Unleashing the power of academic sharing

The deeply rooted culture of sharing in the research community is one of the driving forces behind scientific advancement. At Elsevier, we're working with the research community to make sharing simple and seamless while being consistent with access and usage rights associated with journal articles.

To strike this balance and implement the STM Article Sharing Principles, we are refreshing our posting policy. We invite hosting platforms – whether repositories or social collaboration networks – to work with us to make the vision of seamless research sharing a reality.

The prize is to empower researchers to share confidently and easily on the platforms of their choice in ways that give authors appropriate credit, and to allow readers to access the best available version and trust that the content is authoritative and complete.

Our new policy framework

Elsevier's updated sharing and hosting policies explain how articles published with Elsevier may be shared and made available. These provide a more clear and consistent framework that is aligned with the rest of the publishing industry, and which is based on feedback from our authors and institutional partners. While we know the policy changes will not go as far as some would like, we believe they strike an appropriate balance between the rights and responsibilities of sharing.

We make it clear that authors may share their research at each stage of the publication process: before submission, from acceptance, upon publication, and after embargo. We differentiate policies for private sharing from those for public sharing. We've also made it easier for institutions to implement green open access policies via institutional repositories by eliminating the need for them to have a formal agreement. Recognizing that many researchers are choosing to share on commercial platforms such as social collaboration networks, we have added hosting policies to support sharing on these platforms too.

Elsevier's new sharing policy

PRESUBMISSION	AFTER ACCEPTANCE	AFTER PUBLICATION	AFTER EMBARGO
Preprints can be shared anywhere at any time. PLEASE NOTE: Cell Press, The Lancet, and some society-owned titles have different preprint policies. Information on these is available on the journal homepage.	Author manuscripts can be shared: • Privately with students or colleagues for their personal use • Privately on institutional repositories • On personal websites or blogs • To refresh preprints on arXiv and RePEc • Privately on commercial partner sites	Gold open access articles can be shared: • Anytime anywhere on non-commercial platforms • Via commercial platforms if the author has chosen a CC-BY license, or the platform has an agreement with us Subscription articles can be shared: • As a link anywhere at any time • Privately with students or colleagues for their personal use • Privately on commercial partner sites	Author manuscripts can be shared: • Publicly on non-commercial platforms • Publicly on commercial partner sites

Elsevier's new hosting policy

HOSTING GUIDELINES

NON-COMMERCIAL PLATFORMS

Can host:
- Metadata and links to articles
- Preprints anywhere at anytime
- Accepted manuscripts publicly after embargo
- Gold open access articles
- Subscription articles as per their ScienceDirect agreement

Examples include:
- Personal website/blog
- Preprint server
- Institutional repository
- Subject repository

COMMERCIAL PLATFORMS

Can host:
- Metadata and links to articles
- Preprints anywhere at anytime
- Gold open access articles with a CC BY license
- Partners can host full text articles in private groups or via embedding services

Additional sharing options and services are available contact us

We ask that shared copies contain a DOI link back to the formal publication and be distributed under a clear user license. This helps readers to refer to the official version of record with respect to corrections and retractions and ensures authors are credited for their work. In the coming months, we will take steps to ensure that from the point of acceptance all manuscripts and articles are tagged with this information, including a non-commercial Creative Commons user license (CC BY NC ND) on all accepted manuscripts.

We are committed to collaborative development of standard approaches to cross-platform usage sharing and ask hosting platforms to share this information with us when the systems are in place to do so easily. This will enable us to report consolidated usage back to authors and their institutions and provide more intelligent recommendations to users of our platforms.

It will take some time to develop some of these services and for hosting platforms to implement them. For those hosting platforms that signal they agree in principle with this plan, and who wish to work in partnership with us, we will in the interim condone sharing on their platforms that is not fully aligned with our policies.

For those platforms that do not wish to work in partnership with Elsevier, as we noted in 2013 we do from time to time send and receive takedown notices when our scans reveal that an article has been – usually inadvertently – shared in other ways. It has always been our belief that it is the role of hosting platforms, rather than authors, to ensure that the content they make available is done so in the right way, so we will continue to direct takedown notices to platforms rather than authors. And by having clear policies and collaborative development of tools to make them easy for platforms to implement, we're hopeful there will be reduced need for takedown notices.

