

Open Access Policy

September 2025

Open Access Policy

1. Background

- 1.1 The Medical Research Foundation's vision is to advance medical research, improve human health and change people's lives. The health and wellbeing of millions of people depends upon continual medical advances and we are committed to ensuring that the knowledge and discoveries which result from our funded research are available freely and immediately to everyone.
- 1.2 Open access is an important means of achieving this as it makes published research freely and permanently available online for anyone to read, share and reuse. The Medical Research Foundation ("The Foundation") is committed to working towards a sustainable future for immediate open research.

2. Policy Scope

- 2.1 The Foundation's open access policy applies to all original, peer reviewed research publications that have been supported, in whole or in part, by the Foundation.
- 2.2 Preprints are not in scope of this policy; however, the Foundation encourages their use. In addition, this policy does not apply to PhD theses by Foundation-funded students, but it is expected that PhD theses will be made freely available on the Electronic Theses Online System (EThOS) repository via the [British Library](#) as soon as possible.

3. Key Policy Principles

Principle 1 – Research articles must be made available to everyone immediately, freely and be openly accessible.

- 3.1 All research articles must be archived and be freely available through Europe PubMed Central (Europe PMC). The most up to date Version of Record¹ or the Author Accepted Manuscript² must be deposited on Europe PMC by the final publication date, without any embargo period. This requirement can be fulfilled through deposition from either the publisher or the author and it is the author's responsibility to ensure that this requirement has been fulfilled.
- 3.2 Publications in scientific and medical journals should acknowledge the Foundation using the journal's standard format, and include the Grant Reference number. Research and the Results should formally be described as "funded by a grant from the Medical Research Foundation" in line with the grant Terms & Conditions.

Principle 2 – The content of a research article must be made available to anyone to share and reuse.

¹ Version of Record: The version that has been published in a journal, in print and/or online.

² Author accepted manuscript: The version that has undergone peer review and has been accepted by the publisher.

- 3.3 Research articles must be published under a Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) public copyright licence. This is to permit copying and reuse (for example, for text and data mining purposes) without further permission or fees being required. An Open Government Licence (OGL) can be used as an alternative when a research article is subject to Crown Copyright.

Principle 3 – Research articles and research data must be freely discoverable.

- 3.4 To enable research data to be discoverable, it is a requirement that all research articles are deposited on Europe PMC. Authors are also encouraged to include data access statements in their publications. This informs readers where the underlying research data is available and how it can be accessed. The statement can include links to the dataset, where applicable and appropriate.
- 3.5 Any relevant data and materials must also be made freely available to other researchers upon request, subject to any ethics, approvals and Intellectual Property consideration.

4. Compliant Open Access Routes

- 4.1 Grant holders can comply with the Foundation's open access policy via two different routes:
- Route 1: Publish the research article in an open access journal. Open access journal publishers take responsibility for making the Version of Record for the article freely available on Europe PMC at the time of publication, under a CC BY licence. This route is also known as the Gold Open Access route.
 - Route 2: Publish the research article in a subscription journal. Under this route, the author takes responsibility for making the Author Accepted Manuscript freely available on Europe PMC at the time of publication, under a CC BY licence. This route is an enhanced version of the Green Open Access route, whereby there is no publication embargo period permitted.
- 4.2 Researchers can publish in the journal or platform they consider most appropriate for their research, provided the Medical Research Foundation's open access requirements are met. This can include fully open access journals or 'hybrid' subscription journals that offer an open access option, and which offer a compliant route.

5. Publication Costs

- 5.1 Publishing a research article in an open access form will normally incur an Article Processing Charge (APC). The Foundation is committed to supporting this policy and will therefore pay reasonable fees as required by the publisher.
- 5.2 Grant applicants are permitted to request funding for publishing their work through their original application form. The amount of funding available for publications is dependent on the funding call and size of the award. More information is available in the relevant funding call application guidance. In addition to this, grant holders will be permitted to use fellowship or research grant underspends for this purpose subject to Foundation approval.