definition of open access can be found in the Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge in the Sciences and Humanities.

Publication on the Internet without expressly transferring rights to the users in the meaning mentioned above does not meet the requirements of Open Access. Concerns that Open Access contravenes the rules of good scientific practice are unfounded, given that the same rules apply here as apply to conventional publications (ban on plagiarism, improper adaptation, etc.).

The call for OA has also been motivated by the trend in the cost of scholarly journals, which has led to the so-called journal crisis. Many proponents of OA hope that it will not only improve accessibility but also serve to keep costs down.

## The Max Planck Society and Open Access

The Max Planck Society, funded by the federal and state governments, conducts basic research in the public interest. Making its scientists' research findings available for the benefit of the whole of humanity, free of charge whenever possible (Open Access), is a key aspiration of the Society.

This is the spirit out of which the first Berlin Conference was initiated in 2003, along with the [Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge in the Sciences and Humanities](#) that was adopted there. It strengthened the Open Access Movement in Germany and across the globe in a sustained manner. Together with the [Budapest Open Access Initiative](#) (February 2002) and the [Bethesda Statement on Open Access Publishing](#) (June 2003), it is seen as a fundamental element of the programme pursued by the international Open Access Movement. The Max Planck Society provides one of the most important forums for professional discussion of the international development of Open Access in the [Berlin Open Access Conference](#), which it stages with different partner organisations every year.

Overall, the Max Planck Society's Open Access policy forms part of a close collaboration within the [Alliance of German Scientific Organisations](#).

Internally, the Max Planck Society calls upon its academic staff to observe the principle of public availability of basic research in its [Rules of Good Scientific Practice](#). Its [Rules for Scientific Advisory Boards](#) were correspondingly extended to include a section on Open Access.

The concept of Open Access is realised in practice through centralised strategic decisions, such as the creation of a central budget for subscription and Open Access publication charges, and a large number of corresponding projects. For instance, the Max Planck Society is involved in projects that promote the reconfiguration of science publishing to enable Open Access, e.g. by developing and analysing Open Access business models.

The decision to establish the [Max Planck Digital Library](#) was a crucial one. The library is responsible for supplying the Max Planck institutes with their basic information requirements. As such, it also operates the two central [repositories](#) of the Max Planck Society, [eDoc](#) and [PubMan](#). The Max Planck Society's [Open Access Policy Team](#) (in German only) is also based at the Max Planck Digital Library, acting as a point of contact for all Max Planck Society scientists and librarians on Open Access matters.

Information on the Max Planck Society's individual Open Access projects and activities can be found on the page detailing [open access activities at the MPS](#).