

(15 August 2016)

OPEN ACCESS POLICY OF RHODES UNIVERSITY

Purpose	To facilitate Open Access practices and raise visibility of institutional research at Rhodes University
Document type	Policy
Date of Approval	
Date of Implementation	
Approved by	
Revision frequency	Biennial from date of approval
Revision History	New policy (draft: Rhodes University Library, 15 August 2016)
Policy Owner	Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research & Development
Institutional Repository (curator and driver)	Director: Library Services
Supporting Offices	Director: Research Director IT&S: Information and Technology Services Director: Human Resources Division Director: Post-Graduate Centre Manager: SEALS Library Systems (Consortia partners) Manager: Contracts & Intellectual Property: Research Office
Applies to	Rhodes University academic/researchers/support staff, post-graduate and post-doctoral students

PREAMBLE

As a research-intensive university, Rhodes University (RU) became a signatory to the Berlin Declaration on 24 October 2013. As a signatory to this Declaration, Rhodes University is committed to adopting Open Access (OA) as a paradigm which enhances the institution's research strategy "to encourage research at the highest level of excellence and to ensure that our research programmes are internationally recognised for their excellence" (Research Office, 2016).

The call to South African universities to support Open Access was strengthened by a statement issued by the National Research Foundation (NRF) in January 2015, after it became a signatory to the Berlin Declaration on 20 October 2014. The NRF announced that from 01 March 2015, all publicly funded authors "deposit their final peer-reviewed manuscripts that have been accepted by the journals, to the administering Institution Repository with an embargo period of no more than 12 months." (NRF, 2015). The statement advocated institutions to:

- "Formulate detailed policies on Open Access of publications and data from its funded research;
- Establish Open Access repositories; and
- Support public access to the repositories through web search and retrieval according to international standards and best practice" (NRF, 2015).

Furthermore, a statement was issued from the Research Office on 6th October 2015, wherein the Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Research & Development advocated Rhodes University researchers register with [ORCID \(Open Researcher and Contributor ID\)](#) as the preferred institutional researcher profile platform. This OA scholarly communication practice is aligned with the requirements of the National Research Foundation (NRF) on OA advocacy.

The [Rhodes Digital Commons](#), the official institutional repository, was established and is managed by the Rhodes University Library.

WHAT IS OPEN ACCESS?

Open Access addresses the limited access to scholarly outputs, usually caused by high journal subscription rates. It is **the practice of providing online access to scientific information (articles, monographs, research data and other research outputs) that is free of charge to the reader, and licensed** so that they can be further used and exploited by researchers, the industry, and citizens.

Milestone definitions of Open Access include those of the [Budapest Open Access Initiative \(BOAI\)](#) and the [Berlin Declaration on Open Access](#)

HOW TO PROVIDE OPEN ACCESS

Self-archiving (the Green route): Authors publish their research in their preferred venue and upon acceptance archive an electronic copy of their peer-reviewed publication and related research data in an institutional or subject repository through which it is freely available to everyone.

A repository allows the institution to manage, preserve and showcase its scientific output. The repository is a valuable tool in an institution's research information system and evaluation process, and one that offers added value services for the scientific community.

Open Access publishing (the Gold route): Authors publish their scholarship in Open Access journals or monograph series. These publications are freely available to the end users on the Internet. Copyright is usually retained by the authors. Open Access publications follow the same processes as toll access publications (i.e. peer review), but provide Open Access to the content of the publications. There is no correlation between the quality of a publication and access to it.

BENEFITS OF AN OPEN ACCESS POLICY

The formal adoption of Open Access through an institutional policy allows institutions to become part of the evolving research and academic ecosystem where access to research is immediate and open to the benefit of funders, researchers and citizens. An institution and its researchers may expect multiple benefits from the implementation of an efficient Open Access policy:

The Institution:

- Collects and preserves its scientific output and disseminates it through the institutional repository
- Provides the possibility of indexing and tracking the scientific output of the institution from international search engines on the Internet, like Google etc.
- Monitors the number of visits and use and collects data and indicators that can be used in institutional planning, and the search for sources of funding etc.
- Provides opportunities for the use and re-use of the institution's output for scientific purposes (CVs, publications, excellence reports, indicators, institutional websites, personal websites etc.)
- Strengthens international communication and collaboration channels and the institution's international profile
- To participate, support and advance the OA movement to make African research more accessible and visible

Researchers:

- Increase the visibility of their research and their citations
- Increase the usage of their research
- Increase the impact of their research
- Obtain a permanent link for each of their research outputs

RHODES UNIVERSITY adopts an Open Access Policy based on the following principles:

ARTICLE 1: GENERAL PRINCIPLES

1. **Rhodes University'** Open Access policy aims at providing free online access to the outputs of its publicly funded supported research in accordance with the university's Research Office [publication guidelines](#).
2. Open Access to scientific results is based on the recognition of knowledge as a public good and the social and economic benefits derived.
3. The efficient and wide dissemination of scientific outputs constitutes a significant part of the **Rhodes University'** role as a public research organization.
4. The increase in the visibility of the scientific outputs resulting from Open Access leads to an increase of the impact of publications.
5. Deposit in the institutional repository, the Rhodes Digital Commons, ensures curation, long-term preservation and further dissemination of the scientific output of **Rhodes University** and access to them for the conduct of internal and external evaluation. RU research publications include post-graduate theses and dissertations, peer-reviewed articles, book chapters, and conference papers and posters, and technical reports.