Our goal at Elsevier and with our colleagues in the scholarly publishing industry is to maximize the value of the publishing process to researchers by supporting collaboration and sharing. We'd like for other commercial platforms to unlock that value too, but we all have to play by the same rules. Sharing done right represents a tremendous opportunity for all.

Our services to help researchers share

- We encourage authors to promote their research and to link to their article on ScienceDirect (e.g., DOIs and Share Links). This gets readers to the best available version of your article and ensures you receive maximum usage and impact.

- Authors may share their articles at a conference, in the classroom, for grant applications and privately with colleagues

- Preprints may be shared, and on arXiv and RePEC they may be refreshed with accepted manuscripts.

- You may self-archive your accepted manuscript. Accepted manuscripts are available via our submission system to corresponding authors. We're implementing some changes during 2015 so all manuscripts will be tagged with key metadata from the date of acceptance, and in due course these will be available via the My Research Dashboards.

- You may share your accepted manuscript immediately on a personal website or blog.

- Authors may share articles on social collaboration networks working with publishers to facilitate seamless article sharing

- If you have access to another author's research via ScienceDirect, you can share this too – privately if it is a subscription article, or publicly if the article is published open access.

Our services to help repositories and other hosting platforms

- As a signatory to the STM Article Sharing Principles , we are committed to making it simple and seamless for researchers to share their research on platforms of their choice. To support this, we are actively working with platform partners to facilitate additional sharing options and to develop industry technology, standards and best practices for article sharing.

- For institutional repositories, we have removed a complex distinction between mandated and voluntary posting, thereby permitting all institutional repositories to host their researchers' accepted manuscripts immediately and to make these publicly accessible after the embargo period. We are developing API services to make it easier to implement the policy, and we are piloting these with our institutional repository partners. We are piloting this approach and will be rolling out the services later in the year.

Repository objectives & use cases	How this challenge can be addressed using Elsevier/ScienceDirect APIs
Ensure your institutional repository reports on all articles affiliated authors published with Elsevier	Automate periodic downloads of structured metadata (including abstracts) for articles your authors published with Elsevier.
Ensure self-archived accepted manuscripts can be made available in line with publisher's hosting & posting policies, with minimum hassle.	We will also be taking steps to tag all manuscripts from the point of acceptance with key metadata, and to further enhance our ScienceDirect search API to include the embargo end date from which an accepted manuscript may be made publicly available.
Ensure repository users are linked to the best available version	Use the article DOI or PII to check if the user has access on ScienceDirect based on their IP, and if so, link the user to the full text of the article on ScienceDirect. Show links to locally hosted earlier versions in case the user does not have access to the final article on ScienceDirect
Keep users on your repository site to discover and use more of the content available on the repository. Immediately show the final published article to all entitled users, and the first page for everyone, even when no version available in the IR itself. Ensure readership metrics are captured and made available to authors.	Embed PDFs of final articles on your repository. Users entitled based in IP address will be shown the final article; non-entitled users will see a first page preview. This API usage will be made available in reports for subscription customers and to authors

- Other non-commercial repositories may aggregate and make available accepted manuscripts after the embargo period expires. Later in 2015, we will begin to tag manuscripts with this date.

- Commercial platforms may aggregate and make available research too. We plan to develop and make available technologies to support implementation, using industry standards to identify published content among user-posted content, to differentiate various versions of articles, to embed subscription articles, and to report on usage.

- We are already working with Mendeley on these approaches and are keen to work with other platforms as well.

We would like to hear from you and work with you

This is a fast-evolving aspect of scholarly communications, and we plan to regularly review, adjust and align our policies. This refresh of our posting policy and introduction of hosting guidelines is part of our plan to work collaboratively with the research community. We welcome your feedback and continue to seek pilot partners for a range of innovative sharing services. Feel free to contact us anytime via the comment thread or universalaccess@elsevier.com.

Elsevier Connect Contributor

Alicia Wise, PhD
As Director of Access and Policy for Elsevier, Dr. Alicia Wise (@wisealic) is responsible for delivering Elsevier's vision for universal access to high-quality scientific publications. She leads strategy and policy in areas such as open access, philanthropic access programs, content accessibility, and access technologies. Based in Oxford, she has a PhD in anthropology from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.