

Open Access Collection Development Policy

Prepared by: Chris Palazzolo, Director of Collections and Open Strategies; Jody Bailey, Head of the Scholarly Communications Office; and Jenny Townes, Open Access Librarian

Original Versions: 2021, 2024

Last Updated: Summer 2026

Purpose

The following policy outlines basic principles regarding the addition and support of open access (OA) content and infrastructure to complement existing collection development policies. The supported OA content may be monograph and journal programs and models as well as cooperative large-scale digitization efforts of content that will be made openly available. The policy covers both financial support for OA initiatives, including transformative agreements (e.g., read and publish agreements and subscribe to open), and identification and selection of OA content for addition to the collection and catalog.

We are committed to the advancement and promotion of OA by helping users discover OA materials in our collection and supporting OA publishing efforts of Emory-affiliated authors and the greater research and publishing community. These OA materials enhance and complement resources that are purchased/owned, leased, or created by the library.

Support of OA Collection Initiatives

Numerous new and innovative publishing and digitization OA initiatives from established and new publishers and presses continue to be piloted and implemented. Novel financial models are also emerging in this area, but most require single or multiyear financial commitments on the part of the library in pursuit of making the resulting content openly available.

The following guidelines should inform selectors and collection managers as to which content initiatives are to be supported by Emory Libraries. Note that for-profit initiatives and initiatives from for-profit organizations will undergo greater scrutiny.

- The OA content should be within our current collection development guidelines (i.e., would we acquire this content if it were fee-based to support the curricular and research needs of the Emory community?).
 - Emory may support content that does not match Emory curricular or research needs because of the general nature of the initiative and its intellectual contribution to research.
- The OA initiative should have a sustainable and equitable business model that does not require exorbitant costs for the author or the library. To mitigate unforeseen budgetary changes, multiyear commitments should include a clause allowing Emory Libraries to exit the agreement in cases of financial exigency.
- The OA initiative should adhere to social justice principles, such as those established by the Coalition for Diversity and Inclusion in Scholarly Communications (<https://c4disc.org/principles/>), in terms of content and business practices.
- The OA initiative should adhere to ethical principles in terms of content and business practices. Specifically, the company/organization providing the OA content should be reputable and follow the Open Access Scholarly Publishing Association's Code of Conduct

(<http://oaspa.org/membership/code-of-conduct/>) and/or the Committee on Publication Ethics guidelines (<https://publicationethics.org/guidance/Guidelines>) Library financial support should be based on a cost-to-content ratio (i.e., fees should be in proportion to the content received or produced) as well as any benefits accrued to contributors (e.g., advance access to content).

- Of particular consideration should be whether Emory has contributed content or whether Emory authors are represented.
- The library should receive some benefit from contribution even if the OA funding goal is not met.
- The publisher/organization should have a robust policy and practice in place for the preservation of their OA titles or collections or will facilitate Emory serving as the preservation repository if we choose.
- The publisher/organization should have a metadata plan to enable and enhance discovery of OA materials it produces.

Support of each OA model will be reassessed on a regular basis to determine whether terms of agreement or support (financial or otherwise) are still beneficial to Emory. Current OA initiatives supported by and/or under consideration will be documented and updated by way of an internal Open Access Inventory.

A regularly recurring budget fund has been established to track OA publishing models and initiatives. The fund can be used for one-time or ongoing commitments expanding the financial commitment to OA over time when possible.

Requests for OA monograph collections or support of large-scale OA digitization efforts should go through the Collection Management Technical Advisory Group (CMTAG) as we are committing staff time to review contracts and to catalog and manage these materials.

Open Educational Resources

Open educational resources (OERs) are discoverable and available through the library catalog. OERs are teaching and learning materials that are free of cost in digital form and openly licensed to allow users to retain, reuse, revise, remix, and redistribute them. Instructors benefit from OERs' adaptability, and students benefit from access to a curated list of cost-free course materials. The latter is particularly beneficial to those from historically excluded and underrepresented populations. Furthermore, because Emory is expanding its online education offerings, OERs equalize access to educational resources for students around the world who might otherwise have difficulty purchasing or leasing commercial textbooks. OERs will be added to the catalog when large collections of them are made available along with their metadata that can be batch downloaded (e.g., the Open Textbook Library, <https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks>).

To further support and supplement our support for open education practices, in Fall 2024, Emory Libraries partnered with Emory First (part of Campus Life) to purchase and make print textbooks available on reserves (ebooks are also provided when available). High-enrollment (50+ students) general education courses are targeted for this program, and although these books are not OA, students can access them at no cost to themselves, which helps to increase student success and retention, particularly for first-generation students or those from lower-income families.

Open-Access Collection Requesting and Open-Resource Catalog Additions for Emory Libraries

Relevant OA content identified as within this collection development policy will be added to our collections in the same way as purchased content. As emphasized above, the content should be in line with the current collection development guidelines of the relevant library.

