# **Open Access Policy Schema**

## Introduction

This document outlines the rationale for developing a schema for Open Access (OA) policies, overviews the schema and presents a glossary of the schema. The schema advances a proposal for those issuing policies on Open Access to express them in a consistent and structured way. It is relevant to both research funders and research performing organisations such as universities who might adopt such policies.

## Background

Funders’ and institutions’ OA policies documented, for example in [ROARMAP](http://roarmap.eprints.org/), [SHERPA/JULIET](http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/juliet/) and [MELIBEA](http://www.accesoabierto.net/politicas/?idioma=en) are very varied. While there are likely to be good business and/or strategic reasons for this variety, it comes at the price of increased complexity for those asked to comply with those policies, and those who seek to advise them or provide other information services to them.

It would not be practical at this time to ask those issuing OA policies to converge on a single policy type, though that might arise through other means. Instead, a practical response to the problems generated by this variety would be to ask those issuing policies to express them using consistent language. That is the aim of the schema proposed here.

## Rationale

It is not the function of this document to outline the benefits of adopting a common schema for OA policies. However, in brief, these can be summarised as:

1. Reducing the cognitive and administrative burden on academic authors, for example when they encounter new policies or when they are subject to more than one policy in respect of a particular publication;
2. Enabling clear guidance to be provided to academic authors by funders, universities and online services;
3. Allowing compliance with OA policies to be monitored systematically, enabling lessons to be learned and improvements to be made.

## Overview of the schema

The schema comprises 38 fields, in five sections. Those five sections are:

1. **ORGANISATION**: The ‘organisation' is the organisation (funder, university, university department or faculty, research institution or other) issuing the OA policy. If a policy varies within an organisation, then each of those variations should be represented by a separate instance of the schema. For example, if different OA policies apply at a sub-institutional level or at the research-funder level. Where national research council OA policies vary, then the schema should be completed separately for each sub-institutional policy / each research council OA policy.
2. **POLICY**: This section gives general parametric information about the OA policy (links, dates, and constituency).
3. **REPOSITORY REQUIREMENTS**: This section is about the policy requirements on (1) depositing items into repositories, and on (2) making the deposited items OA.
4. **OA PUBLISHING REQUIREMENTS**: This section is about items formally published in Open Access form. Where journal articles are concerned, this is commonly referred to as 'Gold' Open Access.
5. **OTHER CONDITIONS**: This section enables organisations to add further information not captured by the schema.

This schema is only applicable for **journal articles and conference proceedings**. It is not recommended to use this schema for other items such books, book chapters, policy briefing reports, technical reports, thesis, working papers or other items.

For each field in the schema, the following information is provided:

* Field number
* Field name, usually in the form of a question for the organisation to answer.
* Contents to be provided by the organisation, noting the permitted values they might enter for the field. “String” indicates that an arbitrary text string is permitted, otherwise controlled vocabularies are proposed from which the organisation may choose a value.
* Mandatory or optional, that is, whether the field must be filled in (mandatory) or if it may be left empty (optional).
* Guidelines, give further information to help the organisation provide the “contents”.

## Glossary

SECTION 1: ORGANISATION

**1. Name of organisation issuing the policy**: the organisation (e.g. funder, university, university department or faculty, research institution or other) issuing the policy. Note: it is mandatory to fill this field in the schema.

**2. Identifier for the organisation:** an identifier for the organisation. For example, if the organisation is a funder then provide FundRef ID. If the organisation is an institution then provide the ISNI, Ringgold identifier, etc. Note: it is optional to fill this field in the schema.

**3. Type of organisation:** the organisation type issuing the policy can be a research funder, an institution, both, or other. Note: it is mandatory to fill this field in the schema.

**4. Link to organisation:** URL to the organisation’s website. Note: it is mandatory to fill this field in the schema.

**5. Country or region in which the organisation is based:** name of the country or region where the organisation is based. For example, if it is a country insert ISO 3166-1 code, which is an international standard defining the codes for the representation of names of countries and their subdivisions. Note: it is mandatory to fill this field in the schema.

