

Open Access (OA) and Author Processing Charges (APCs)

General information for the Board of the Alberta Gambling Research Institute. Prepared December 7, 2021 by Rhys Stevens, Institute Librarian & Information Specialist. Revised by David Scott on April 7, 2022.

What is Open Access (OA)?

- Open access (OA) refers to freely available, digital, online information. Open access scholarly literature is free of charge and often carries less restrictive copyright and licensing barriers than traditionally published works, for both the users and the authors.
- While OA is a newer form of scholarly publishing, many OA journals comply with well-established peer-review processes and maintain high publishing standards. For more information, see [Peter Suber's overview of Open Access](#).



SOURCE: [Open Access Publishing: What is Open Access? Cornell University Library](#)

Why is Open Access Important?

- Open access is the practice of providing free and unrestricted online access to research publications and data. This greater access is expected to accelerate the progress of research, democratize access to knowledge worldwide, and ensure that publicly funded research is available to the public. Open access makes it possible for research results to have a greater impact and enables researchers, scholars, clinicians, policymakers, private sectors and not-for-profit organizations and the public to use and build upon this knowledge. Moving toward open access is a way to increase transparency, accountability and efficiency.

SOURCE: [FAQs, Tri-Agency Open Access Policy on Publications](#)

- **What is the Tri-Agency Open Access Policy on Publications?** -- In keeping with the global movement towards open access, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), (“the Agencies”), have developed a harmonized policy on open access, applicable to research results. The unified approach of the Tri-Agency Open Access Policy on Publications was modeled on CIHR’s Open Access Policy. The objective of the policy is to ensure that results arising from Agency-supported research are freely accessible online within 12 months of publication.

SOURCE: [FAQs, Tri-Agency Open Access Policy on Publications](#)

Types of Open Access – Green OA, Gold OA & Hybrid

- **Green OA** publishing refers to the self-archiving of published or pre-publication works for free public use. Authors provide access to preprints or post-prints (with publisher permission) in an institutional or disciplinary archive such as [OPUS @ U. of Lethbridge](#) and [arXiv.org](#).

Another definition that I found which I like is the following:

"Green open access is **repository-based** open access. Green OA models are agnostic about publisher open access behaviors, relying instead on institutions and authors to take steps to make otherwise toll-access works freely available in online repositories that may be (and often are) managed by institutions. In essence, successful green open access requires: the right to share a given scholarly output, a copy of it, the motivation to share it, and a location for sharing it (i.e., a repository)."

- **Gold OA** publishing refers to articles published in freely available OA journals, which may or may not involve payment of article processing charges (APCs) to cover publication costs. Examples of Gold OA include [PLOS \(Public Library of Science\)](#) and [BioMed Central](#).
- **Hybrid journals** refer to subscription journals that offer optional OA for individual articles when an APC is paid to the publisher or journal by the author, the author's organization, or the research funder. Examples of hybrid OA options include [Open Select](#) (Taylor & Francis), [OnlineOpen](#) (Wiley) and [Sage Choice](#) (Sage).
- **Diamond or Platinum Open Access** refers to an OA journal supported by sponsors. Neither authors nor readers pay for journal publishing.

SOURCES: Open Access Library Guides, U. of Lethbridge, Cornell U., Penn State and UNLV.

What are Author Processing Charges (APCs)?

- Article Processing Charges (APCs) are charged to authors of scholarly articles during the publication process. APCs are used by open access journals in lieu of subscription fees that libraries and readers traditionally have paid to gain access to research articles. APCs shift the burden of journal production costs (editing, peer review, hosting, archiving, preservation), to authors from readers. Paying an APC results in an article that is available to anyone with an internet connection. Corporate, non-profit, society, academic, and other publishers use a variety of models to meet their income needs and publishing service costs, and charging APCs is one model.

