

RULES AND REGULATIONS

ON THE APPLICATION OF THE OPEN ACCESS POLICY

TO SCIENTIFIC PUBLICATIONS RESULTING FROM

RESEARCH PROGRAMMES SUPPORTED BY THE F.R.S.-

FNRS AND ITS ASSOCIATED FUNDS

ADOPTED BY

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE F.R.S.-FNRS

ON 12TH DECEMBER 2023

1. FOREWORD

The mission of the Fund for Scientific Research (F.R.S.-FNRS) not only aims at supporting basic scientific research through initiatives presented by researchers working in universities of the Wallonia Brussels Federation (either individually or collectively), but also promoting the valorisation of scientific research outputs supported by the F.R.S.-FNRS in order to maximise societal benefits.

By supporting the principle of Open Access to scientific publications financed wholly or partly from the public funding, the F.R.S.-FNRS has joined a broad Open Access movement that the “*Budapest Open Access Initiative*” (2001) has initiated and which is backed by numerous declarations including the European Commission declaration (2012), and, more recently, the decree (May 2018) aimed at establishing an Open Access policy for scientific publications in the Wallonia-Brussels Federation, the programme law/framework legislation dealing with amendments to the provisions of the *Code of Economic Law* relating to copyright (2018) and the UNESCO's recommendations on open science (2021).

“By “open access” to [scientific literature], we mean its free availability on the public internet, permitting any users to read, download, copy, distribute, print, search, or link to the full texts of these articles, crawl them for indexing, pass them as data to software, or use them for any other lawful purpose, without financial, legal, or technical barriers other than those inseparable from gaining access to the internet itself. The only constraint on reproduction and distribution, and the only role for copyright in this domain, should be to give authors control over the integrity of their work and the right to be properly acknowledged and cited.”

Definition excerpted from the “Budapest Open Access Initiative” (BOAI, 2002).

At the meeting of the Board of Trustees on 7th December 2012 the Fund for Scientific Research (F.R.S.-FNRS) reaffirmed its support for the implementation of an institutional Mandate for open-access publications from research projects and researchers funded by the F.R.S.-FNRS under the “*Open Access Green Road*”¹ model.

This resolution follows the decision of the Board of Trustees of the F.R.S.-FNRS of 16th December 2011, which has stated that “from 2013, applicants with a PhD's degree who have been working for at least two years in institutions that have set up an institutional repository are required to submit their publications list in a PDF format in their institution's repository”. This also follows the decision of the Board of Trustees of 7th December 2012, which had extended such obligation to promoters of a CDR, PDR, EQP or MIS research programmes.

The provisions stated herein support the aforementioned decisions and fulfil the requirement expressed by the Board of Trustees.

¹ See the definition in Article 3 hereinafter.

2. OBJECTIVE AND IMPLEMENTATION OF AN INSTITUTIONAL REPOSITORY

First, the aim of this decision is to facilitate free access to the results of the research funded by the F.R.S.-FNRS (see definitions below), to the benefit of the entire community, especially the scientific community, and second, to increase both national and international visibility of its researchers.

To that end, each university of the Wallonia Brussels Federation (*Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles*, FWB) creates an institutional repository to make archived material available through electronic Open Access and contribute to unrestricted dissemination of ideas and knowledge in accordance with the Open Access Green Road policy. Federal scientific institutions, which receive at least partial funding from the F.R.S.-FNRS for their research, have collectively or individually set up such a repository.

3. DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this Regulation, the terminology used herein shall mean:

- **Open Access (OA):** a free universal, immediate, and permanent access to full-text version of scientific publications electronically.
- **Gold Open Access:** the immediate availability of the full-text version of a scientific publication online and in OA by a publisher, possibly with publication fees paid by the author or his or her institution.
- **Diamond Open Access:** the immediate online availability of the full text of a scientific publication by a publisher, free-of-charge for the author and the reader. The Diamond Open Access model represents a variation of the Gold Open Access publishing model. The scientific journals concerned are funded ahead of time by, among others, universities, learned societies, research institutions or non-profit organizations.
- **Green Open Access:** the immediate online, open-access archiving by an author of the full text of a scientific publication, as soon as it has been accepted by the publisher. To this end, the text is deposited by the author in an institutional repository. This must be the final, corrected "author" version of their publication.
- **Hybrid Open Access:** a free-of-charge access to a scientific paper in a subscription-based journal which offers the author the option to give free access to their own publications for an additional publication fee.
- **Transformative journals:** subscription-based or hybrid journals which, after a transitory period, aim to become fully Open-Access journals through the Gold model, as a result of contractual agreements between an institution (or consortium) and one or more publishers. These agreements may cover cost control, content accessibility (offset agreement, read & publish, read & free articles) or full access to scientific production. The institution (or consortium) pays a fee in advance (known as APC: Article

Processing Charges) so that its researchers can publish a certain number of articles in Open Access.

- **“Author” final version:** author manuscript version accepted that has undergone peer review and has been accepted by the publisher.
- **“Editor” final version:** final manuscript version published after editor's layout.
- **Results from the research funded by the F.R.S.-FNRS/Associated Funds:** refers to any peer-reviewed articles and participation in symposiums, seminars or conferences (including posters) which have been subject to scientific publications, in whichever form, when these results have been generated in full or in part by the funding of said funds in the framework of research fellowships and credits.

4. COMMITMENTS

Considering Article 5 of this Regulation in particular, recipients shall endeavour to submit all the published research outputs to their institution's repository, whether they are funded authors or co-authors. This is mandatory for scientific papers published in a periodical that issues at least once a year. The deposit concerns the PDF copy of the full text in its final “author” version accepted for publication, or the “editor” final version subject to approval from the editor. The published version's details shall be mentioned on the deposited copy.

The storage of other types of publications (e.g. monographies, conference proceedings) is not mandatory but highly encouraged.

Soft copies of all scientific papers that have been accepted for publication in a peer-reviewed journal, and which are funded wholly or partly by the F.R.S.-FNRS and its Associated Funds must be deposited in the institutional digital repository immediately after acceptance for publication. These electronic versions will be accessible only with the consent of the author and, should the editor require it, in accordance with the rules applicable to copyright and embargo, no later than 6 months after publishing for publications in the fields of sciences, techniques, and medicine and up to 12 months for publications in the fields of Social Sciences and Humanities. In the meantime, the author can send a copy of their paper to anyone who asks for one, in accordance with article 8 of the Open Access decree.

Provisions of this Regulation apply to newly granted fellowships and allocated grants as from 1st October 2018.

Grant recipients of the F.R.S.-FNRS/Associated Funds who have been granted before that date for a period running beyond the 1st October 2018 are asked to comply with the provisions of this Regulation.

5. COPYRIGHT CLEARANCE AND EXPLOITATION OF RESEARCH OUTPUTS

In order to guarantee Open Access, the F.R.S.-FNRS advises recipients whose works are publicly funded to sign a Creative Commons licence agreement in accordance with the provisions of the present regulation. The licence facilitates the retaining of full intellectual property rights (CC-BY) and, if necessary, prevents the alteration of the original work and sharing it for commercial purposes (CC-BY-NC-ND).

Publishers' and journal's policy dealing with OA more specifically can be found on the [SHERPA-ROMEIO](#) website.

Under a publishing contract, the authors of a scientific paper published in a periodical appearing at least once a year, and whose research has been financed in whole or in part by the F.R.S.-FNRS retain, even if they have assigned their rights to a publisher on an exclusive or non-exclusive basis, or have placed them under a simple or exclusive license, the imperative² right to make the manuscript freely available to the public after a period of 6 months (sciences, techniques, medicine) or 12 months (Social Sciences and Humanities) following the first publication, provided that the source of the first publication is mentioned.

