

ISSUES BRIEF

Open Access Mandates in Canada

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Overview

Since the mid-2000s, funding agencies, research institutions, and governments have been implementing open access (OA) mandates in an effort to increase unrestricted access to publicly funded research. These formally established policies typically require that researchers either self-archive a final peer-reviewed draft of their work in an institutional repository (IR), or publish in an OA journal. Research has demonstrated that mandates can be an effective strategy to heighten awareness of OA publishing, and advance self-archiving of research.

This issue brief provides a snapshot of OA mandates established by universities and funding agencies in Western Canada and across the country. It also provides recommendations and considerations for institutions interested in implementing or updating an OA mandate, and points to additional resources and readings to inform these activities.

What's Happening Locally

- Athabasca University: [Open Access to Research Outputs Policy](#) (est. 2014). Researchers encouraged to make the results of their research permanently and openly accessible online; researchers are obliged to comply with the OA publication policies of their research sponsor(s).
- MacEwan University: [Open Access Archiving Guidelines for Internally Funded Research](#) (est. 2018). Requires recipients of internal research grants contribute any peer-reviewed works arising from funding to the IR within 12 months of publication.
- Mount Royal University: [Position statement on open access](#) (est. 2014). Confirmation of the Library's commitment to OA stating how it will support OA through a variety of services and initiatives.
- Simon Fraser University: [SFU Open Access Policy](#) (est. 2017). Asserts a commitment by SFU authors to deposit scholarly articles to the IR, with a waiver option for those unable to comply with this requirement.
- University of British Columbia: [Open Access Position Statement](#) (est. 2013). Encourages faculty members to deposit an electronic copy of their refereed and non--refereed research output and creative work to the IR.
- University of Calgary: [Libraries and Cultural Resources Open Access Mandate](#) (est. 2009). A commitment by LCR academic staff to deposit their scholarly output in the IR, promote OA, and where possible publish research in OA journals.

- University of Saskatchewan: [UofS Librarians and Archivists Open Access Commitment](#) (est. 2010). Librarians and archivists commit to deposit the output of their scholarly activities in the IR, subject to copyright restrictions.
- University of Victoria: [UVic Librarians - Statement of Commitment](#) (est. 2012). Asserts that librarians commit to making their published works available in OA venues wherever possible, and self-archive these works in the IR.

What's Happening Elsewhere in Canada

Numerous universities beyond Western Canada have adopted institutional policies that encourage faculty to make their work openly available; many reiterate [Tri-Agency OA requirements](#) and advocate specifically for IR deposit. Of those noted below, only Montreal's Concordia University formally *requires* IR deposit of peer-reviewed research articles.

- Acadia University: [Open Access Policy](#) (est. 2016).
- Carleton University: [Open Access Policy](#) (est. 2012)
- Concordia University: [Senate Resolution on Open Access](#) (est. 2010)
- Memorial University of Newfoundland: [Statement on Open Access](#) (est. 2012).
- Mount Saint Vincent University: [Open Access Policy](#) (est. 2010)
- OISE - University of Toronto: [Open Access Policy Statement](#) (est. 2012)
- University of Windsor: [Senate Policy](#) (est. 2015)

Librarians and archivists have also established OA policies specifically concerning their works:

- Brock University - [Library Open Access Resolution](#) (est. 2017)
- Queen's University: Open Access Policy for Librarians and Archivists (est. N/A)
- University of Ottawa Library: [Open Access Policy](#) (est. 2016)
- York University: [Open Access Policy for Librarians and Archivists](#) (est. 2009)

Several research funding agencies in Canada have also implemented OA policies, requiring researchers to make publications reporting on research supported by these funding agencies to be made publicly accessible following a brief embargo period. Most of these policies come from agencies funding research in health sciences. They include:

- Tri-Agency (CIHR, SSHRC, NSERC) [Open Access Policy on Publications](#) (12 month embargo; est. 2015).
- [Canadian Cancer Society](#) (12 month embargo, est. 2013).
- [Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvement](#) (6 month embargo; est. 2008).
- [The Fonds de recherche du Québec open access policy for the dissemination of research](#) (12 month embargo; est. 2019).
- [Genome Canada](#) (6 month embargo; est. 2008).