ARTICLE 2: DEFINITIONS

- **Creative Commons** refers to the OA license used by authors to stipulate copyright and use of research publications
- A **Digital copy** is the electronic copy of the publication in its final stage (either the author's final manuscript after peer review or the publisher's version).
- An **Embargo** is the period during which a publication can be 'closed' while deposited in the repository (i.e. the publication is not openly available).
- An **Institutional Open Access Repository**, is established according to international standards, containing digital content from various disciplines and providing advanced tools for search, navigation and Open Access to its digital collections
- **Metadata** are the descriptors used for describing, tracing, use and management of the deposited item (indicatively: title of publication, author(s), institutional affiliation, name of journal where the publication has been accepted).
- **Pre-prints** refer to the unpublished draft of research intended for publishing in peer-reviewed journals.
- **Post-prints** refer to the final print of research articles after peer-review.
- A **Publication** is defined as the peer-reviewed published (or under publication) work of researchers based in the institution (indicatively this comprises articles, monographs, book chapters, reports, conference presentations).
- A **Repository** is one that provides Open Access to scientific results, enables citation through permanent identifiers (DOI or other) and provides qualitative metadata (including acknowledgment of research funding) based on accepted guidelines and standards.
- A **Researcher** is any member of the research/academic/support staff of **Rhodes University** irrespective of their employment status.
- **Research Data** is the data (such as statistics, results of experiments, measurements, observations, interview recordings, images, etc.) used to validate the results presented in scientific publications.
- **Self-Archiving** refers to the deposit of digital documents on the designated institutional platform by the individual.

ARTICLE 3: POLICY

From [date]

Rhodes University:

1. Requires its researchers to deposit in the Rhodes Digital Commons, a digital copy of the full text, as well as the related metadata of all publications (author final manuscript or publisher version) upon acceptance for publication. Researchers are held responsible for the timely deposit of their publications in the Rhodes Digital Commons. The monographs deposit remains mandatory, but access is closed until publisher embargo elapses.
2. Requires the full text of all publications referred to in 3.1 (above) to be made openly available upon deposit or as soon as possible following deposit. In all cases, metadata should be openly accessible. For peer-reviewed publications, the deposited item can remain closed for up to 6 months (or for up to 12 months for publications in the social sciences and humanities).
3. Requires the deposit of the abstract of the publication to be made openly accessible in the case of 'closed' publications with the aim to increase their visibility.
4. For purposes of individual or institutional evaluation of the research output of the institution and its members, **Rhodes University** will only consider as publications those whose metadata and full texts are deposited in the institutional repository according to the requirements stated above.
5. Encourages researchers to deposit the research data supporting their publications in the institutional repository or in any other suitable Open Access Data repository.
6. Encourages its members to retain ownership of copyright and to licence to publishers only those rights necessary for publication. This is possible through the use of [The SPARC Author Addendum](#) or the [Copyright Toolbox](#) to the publishing contract.
7. Encourages researchers to deposit in the institutional repository publications authored prior to the date of effect of the current policy and make them openly accessible whenever possible.

Article 4

Support and Monitoring of the Open Access Policy

Rhodes University, in collaboration with the Research Office and the Rhodes University Library

1. Enables the adoption of Open Access through the organization of seminars, events, awareness-raising actions, and education and training on Open Access issues.
2. Monitors policy compliance by comparing the content of the repository with information gathered from indexing services and through data on the use (access and downloads) per publication/department/unit/institute etc.
3. Provides the necessary human resources and the required infrastructure for the support of the Open Access policy.
4. Provides links and interoperability with other databases like Google Scholar.

For more information:

RUL's LibGuide on Open Access: <http://ru.za.libguides.com/OpenAccess>

SPARC (the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition): <http://sparcopen.org/who-we-are/> and <http://sparcopen.org/open-access/>

CERN and Open Access: <https://home.cern/scientists/updates/2014/10/open-access-there-something-you-can-do>

Acknowledgement:

Pasteur4oa.eu. (2016). *Open Access Policy Guidelines for Research Performing Organizations (also available in French, Portuguese, Slovak and Turkish)* | PASTEUR4OA. [online] Available at: <http://www.pasteur4oa.eu/resources/138#.V7GxBpN941N>