

By championing open access publishing, the academic community can bring us closer to making research available to all.

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Open access publishing increases the likelihood that academic research will be a top Google search hit for policy-makers, journalists and NGOs who use the internet to seek out research to inform their policies. [Dave Puplett](#) and [Natalia Madjarevic](#) list their top five tips and outline how open access publishing will increase citation counts and contribute to the author's reputation.



Peter Suber, [Berkman Fellow](#) at Harvard University and an established essayist on Open Access, uses the following [succinct definition for Open Access](#):

'Open-access (OA) literature is digital, online, free of charge, and free of most copyright and licensing restrictions. What makes it possible is the internet and the consent of the author or copyright-holder.'



Open Access is important for researchers for many reasons. Fundamentally, your funder or institution may require it of you. You may be using the Open Access fruits of other peoples' research without realising – Open Access is why Google Scholar has so many PDF files freely available. You might supervise PhD students whose research careers begin with Open Access, as their theses is deposited online by their university library. The case for Open Access has been made strongly, by public bodies such as [JISC](#), [journalists](#) and recently the [UK government](#), and it is becoming a bigger factor in the lives of research institutions all the time.

To mark the 5th annual Open Access Week (24-29th October 2011), LSE's own Open Access service presents our top 5 tips for researchers wanting to harness the possibilities that Open Access publishing can bring:

1. Make sure your institution's Open Access service has references for all of your work, and deposit as much full-text as you can.
2. Ask your Open Access service for download and viewing statistics of your work, and how Open Access can affect your H-index.
3. Check what your Open Access support is offered by your research funders (for example the [Wellcome Trust](#)).
4. Find out if your institution has an Open Access fund that could pay your publisher to make your work Open Access.
5. Protect your copyright – question why you transfer your copyright to publishers of your work .

There are Open Access options available now to researchers in virtually every field, with mainstream publishers now offering different routes to Open Access publishing. It is increasingly common for an author or their institution to pay a one-time upfront fee to a publisher. There are two variations of this paid, or 'Gold', Open Access journal publishing: paying a fee to publish in an Open Access journal or paying to publish in a journal that offers an Open Access option (a hybrid journal). Many funding grants now also include [Open Access obligations](#), and many institutions have responded by introducing their own funds to support the Open Access publishing efforts of their academics.

Of course many Open Access journals are freely available to all and don't require a fee from either the author or the institution. In all scenarios however, academics should not forget to deposit a copy of their work with their own institution as well as wherever they publish. Institutional services both preserve the research output for a university and effectively showcase that work to the wider academic community and the web. An example of bold institutional practice is Princeton University's recently [adopted an Open Access mandate](#), which prevents authors from handing over the copyright of their work when publishing. The institution therefore holds 'a nonexclusive, irrevocable, worldwide license to exercise any and all copyrights in his or her scholarly articles published in any medium'.

At LSE we're celebrating Open Access week by acknowledging those authors and departments who deposit the most work in the Open Access environment, and many other institutions will be offering [similar events](#). Recent developments such as Princeton's mandate could set a precedent for other institutional OA policies while encouraging journal publishers to rethink restrictive copyright contracts.

By championing Open Access, either by depositing your full-text or questioning [why publishers want to own your copyright](#), the academic community will be helping to bring us a step closer to making research available to all. From journalists seeking an expert opinion, students attempting to find resources outside of their library's collections to NGOs without funding to pay for expensive journal subscriptions, Open Access improves the likelihood that scholarly research is a top search hit. All of which is the oxygen to the author's citation counts and attention for their institution.

Related posts:

1. [Open access repositories are beginning to push academic publishers off their previously unreachable perch.](#)
2. [University libraries, repositories and Open Access should be seen as crucial tools in improving the impact of academic research](#)
3. [Academic journals remain unnecessary and unhealthy whilst open access archives such as arXiv continue to grow.](#)
4. [Universities are increasingly moving towards recognising digital scholarship despite conflicting messages that favour traditional publishing in journals](#)
5. [Continual publishing across journals, blogs and social media maximises impact by increasing the size of the 'academic footprint'.](#)