6. OPEN ACCESS PUBLICATION REQUIREMENTS AND CONDITIONS FOR FUNDING

Minimum requirements of the F.R.S.-FNRS regarding Open Access

The F.R.S.-FNRS and its associate funds support the implementation of Open Access, **with a preference for the Open Access deposit** of publications resulting from funded projects (**Green OA**), **as made mandatory by the OA decree of the FWB for scientific articles** and protected by the amendments of the provisions of the *Code of Economic Law* relating to copyright.

Furthermore, **the publication of scientific results under the Diamond model** (*Diamond OA*) is **strongly encouraged**.

Positioning with respect to the Gold model (Gold OA)

The present provisions do not exclude direct publication in a purely Open Access journal (*Gold OA*). In this framework, the financial support of the F.R.S.-FNRS is regulated as follows:

² Art.XI. § 2/1 of the law on various provisions relating to the Economy of JULY 30, 2018 (**translated from French**): "The author of a scientific article resulting from research financed for at least half by public funds retains, even if, in accordance with Article XI.167, he or she has assigned his or her rights to a publisher of a periodical or has placed them under a simple or exclusive license, the right to make the manuscript freely available to the public in open access after a period of twelve months for the social sciences and humanities, and six months for the other sciences, following the first publication, in a periodical, subject to mention of the source of the first publication."

Types of publications for which fees may be charged

The charging of costs is permitted for the following publications, in accordance with the provisions of Article 8 of this Regulation.

- a. *Journal articles*: peer-reviewed scientific papers published in full Open Access;
- b. *Scientific monographs*: comprehensive, original and unpublished books, submitted to a review committee;
- c. *Collective books*: scientific works containing individual contributions by various authors on a specific title, under the responsibility of an editor or an editorial board;
- d. *Book chapters*: an author's scientific publications published in the form of an individual contribution in collective books;
- e. *Doctoral theses*: in the form of books, doctoral theses are regarded as monographs when they are published by a publisher;
- f. *Conference proceedings*: scientific papers published in a volume of proceedings of high scientific level by a publishing house. These publications are regarded as book chapters.

Scientific papers and book chapters

The costs charged to the budgets granted are intended to cover the publication costs commonly referred to as Article Processing Charges (APC) and Book Chapter Processing Charges (BCPC).

The fees for publications in transformative journals are not covered by the F.R.S.-FNRS.

Subscription-based journals that offer Open Access following a change of business model, but with a catalogue that is partially restricted are considered hybrid journals. Publication costs associated with these journals are not eligible under the present regulation.

Collective book chapters are taken into consideration, provided that the individual contributions come from a peer-reviewed book and the request was submitted by the publisher in accordance with the publishing contract.

Conference proceedings are considered book chapters when published in collective books.

The F.R.S.-FNRS and its Associated Funds guarantee its grant recipients the academic freedom of choice of the most suitable journal but encourage them to publish their work in journals that are indexed in [DOAJ](#) or any other scientific journal offering the same publishing standards and level of transparency.

The payment of publication costs must guarantee that the author retains all copyrights, and that the publication will be made available under a Creative Commons license, allowing them to download the PDF from the publisher's website for archiving purposes.

Long-form publications

The F.R.S.-FNRS contributes to the funding of publication costs for scientific works fully accessible through the Gold OA. Depending on the nature of the work concerned, a threshold amount- corresponding to Book Processing Charges (BPC) can be charged to the budget granted in the framework of research fellowships and credits.

Within this framework, the charging of publication costs is allowed under the following conditions:

- (i) The payment of publication costs must guarantee that the author retains all copyrights and that the publication will be made available under a Creative Commons license.
- (ii) Complete and peer-reviewed long-form publications are taken into consideration, when they are presented in the form of a definitive text submitted for publication and in full compliance with editorial norms.
- (iii) Monographs must meet the criteria of excellence applicable to long-text formats, completed in a single volume or be destined to be completed in a limited number of volumes.
- (iv) Monographs based on a doctoral thesis are taken into consideration, provided that the thesis was presented and accepted in a research institute of the FWB. In this context, the thesis must have been subjected to rewriting and an independent, external and relevant recognition by peers in written form covering the entire manuscript.
- (v) Should the publications also be issued in printed form the F.R.S.-FNRS will only participate financially to the BPC for the digital version.
- (vi) The fees relating to teaching manuals, popularisation tools and printing of monographs and collective works are not charged to the budgets granted in the framework of research fellowships and credits.