SECTION 2: POLICY

**6. Link to policy on organisation’s website:** URL to policy on the organisation’s website. Note: it is mandatory to fill this field in the schema.

**7. Link to policy in ROARMAP:** URL to the Registry of Open Access Repositories Mandatory Archiving Policies (ROARMAP). Note: it is optional to fill this field in the schema.

**8. Link to funder policy in SHERPA/JULIET:** URL to the registry of research funders' open access policies (SHERPA/JULIET). Note: it is optional to fill this field in the schema.

**9. Date the policy was issued:** date the policy was issued (dd/mm/yyyy). Note: it is mandatory to fill this field in the schema.

**10. Is the policy current or archived**: the version of the policy recorded in this schema can either be the one currently in place or it can be an older version that has been archived. This field needs to be changed when a new version is adopted and a new schema needs to be filled. Note: it is mandatory to fill this field in the schema.

**11. Policy start date:** date from when compliance with the policy must begin. Note: it is mandatory to fill this field in the schema.

**12. To whom does the policy apply:** the policy can apply, for example, to research students, researchers, all members of an institution, grant holders, etc. Note: it is optional to fill this field in the schema.

SECTION 3A: REPOSITORY REQUIREMENTS – DEPOSITING ITEMS

**13. Does the OA policy make explicit reference to depositing in a repository:** the policy should make reference to whether depositing the item (peer-reviewed articles and conference proceedings) in a repository should (yes) or should not be made (no). Note 1: it is mandatory to fill this field in the schema. Note 2: if option “yes” is selected in the schema, then the remaining fields in this section should be completed.

**14. Is depositing the item a requirement or a recommendation:** the policy can either require – i.e. the author complying with the policy must or is obliged to deposit the item –or recommend – i.e. the author is merely encouraged or requested to deposit the item. In a few cases, however, OA policies may not specify this criterion. OA policies that require depositing the item are mandatory policies. Mandatory policies are more likely to be effective, to result in higher compliance rates and to accumulate higher amounts of items in a repository. To succeed, mandatory OA policies must be accompanied by effective support, advocacy and e-infrastructure systems. Note: it is optional to fill this field in the schema.

**15. If there is a requirement to deposit the item, are exemptions allowed:** the policy may under specific conditions allow for exemptions – i.e. the author can be exempt from the obligation to deposit the item into a repository. In the cases where exemptions are allowed, these can be unconditional (no conditions or limitations apply) or conditional (express the conditions under which exemptions are allowed). OA policies can also designate that exemptions are not allowed, where under this circumstance the author has to deposit the item. Some OA policies do not make any reference to exemptions (i.e. they do not specify if any exemptions are or are not allowed and under which conditions). [Research](http://www.pasteur4oa.eu/sites/pasteur4oa/files/deliverables/PASTEUR4OA%20Work%20Package%203%20Report%20final%2010%20March%202015.pdf) has demonstrated that effective OA policies include, among other, policy elements that specify that the ‘deposit cannot be waived’. Note: it is optional to fill this field in the schema.

**16. Is depositing the item required for eligibility in research performance evaluation or assessment:** the policy can either confirm (yes), reject (no) or not specify if depositing the item is a requirement for the author’s eligibility in the organisation’s research performance evaluation or assessment exercise. Examples of organisations that have made a requirement for the item to be deposited an eligible and inclusive component of the research performance evaluation or assessment include the [University of Liege OA policy](http://orbi.ulg.ac.be/files/extrait_moniteur_CA.pdf) and the UK’s Higher Education Councils post-2014 [Research Excellence Framework (REF) OA policy](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/media/hefce/content/pubs/2014/201407/HEFCE2014_07.pdf). [Research](http://www.pasteur4oa.eu/sites/pasteur4oa/files/deliverables/PASTEUR4OA%20Work%20Package%203%20Report%20final%2010%20March%202015.pdf) has demonstrated that effective OA policies include, among other, policy elements that specify that the ‘deposit of articles is linked to research evaluation (performance assessment)’. Note: it is optional to fill this field in the schema.

