Open Access MythBusters

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Myth:

Academic research has impact and value only if published in traditional, subscription journals.
Fact:

• More than 76% of electronic scholarly documents are not freely available to the public.* This is largely attributable to the traditional practice of locking academic research behind expensive paywalls created by for-profit publishers.

• Open access makes scholarly research available to anyone with an internet connection, and is more discoverable by researchers, students, policy makers, and journalists which can greatly enhance impact and reach.

• Open access also promotes retention of rights by authors and encourages the reuse and sharing of research.

* http://dx.doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0093949

https://justpublics365.commons.gc.cuny.edu/10/2014/introducing-open-access-series/
Visit the Directory of Open Access Journals and search for open access titles in your field.

https://doaj.org/search
Myth:

Open access journals are low quality and not peer reviewed.
Fact:

• All journals, whether traditional subscription-based journals or open access journals, should be evaluated for quality before a manuscript is submitted for review and publication.

• Many open access journals are affiliated with academic institutions, such as the *Journal of Religion & Society* published by the Kripke Center at Creighton University, and have rigorous editorial policies for peer review and selection.
Act:

• Utilize Think.Check.Submit. [http://thinkchecksubmit.org](http://thinkchecksubmit.org) to evaluate any source of publication, regardless of open access status.

Myth:

Open access journals do not have impact factors and therefore are irrelevant.
Fact:

• The more accessible a work is to other researchers, the greater chance it will be discovered, read and cited by peers thereby increasing the impact your research has.

• The term “impact factor” is a proprietary term that applies only to journals indexed in the Web of Science databases managed by Thomson Reuters. Not all scholarly journals are indexed in Web of Science.

• Alternative metrics or measurements of impact and citation should also be consulted when evaluating publications.
Act:

• Download Harzing’s **Publish or Perish software** to retrieve and analyze your academic citation
• Register for an **ORCID identifier** to better track your scholarly output
• Consider creating a profile on **ImpactStory.org** to calculate the impact your research has beyond the impact factor.
• Check out the **Metrics Toolkit** for information about many available research metrics across disciplines

http://www.harzing.com/resources/publish-or-perish
https://orcid.org/register
https://impactstory.org/
http://www.metrics-toolkit.org/
Myth:

Open access publications will not be respected by peers and thus not satisfy requirements of promotion and tenure.
Fact:

If the open access journal has editorial policies that require rigorous peer review and reject manuscripts for research misconduct, the publication would satisfy the requirements of promotion and tenure.
Search Google Scholar for an open access journal of interest. What is the citation reach of recent articles? Do you recognize the names of the authors? Are they affiliated with peer institutions?
Myth:

Open access means only publishing in open access journals.
Fact:

Open access can be accomplished in two ways: (1) by publishing in an open access journal or (2) by publishing in any journal and retaining the right in the publisher agreement to make a version of your work available in an open access repository.
Act:

- Look up the archiving/deposit policy of individual journals in Sherpa/ROMEO [http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/romeo/index.php](http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/romeo/index.php)

- Deposit your article in your institution’s repository or in a subject based repository.

- See OpenDOAR for a list of repositories [http://v2.opendoar.sherpa.ac.uk/search.html](http://v2.opendoar.sherpa.ac.uk/search.html)
Myth:

Open access deprives authors of their copyright and allows for reuse of a work without proper attribution.
Fact:

Open access actively promotes the retention of copyright by authors as opposed to the traditional transfer of control to publishers. Most open access publishers utilize Creative Commons™ licensing, which require full attribution of the author but allows authors to customize how their work may be reused and shared by others.
Act:

Read your publisher agreements carefully, and negotiate or amend them to allow retention of rights. Consider using this author’s agreement amendment https://sparcopen.org/our-work/author-rights/brochure-html/
Myth:

Open access is only for STEM disciplines.
Open access is becoming a part of everyone’s world and is the next wave of scholarly dissemination regardless of the discipline. Funding agencies and organizations, including NEH, NEA, and Mellon Foundation, are adopting public access policies that require deposit of publications that are the product of funded research in specific open access repositories.
Learn more about public funding agencies mandating open access at https://sparcopen.org/our-work/2013-executive-directive/#plans
Myth:

Open access publishing is expensive for authors.
Fact:

• Not all open access journals charge article processing charges or APCs. Subscriptions are the traditional means of covering overhead costs, but most publishers are collecting these at a profit level that is not sustainable and at the cost of restricting research to only those who can afford to pay.

• Open access journals make all research free to read while covering overhead costs through nonprofit or funder backing.

• Some open access journals utilize APCs as a business model, but authors can request a fee waiver in certain cases, cover the cost of APCs by utilizing institutional funds where available or cover the cost through grants or other funding.
Act:

• Investigate whether your institution provides support to cover APCs. SPARC maintains a list of colleges and universities that maintain funds as well as other resources on campus based funds. [https://sparcopen.org/our-work/oa-funds/](https://sparcopen.org/our-work/oa-funds/)

• Review the research on the frequency and rate of APCs charged by scholarly journals [https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4963224/](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4963224/)
Thank you!

Questions?

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