- [Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada](#) (6 month embargo; est. 2010).
- [International Development Research Centre](#) (12 month embargo; est. 2015).
- [SSHRC Aid to Scholarly Journals](#) (each grant provides 3 years of operating funds to OA Canadian journals, 12 month embargo allowed).

Many researchers in Canada may also be participating in collaborative international projects receiving grants from funding bodies in other jurisdictions. Use the [Registry of Open Access Repository Mandates and Policies \(ROARMAP\)](#) to search for funding policies.

Recommendations & Considerations

- There are many different models for institutional OA mandates. Wide consultation with campus stakeholders is critical when determining who and what should be included as part of a mandate to help ensure buy-in and compliance. SPARC's [Choice Points](#) document articulates many of the decision points for administrators to consider within the context of their own institutional culture and can help initiate and guide discussions.
- Evidence suggests that OA mandates can increase sharing of scholarship by researchers, however, a mandate on its own does not guarantee compliance. Strong administrative support and making these mandates part of a mandatory administrative function paired with adequate technical infrastructure and staffing support are all essential to a mandate's success. Funding agencies and institutions in Europe have developed mandates that are leading in these successful implementations.
- Many common library services already support alignment with institutional and funder OA mandates including: institutional repositories; copyright and author rights expertise and consultation; guidance in selection of publication venues; interpretation of existing policies; and OA publishing and hosting programs. These services provide opportunities for libraries to demonstrate the existing frameworks and support already in place to support future policies. Ensuring these existing services are appropriately resourced and promoted can help an institution strengthen its position on OA.

Learn More

Websites:

- [SPARC](#) has many resources for those considering or initiating an [OA Policy](#).
 - SPARC also hosts the [Coalition of OA Policy Institutions](#), an organization dedicated to knowledge and experience sharing between institutions with established OA policies and those in early stages of development and adoption.
- The Open Scholarship Policy Observatory at the University of Victoria [comments](#) on OA policies and provides a robust [list of policies](#) from around the world.

- [Registry of Open Access Repository Mandates and Policies \(ROARMAP\)](#) is a database of institutional and funder mandates. Some of the links are out of date, but this is an excellent starting place to explore what is happening in this area globally.
- [Good Practices for University Open-Access Policies](#) is maintained by the Harvard Open Access Project (HOAP) providing helpful information about all stages of institutional OA policy development and implementation.

Articles and presentations:

- Fruin, C., & Sutton, S. (2016). [Strategies for success: open access policies at North American educational institutions](#). *College & Research Libraries*, 77(4), 469-499. doi:10.5860/crl.77.4.469
- Gargouri Y., Hajjem C., Larivière V., Gingras Y., Carr L., Brody T., & Harnad. (2010). [Self-selected or mandated, open access increases citation impact for higher quality research](#). *PLoS ONE*, 5(10), e13636. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0013636
- Johnston, D. J. (2017). [Open access policies and academic freedom: Understanding and addressing conflicts](#). *Journal of Librarianship and Scholarly Communication*, 5(1), eP2104. doi:10.7710/2162-3309.2104
- Larivière, V., & Sugimoto, C. R. (2018). [Do authors comply when funders enforce open access to research?](#) *Nature*, 562, 483-486. doi:10.1038/d41586-018-07101-w
- Kirchner, J., Robertson, M., & Yates, E. (2019, January). [Engaging faculty to advance campus open access policies: Strategies and lessons learned](#). Presented at the Ontario Library Association Super Conference, Toronto, ON.
- Neugebauer, T., & Murray, A. (2013). [The critical role of institutional services in open access advocacy](#). *International Journal of Digital Curation*, 8(1), 84-106. doi:10.2218/ijdc.v8i1.238
- Zhang, H., Boock, M., & Wirth, A. (2015). [It takes more than a mandate: Factors that contribute to increased rates of article deposit to an institutional repository](#). *Journal of Librarianship & Scholarly Communication*, 3(1), eP1208. doi:10.7710/2162-3309.1208