**17. What kinds of items does the policy cover:** the policy can either require or recommend the deposit of peer-reviewed articles and conference proceedings or even of other items (e.g. book chapters, books, theses, data, etc.) in the repository. This schema is only applicable for journal articles and conference proceedings, therefore it only requires that one or both of these two items are identified. Note: it is optional to fill this field in the schema.

**18. Which version of the item is to be deposited:** frequently, OA policies make reference to the version of the item to be deposited in the repository. The most commonly required/recommended versions of the item to be deposited include: 1) the author's manuscript pre-peer-review (i.e. the author’s manuscript before it has been peer-reviewed); 2) the author's manuscript post-peer-review (i.e. the author’s manuscript after it has been peer-reviewed); 3) the published version (i.e. the published version of the item); or 4) other (i.e. another version of the item). For peer-reviewed articles, the 4 options described above should be considered in relation to the [NISO/ALPSP vocabulary](http://www.niso.org/publications/rp/RP-8-2008.pdf): 1) the author's manuscript pre-peer-review = "AO" or "SMUR"; 2) the author's manuscript post-peer-review = "AM"; 3) the published version = "VoR", "CVoR" or "EVoR"; 4) other. Note: it is optional to fill this field in the schema.

**19. Where to deposit:** the policy can either require or recommend depositing the item (peer-reviewed articles and conference proceedings) in one or more of the following repositories: a) institutional repository; b) funder repository; c) subject repository; d) national repository; e) any repository; f) other (i.e. deposit in another form of repository or elsewhere); and g) not specified (i.e. no reference is made to where the item must/should be deposited). For example, the University of Liege OA policy requires that the deposit of the item is made in the institutional repository, [ORBi](http://orbi.ulg.ac.be/project?id=103). The [Wellcome Trust](http://www.wellcome.ac.uk/About-us/Policy/Policy-and-position-statements/WTD002766.htm) requires that the deposit of the item is made in the funder & subject repository: PubMed Central (PMC) and Europe PMC. The organisation should specify where the item is to be deposited to ensure that authors have clear guidance on how to comply with the policy and to ensure that the organisation can monitor compliance more effectively. Note: it is optional to fill this field in the schema.

**20. Which repository:** URL to the repository where the item is to be deposited. Note: it is optional to fill this field in the schema.

**21. When to deposit:** the policy should make reference to the date when the item is to be deposited. The codes used in this schema refer to the date specified in the OA policy when the item is to be deposited: 1) A + x = immediately upon (or within x months of) date of acceptance; 2) P+ x = immediately upon (or within x months of) date of publication; 3) O - other = at another date not listed here (details can be added in field 22); 4) Y - as early as possible = the item is to be deposited at the earliest possible opportunity; 5) Z - unspecified = the policy does not specify when the item is to be deposited. Research on [deposit timing](http://cyber.law.harvard.edu/hoap/bestpracticesguide-2013.pdf) has demonstrated that OA policies that require the item to be deposited ‘at the time of acceptance for publication or no later than the date of publication’ – even if the item needs to remain in a dark deposit until the embargo period expires – is the most efficient date of deposit and ensures greater compliance with and effectiveness of the policy. Note: it is optional to fill this field in the schema.

**22. When to deposit if not covered by Field 21:** the policy may make reference to another date of deposit, which has not been covered in the field above. In this field, the organisation can specify when the item should be deposited. Note: it is optional to fill this field in the schema.

