

Article processing charge

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An **article processing charge** (**APC**), also known as a **publication fee**, is a fee which is sometimes charged to authors to publish an article in an academic journal. It is common in open access journals (hybrid or fully open)^{[1][2]} as well as in fully closed journals.^[3] This fee is usually paid by an author's institution or research funder rather than by the author themselves.^[4] It may be waived in cases of hardship.^[5]

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Usage

Journals use a variety of ways to generate the income required to cover publishing costs, such as subsidies from institutions^[6] and subscriptions. A majority of open access journals do not charge article processing charges,^[7] but a significant and growing number of them do.^[8] They are the most common funding method for professionally published open access articles.^[9]

Different academic publishers have widely varying levels of fees, from under \$100 to over \$3,000.^[1] High fees are sometimes charged by traditional publishers in order to publish in a hybrid open access journal, which make an individual article in a subscription journal open access. The average APC for hybrid journals has been calculated to be almost twice as high as APCs from full open access publishers.^[10] Journals with high impact factors from major publishers tend to have the highest APCs.^[1] Many open access publishers, such as PLOS, waive their APCs for those who cannot afford to pay them.^[5]

Open access articles often have a surcharge compared to a closed-access APC; for example the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* regularly charges \$1,700 per article, with a surcharge of \$1,350 for open-access.^[11] Similarly, AGU's *Journal of Geophysical Research* charges \$1000 for closed-access and \$3500 for open-access.^[12]

Even when publishers do not charge standard fees, excess or overlength fees might still apply after a certain number of pages or publication units is exceeded;^{[12][13]} additional fees might exist for color figures,^[11] primarily for print journals that are not online-only.

While publication charges occur upon article acceptance, article **submission fees** are charged prior to the start of peer review; they are not uncommon among journals in, e.g., finance and economics.^[14] **Page charge** may refer to either publication or submission fees.

See also

- Vanity press, a book publisher that charges publication fees with no selection criteria

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