

Position Statement on Open Access

Open Access is part of the wider Open Science movement, which calls for greater transparency in the creation of and greater public access to scientific methods, data, and results. Open Access specifically refers to the free availability online of research outputs, including peer reviewed journal articles such as those published by the Microbiology Society.

1. Background

As a membership organisation, charity and independent publisher, the Microbiology Society supports sustainable Open Access models which maintain the scholarly publishing environment that is fundamental to how microbiologists improve, validate and share their research.

The mission of the Microbiology Society is ‘advancing the understanding and impact of microbiology by connecting and empowering communities worldwide’. In keeping with this mission, the Society publishes a portfolio of high quality scientific journals, namely *Microbiology*, *Journal of General Virology*, *Journal of Medical Microbiology*, *Microbial Genomics*, *Access Microbiology*, *International Journal of Systematic and Evolutionary Microbiology*, and *JMM Case Reports*.

The surplus the Society generates from its peer-reviewed journals is its primary source of income. This surplus is used to support its charitable remit, for example, by funding career development opportunities for undergraduate and post-graduate students, awarding grants through a number of different schemes, and organising scientific conferences.

Readers of microbiological papers must have confidence that the science they read is peer-reviewed, published and archived to the highest standards. The Society’s journals help to maintain and define these standards.

Microbiologists can support the Society by publishing high-quality science in its journals, which in turn encourages wider readership and increased income, thus enabling the Society to meet its charitable goals. This a unique way for scientists to ‘pay forward’ and support their academic discipline, as well as to communicate vital research.

2. Open access and recovery of publication costs

The Society recognises that there are many models of Open Access, and that a mixed economy is likely to exist throughout any transition from a subscription model to a full Open Access environment.

The Society also believes that authors must be allowed to exercise their individual professional judgement in deciding when, and where, to submit and publish the products of their research.

3. Position statement

In response to these issues the Society will:

- Champion financially-sustainable models of Open Access through our own journals (see Society journals).
- Continue to define and maintain high standards of peer-reviewed scientific publishing.
- Engage with government, universities, and the scientific publishing community to ensure academic freedom to publish in the author's journal of choice is maintained.

4. Society journals

The Society supports three sustainable models of Open Access:

- Gold Open Access through OpenMicrobiology, which allows authors and their funding bodies to make Versions of Record freely available under a Creative Commons licence at publication on payment of an Article Processing Charge.
- Green Open Access through author self-archiving, which allows authors to deposit pre-prints or accepted manuscripts in subject or institutional repositories under a Creative Commons licence, without embargo or payment.
- Complimentary Bronze Open Access through the Society's journal archive, in which all subscription articles are made free to read 12 months after publication.

To complement Open Access to published articles, the Society's journals also support the other components of Open Science, namely Open Data and Open Methodologies. Authors are encouraged to deposit their raw data and detailed methodologies in public repositories where relevant.

Further information about Open Science in the Society's journals, including discounts on Article Process Charges for gold Open Access, can be found on the journal website at www.microbiologyresearch.org.

5. Further information

- OpenMicrobiology: www.microbiologyresearch.org/authors/oa
- Society policy information: www.microbiologysociety.org/policy

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