Open Access policy and process

SPCR Open Access policy and process

Open Access (OA) is a publishing model in which peer-reviewed articles are made freely available online providing the work is properly attributed to the author and the author's control over the integrity of their work is preserved. Open access is required on all NIHR-funded publications and researchers must seek to publish their research outputs in a peer-reviewed journal that is compliant with the NIHR OA policy.

Funding

Research Awards

The School will fund the primary paper from a research award.

To be eligible for the funding the output must accurately acknowledge the SPCR as funder and must carry the correct disclaimer.
- Any underspend on the award must be used in the first instance.
- Any uncommitted or underspend in the partner administration fund should be prioritised on OA costs
- The possibility of obtaining institutional OA funds should be investigated
- The School may provide additional funding once the points listed above have been exhausted.

Note: This funding is only available until 31st March 2026. Further availability is dependent on the renewal of SPCR funding by NIHR.

Capacity Awards

The School will fund the primary paper from a capacity award.

To be eligible for the funding the output must accurately acknowledge the SPCR as funder and must carry the correct disclaimer.
- Any underspend on the award must be used in the first instance.
- Any uncommitted or underspend in the partner administration fund should be prioritised on OA costs.
- The possibility of obtaining institutional OA funds should be investigated.
- The School will provide additional funding once the points listed above have been exhausted.

Note: This funding does not apply to Internship funding, or Seedcorn / Bridging funding; and is only available until 31st March 2026. Further availability is dependent on the renewal of SPCR funding by NIHR.

Funding of subsequent papers

The School will fund a second paper when:
- There is unused budget on an open project after funding the principal paper.
- On a case-by-case basis dependent on the impact of subject matter, the calibre of the journal, and budget available. This additional funding can be applied for by contacting the SPCR Senior Programme Manager.

Please note the prerequisite of the correct acknowledgment and disclaimer still applies

If you wish to access Open Access funds, or clarification is needed on any of the above points, please speak to your institute's Research Manager, who will liaise with SPCR.

Complying with the NIHR OA Policy

Open access is required on all NIHR-funded publications. The main publication that is funded (in-part or in-whole) is processed according to the Creative Commons Attribution (CC-BY) Licence. If this is not possible then the authors must reconsider the appropriateness of the original publication, as well as how to comply with the point above. If a project is co-funded by the NIHR SPCR and another funder/s, the majority funder is expected to pay the Article Processing Charge. The full policy can be read at: https://www.nihr.ac.uk/documents/nihr-open-access-policy-for-publications-submitted-on-or-after-1-june-2022/28999

Which articles does the policy apply to?

Articles from research and capacity awards submitted on or after 1 June 2022.

The principal research article generated from the award must be published under Gold OA (i.e. one which provides immediate open access on the publisher's website) unless, under exceptional circumstances, permission is granted by the SPCR directorate to publish elsewhere.

How to comply

Articles must carry:

- A data sharing statement describing how the underpinning research data can be accessed. Where there are reasons to protect access to the data, for example commercial confidentiality or sensitivities around data derived from potentially identifiable human participants, these should be included in the statement.

- Appropriate acknowledgment of NIHR, unique award identifier and disclaimer in the funding or acknowledgments section of the manuscript and included in the funding information requested by the publication on submission.

All manuscripts must be submitted to, and approved by, the SPCR Programme Officer prior to submission for publication, or at the very latest, after acceptance by a journal.

Where else should a copy of the manuscript be submitted?

A copy of the final manuscript from research supported by the NIHR must be deposited with PubMed Central (PMC) and Europe PMC by the official final publication date, without any embargo period. All articles must be long-term archived and freely discoverable through PMC and Europe PMC to those that may wish to read, share and reuse the outputs of NIHR funded research, including patients, service users, carers and the public. This includes machine readability and accessibility to ensure full utility of NIHR funded articles.

NIHR Open Research

NIHR Open Research publishes scholarly articles and other research outputs (e.g. final reports) reporting any basic scientific, translational, applied and clinical research that has been funded (or co-funded) by the NIHR. All research, including clinical trials, systematic reviews, software tools, method articles, and many others, is welcome and will be published irrespective of the perceived level of interest or novelty; confirmatory and negative results, as well as null studies are all suitable. All articles are published using a fully transparent, author-driven model; the authors are solely responsible for the content of their article. Invited peer review takes place openly after publication, and the authors play a crucial role in ensuring that the article is peer-reviewed by independent experts in a timely manner. NIHR Open Research is an Open Research platform: all articles are published open access under a CC-BY license; the publishing and peer-review processes are fully transparent; and authors are asked to include detailed descriptions of methods and to provide full and easy access to the source data underlying the results in order to improve reproducibility.

Requirement to publish study findings

We would like to take this opportunity to remind you that it is Department of Health and Social Care and NIHR policy to require that NIHR-funded researchers publish their main study findings in a peer-reviewed, open-access journal. Therefore, in the spirit of maximising the value of NIHR funded research as the Authority's Representative, if you have not published the study findings in this manner within 2 years, we will publish the following key sections of the final report of the project on the NIHR Open Research platform. The report will be published using the Creative Commons Attribution (CC-BY) licence in accordance with the prevailing NIHR Open Access Policy.

1. Project title
2. Names of report's authors and affiliations
3. Plain language summary
4. Keywords
5. Summary of research findings
6. Patient and public involvement