SOURCE: [UNLV Libraries Article Processing Charges \(APCs\) Overview](#)

- **Why Should an Author Pay an APC?** There are many reasons why authors may choose to publish in a journal that charges APCs. These include:
 - **Visibility:** Typically, paying an APC leads to increased readership of your article through open access. Your colleagues at universities and colleges worldwide, non-profits, government agencies, and the general public will have immediate access to your work, regardless of their library's ability to afford journal subscriptions. Increased access has been shown to lead to increased citation rates as well.
 - **Journal quality:** Authors may find that top-ranking journals charge APCs (e.g., publishers such as PLoS, BMC, Copernicus).
 - **Copyright:** APC-funded articles often include provisions that allow the author to retain more rights to their work and give readers additional usage rights (e.g., Creative Commons licenses ranging from attribution only to more strict non-commercial and/or no-derivatives versions).
 - **Compliance:** Publishing in an OA journal (with or without APCs) helps satisfy requirements to share the results of your research.

SOURCE: [UNLV Libraries Article Processing Charges \(APCs\) Overview](#)

- **APCs as Eligible Expenses** -- As APC fees (for paid Gold or Hybrid OA articles) can be quite expensive, some funding agencies treat APC fees as an allowable expense for successful grant applicants. For example, in the Tri-Agency Guide on Financial Administration, APCs are an eligible expense under [Dissemination of Research Results](#). Note that the Tri-Agency introduced an [Open Access Policy](#) effective May 2015 that applies to published articles arising from Tri-Agency funded research.

SOURCE: [Open Access: Types of OA, U. of Lethbridge Library](#)

- **Negotiated Publisher Discounts on APCs**

Through library licensing agreements with certain publishers, various APC publisher discounts are available to authors interested in submitting to their open access journals.

Note: *Never assume that a discount will be automatically applied. Always check with the publisher to confirm the discount.*

- [Journal Article Processing Charge Discounts](#) (U. of Calgary Libraries)
- [APC Discounts & Waivers](#) (U. of Alberta Library)
- [OA APC Discounts](#) (U. of Lethbridge Library)

OA APCs in Gambling-Related Journals

April 2022

Journal Title	Publisher	APC ¹	Discounted APC ²	Notes
Addiction	Wiley	4,050	n/a	
Addictive Behaviors	Elsevier	3,580	2,864	20% discount for institutions participating in the CRKN agreement (more information here)
Addiction Research & Theory	Taylor & Francis	3,605	2,704	25% discount for institutions participating in the CRKN agreement (more information here)
BMC Psychiatry	BioMed Central	2,790	n/a	
Canadian Journal of Addiction	Wolters Kluwer	2,340	n/a	The APC is USD 2,340 for a CCBY-NC-ND license, and USD 2800 for a CCBY license.
Canadian Journal of Psychiatry	Sage	4,000	0	No APCs will be levied for institutions participating in the CRKN agreement (more information here)
Canadian Journal of Public Health	Springer	2,890	n/a	
Comprehensive Psychiatry	Elsevier	2,370	1,896	20% discount for institutions participating in the CRKN agreement (more information here)
Critical Gambling Studies	University of Alberta Library	0	n/a	Diamond OA journal; no APCs
Drug and Alcohol Dependence	Elsevier	3,690	2,952	20% discount for institutions participating in the CRKN agreement (more information here)
International Gambling Studies	Taylor & Francis	3,400	2,550	25% discount for institutions participating in the CRKN agreement (more information here)
International Journal of Eating Disorders	Wiley	4,800	n/a	
International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health	MDPI	2,681 ³	2,413	10% discount for University of Calgary-affiliated authors (more information here)
International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction	Springer	3,490	n/a	
Internet Interventions	Elsevier	3,110	2,488	20% discount for institutions participating in the CRKN agreement (more information here)
Journal of Behavioral Addictions	Akademiai Kiado	927 ⁴	n/a	
Journal of Gambling Issues	Centre for Addiction and Mental Health	0	n/a	Diamond OA journal; no APCs
Journal of Gambling Studies	Springer	3,280	n/a	
Neuroscience & Biobehavioral Reviews	Elsevier	4,720	3,776	20% discount for institutions participating in the CRKN agreement (more information here)
Philosophical Transactions B. Biological Sciences	Royal Society Publishing	2,380	n/a	
Psychology of Addictive Behaviors	American Psychological Association	3,000	n/a	

¹Cost in USD.

²Cost in USD. Apart from the 10% discount for the *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, all discounts and waivers apply to researchers affiliated with the University of Alberta, the University of Calgary, and the University of Lethbridge.

³Cost (2,500 CHF) converted to USD.

⁴Cost (850 EUR) converted to USD.