SECTION 3B: REPOSITORY REQUIREMENTS – MAKING ITEMS OPEN ACCESS

**23. Is making the deposited item OA a requirement or a recommendation:** the policy can either require – i.e. the author complying with the policy must or is obliged to – make the deposited item (peer-reviewed articles and conference proceedings) OA or it can recommend – i.e. the author is merely encouraged or requested to – make the deposited item OA. In a few cases, however, policies may not specify this criterion. [Research](http://www.pasteur4oa.eu/sites/pasteur4oa/files/deliverables/PASTEUR4OA%20Work%20Package%203%20Report%20final%2010%20March%202015.pdf) has demonstrated that policies that require making the deposited item OA immediately or after an embargo period are more likely to be effective than policies that merely recommend or that do not specify this criterion. Note: it is optional to fill this field in the schema.

**24. When to make the deposited item OA:** the policy should make reference to the date when the deposited item is to be made OA. The codes used in this schema refer to the date specified in the OA policy when the deposited item is to be made OA (i.e. freely available for all online): 1) A + x = immediately upon (or within x months of) date of acceptance; 2) P+ x = immediately upon (or within x months of) date of publication; 3) O - other = at another date not listed here (details can be added in field 22); 4) Y - as early as possible = the item is to be deposited at the earliest possible opportunity; 5) Z - unspecified = the policy does not specify when the item is to be deposited. [Studies](https://www.coar-repositories.org/activities/advocacy-leadership/aligning-repository-networks-across-regions/statement-about-embargo-periods/) on embargo periods and on when to make deposited items OA have demonstrated that shorter embargo periods are preferable as they enable research outputs to become freely available online more speedily. Note: it is optional to fill this field in the schema.

**25. Maximum allowable publisher embargo length:** the policy may make reference to another date when the deposited item is to be made OA, which has not been covered in the above field. In this field, the organisation can specify the longest publisher embargo period that the policy allows. Note: it is optional to fill this field in the schema.

**26. If there is a requirement to make the deposited item OA, are exemptions allowed**: the policy may under specific conditions allow for exemptions – i.e. the author can be exempt from the obligation to make the deposited item OA. In the cases where exemptions are allowed, these can be unconditional (no conditions or limitations apply) or conditional (express the conditions under which exemptions are allowed). OA policies can also designate that exemptions are not allowed, under this circumstance the author has to make the deposited item OA. Some OA policies do not make any reference to exemptions (i.e. they do not specify if any exemptions are or are not allowed and under which conditions). [Research](http://www.pasteur4oa.eu/sites/pasteur4oa/files/deliverables/PASTEUR4OA%20Work%20Package%203%20Report%20final%2010%20March%202015.pdf) has demonstrated that effective OA policies include, among other, policy elements that specify that ‘articles must be made Open Access’. Note: it is optional to fill this field in the schema.

**27. Is making the deposited item OA a condition for evaluation:** the policy can either affirm (yes), reject (no) or not specify if the deposited item is a requirement for the author’s eligibility in the organisation’s evaluation process. Examples of organisations that have made a requirement for the item to be made OA an eligible and inclusive component of the evaluation process include the UK’s [King’s College London OA policy](http://www.kcl.ac.uk/college/policyzone/assets/files/information_policies/Kings_Open_Access_Policy.pdf) and the UK’s Higher Education Councils post-2014 [Research Excellence Framework (REF) OA policy](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/media/hefce/content/pubs/2014/201407/HEFCE2014_07.pdf). Note: it is optional to fill this field in the schema.

**28. What licence should be used for making the item OA:** the policy should clarify which [licence(s)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/) should be applied to the item (peer-reviewed articles and conference proceedings) to be made OA. The policy may allow alternative licences for all the item types covered by the policy or they may specify specific licences for particular item types. Note: it is optional to fill this field in the schema.

SECTION 4: OPEN ACCESS PUBLISHING REQUIREMENTS

**29. Does the policy specify that the item is to be published OA through a publisher:** the policy can either make or not make reference to formal OA publication of items (peer-reviewed articles and conference proceedings) with a publisher who makes them immediately available on OA upon publication (sometimes subject to the payment of a publication fee). Note 1: it is mandatory to fill this field in the schema. Note 2: if option “yes” is selected in the schema, then the remaining fields in this section should be completed.