Requests for most OA journals are not required as Emory Libraries have activated the [Directory of Open Access Journals](#) for regular inclusion in the catalog. For other content, including OA collections and monographs, the following general guidelines should apply:

- Requests for large-scale OA collections to be added to the catalog should go through CMTAG as we are committing staff time to catalog and manage these materials.
- All OA content from a publisher or subject collection should be requested if possible.
- Single titles can be requested for additions to the catalog on an as-needed basis at the discretion of the subject librarian
- Depending on the quality of the individual records, a catalog entry just for the accompanying database may be needed.
- Deselection of content with defunct links should take place concurrently with other link checks in the catalog.

Specific procedures for the inclusion and approval of such content are developed and maintained jointly by the CMTAG and CATACOM (Cataloging and Authority Committee) groups in the library.

Support for Transformative Agreements

Definitions

Transformative agreement: At its most fundamental, “a contract is a transformative agreement if it seeks to shift the contracted payment from a library or group of libraries to a publisher away from subscription-based reading and towards open access publishing”.¹ Such deals are meant to be transitional, at least in principle, so Libraries should consider long-term objectives and incentives both for themselves and publishers. Two models have emerged as the predominant types of transformative agreements: read and publish agreements and subscribe to open agreements.

Read and publish agreements: Under this model, libraries pay publishers for access to a journal’s full content, as well as the right to make their researchers’ work open access, under a single contract and fee. This allows authors affiliated with the parent institution of the library to publish OA without paying article-process charges.

Subscribe to open (S2O) agreements: These models are founded upon existing library procurement methods, rather than on article processing charges. Per SPARC, “S2O allows publishers to convert journals from subscriptions to OA, one year at a time. Using S2O, a publisher offers a journal’s current subscribers continued access. If all current subscribers participate in the S2O offer (simply by not opting out) the publisher opens the content covered by that year’s subscription.”² If not all current subscribers participate (or enough participants meet the threshold), then the content remains gated

¹Hinchliffe, L. J. (2019). “Transformative Agreements: A Primer.” *The Scholarly Kitchen*.

<https://scholarlykitchen.sspnet.org/2019/04/23/transformative-agreements/>, accessed October 28, 2022.

² Subscribe to Open Community of Practice. <https://subscribetooopencommunity.org/>, accessed November 8, 2022.

(i.e., behind a paywall). S2O models are also being used in monograph publishing (e.g., MIT's Direct to Open or University of Michigan's Fund to Mission initiative). S2O is a preferred model for the Libraries for open access transition, as it is generally a more equitable business model because there are no publishing fees for *any* authors (not just those at the institution supporting the program) .

Pure OA agreements: This type of model involves libraries providing financial support to a born-OA journal, or group of journals from a given publisher, or an OA publisher. This support allows authors affiliated with the parent institution of the library to publish in this journal(s) at no cost or with a reduced fee.

In addition to the general criteria noted above for the assessment and consideration of OA initiatives, which all apply to transformative agreements, the Libraries should also consider the following:

For transformative agreements and pure OA agreements:

- Libraries' funds should not take the place of grant funds or discretionary funds from outside the Libraries that currently pay most open access fees for Emory researchers. In other words, if Emory authors are already using grant funds or other discretionary funds to support the majority of articles published OA in the journal(s) under consideration, then the Libraries may not provide funding for the agreements.³
- The publisher/press should have a defined trajectory for OA and a defined threshold for when a journal is to flip to OA.
- There should be some documented cost adjustment on the "read" component of the agreement when open access content reaches a threshold.
- Preference is for elimination of APCs rather than a discounted APC. If a content provider offers only a discounted APC, the discount should be substantial, at a minimum, greater than 50%.
- For traditional, fee-based publishers, additional costs should be minimal, and if additional costs are required, then there should be smaller market increases.
 - Increases in institutional publishing output should not lead to unsustainable increases in fees.
- Where possible, multiyear agreements are preferred to lock in price increases.
- Where possible, the agreement should include gold open access in addition to hybrid access coverage, particularly when the latter accounts for a larger percentage of OA publishing in the publisher's journals.
- The role of the Libraries in administering the agreement should be minimized.
- The publisher should provide a transparent calculation of read and publish costs (e.g., amount of institutional research published in the journal).
- The publisher should provide quarterly reports and data of author uptake of reduced or eliminated APCs.
- The deal should preferably not be capped to a specific number of journal articles or authors, or if so, should allow for some margin of increased publishing output during the life of the agreement.
- The agreement should allow for a default CC BY 4.0 or CC BY-NC license.

³ This criterion may be revised if necessary in response to the proposed OMB rule (2 CFR Part 200 Section 200.461) in late 2026.

- All article types should be covered, as well as all journals. If not, a clear set of exceptions should be made available.