7. ELIGIBLE PUBLICATION COSTS

Given the scope of intervention set out in article 6 of these regulations, the amounts charged to the budget for research fellowships and credits are used to fund the following editorial services:

- *Quality control*: selection of the manuscripts and peer-review, specialized proofreading and/or author revisions.
- *Production of the digital version*: professional composition, layout and designing of the front cover, image processing and digitisation.
- *Distribution*: marketing, publication on the publisher's website, integration and distribution on other platforms and catalogues, availability of standard, digital and Open Access-specific metadata.

The F.R.S.-FNRS advises funding recipients to ask the publishers for a detailed quote so they

can have precise knowledge on the services and costs included in the publication costs (ACP/BPC).

Scientific papers and book chapters

The F.R.S.-FNRS and its Associated Funds allow the charging of costs to the research budget allocated, up to 2000 €³ per publication, in the framework of research fellowships and credits. This charge is granted for the publication of scientific papers and book chapters.

Long-form publications

The amounts needed for the funding of publication costs could be charged in the framework of a fellowship or a research credit. A maximum amount of 5000 € is granted per publication. This grant is dedicated to monographs (included doctoral theses) and collective works.

8. “WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE F.R.S.-FNRS” STATEMENT

Scientific publication resulting partially or fully from the funding of the F.R.S.-FNRS and its Associated Funds shall mention the source of this funding as follows:

- In case of a project: *“This work was supported by the Fonds de la Recherche Scientifique - FNRS under Grant(s) n° [ID number]”*,
- In case of a fellowship: *“[Full name or Initials] is a [title⁴] of the Fonds de la Recherche Scientifique - FNRS”*.

³ Revision following the decision of the Board of Trustees of the F.R.S.-FNRS of 12th December 2023

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- Aspirant (ASP) = Research Fellow
- Boursier FRESH = FRESH grantee
- Boursier FRIA = FRIA grantee
- Candidat spécialiste doctorant (CSD) = Medical Doctor Applicant to an MSc and a Ph.D.
- Spécialiste doctorant (SD) = Clinical Master Specialist Applicant to a Ph.D.
- Vétérinaire clinicien-chercheur doctorant (VETE-CCD) = Veterinary MD. Ph.D. Student
- Chargé de recherches (CR) = Postdoctoral Researcher
- Spécialiste postdoctorant (SPD) = Post-doctorate Clinical Master Specialist
- Chercheur clinicien (CCL) = Clinical Researcher
- Collaborateur scientifique = Scientific Collaborator
- Chercheur qualifié (CQ) = Research Associate
- Maître de recherches (MR) = Senior Research Associate
- Directeur de recherches (DR) = Research Director
- Mandat d'impulsion scientifique (MIS) = Incentive Grant for Scientific Research
- Chercheur temporaire post-doctoral (CTP) = Short-term Postdoctoral Fellow
- Mandat d'impulsion scientifique - mobilité Ulysse (MISU) = Ulysse Incentive Grant for Mobility in Scientific Research

9. FINAL PROVISIONS

Only lists of publications generated from institutional repositories, with a full text available in OA regarding scientific papers⁵ will be accounted for in the evaluation, nomination, promotion and attribution of research fellowships and credits.

⁵ Cf. FWB circular no 8694 of 25/08/2022 *Interprétation proposée de la notion de liste bibliographique devant être prises en considération pour l'évaluation des articles scientifiques publiés par les chercheurs* available at https://www.galillex.cfwb.be/document/pdf/49864_000.pdf.