**30. Is OA publishing policy a requirement or a recommendation:** the policy can either require – i.e. the author complying with the policy must or is obliged to – or recommend – i.e. the author is merely encouraged or requested to – that the item (peer-reviewed articles and conference proceedings) is published with a publisher who makes it OA immediately upon publication (sometimes subject to the payment of a publication fee). Examples of OA policies requiring OA publishing include the Research Councils UK [(RCUK) OA policy](http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/RCUK-prod/assets/documents/documents/RCUKOpenAccessPolicy.pdf) and the Netherlands’ Organisation for Scientific Research [(NWO) OA policy](http://www.nwo.nl/en/news-and-events/news/2014/nwo-takes-next-step-in-open-access-policy.html). Note: it is optional to fill this field in the schema.

**31. What kinds of items does the policy cover:** the policy can either require or recommend OA publishing of peer-reviewed articles and conference proceedings or even of other items (e.g. book chapters, books, theses, data, etc.). This schema is only applicable for journal articles and conference proceedings, therefore it only requires that one or both of these two items are identified. Note: it is optional to fill this field in the schema.

**32. Does the organisation fund any OA publication costs**: the organisation may specify in its policy if it does or does not fund OA publication costs. Some organisations may require or recommend OA publishing but not make reference to funding any OA publication costs. Funding for OA publication costs might be through block grants, allowances in project budgets, dedicated institutional funds, or other methods. Note: it is optional to fill this field in the schema.

**33. Are there conditions on use of the organisation’s OA publication funds**: the organisation may specify in its OA policy if there are any conditions applicable to the use of the specific OA publication funds. In some cases, there may be more than one condition applicable to the use of the specific funds such as a) maximum contribution per publication charge, b) prohibition on using the charge for hybrid journals, and c) other conditions. Note: it is optional to fill this field in the schema.

**34. Other conditions on use of the organisation’s OA publication funds**: the policy may make reference to other conditions on use of the organisation’s funds. In this field, the organisation can specify what those conditions are. Note: it is optional to fill this field in the schema.

**35. Does an item have to be published OA through a publisher for eligibility in research performance evaluation or assessment**: the policy can either affirm (yes), reject (no) or not specify if publishing the item (peer-reviewed articles and conference proceedings) on OA through a publisher is a requirement for the author’s eligibility in the organisation’s research performance evaluation or assessment exercise. An example of an organisation that has made a recommendation for the item to be published OA through a publisher as an eligible and inclusive component of the research performance evaluation or assessment is the [Austrian Science Fund (FWF)](https://www.fwf.ac.at/en/research-funding/open-access-policy/). Note: it is optional to fill this field in the schema.

**36. If there is a requirement to publish the item OA through a publisher, are exemptions allowed:** the policy may under specific conditions allow for exemptions – i.e. the author can be exempt from the obligation to

publish the item OA through a publisher. In the cases where exemptions are allowed, these can be unconditional (no conditions or limitations apply) or conditional (express the conditions under which exemptions are allowed). OA policies can also designate that exemptions are not allowed, where under this circumstance the author has to publish the item OA through a publisher. Some OA policies that require or recommend OA publishing through a publisher may not make reference to exemptions (i.e. they do not specify if any exemptions are or are not allowed and under which conditions). Note: it is optional to fill this field in the schema.

**37. Licences:** the policy should clarify which [licence(s)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/) should be applied to the item (peer-reviewed articles and conference proceedings) published in OA. The policy may allow alternative licences for all the item types covered by the policy or they may specify specific licences for particular item types. Note: it is optional to fill this field in the schema.

SECTION 5: OTHER

**38. Are there any other policy conditions not covered above:** the organisation can specify other conditions or make comments on issues that are not covered in the above schema but that those covered by the policy (i.e. the authors, those required or requested to comply with the policy) should be aware of. Note: it is optional to fill this field in the schema.