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Guidelines regarding Article Processing Charges of ETH Zurich

January 1, 2024

The Executive Board, pursuant to Article 4, Paragraph 1, letter g of the Organisation Ordinance of ETH Zurich of December 16, 2003,

issues the following guidelines:

Preamble

ETH Zurich is committed to the principles of Open Access and supports its researchers in publishing their research results. The Open Access Policy of ETH Zurich¹, which was enacted by the Executive Board on February 1, 2018, is decisive in this regard.

The transformation of academic publishing to Open Access is leading to a shift from the traditional subscription and acquisition cost model for electronic journals, serials and monographs to the financing of publication costs and the associated publication services by means of Article Processing Charges (APCs).

This enables free and open access to scientific information in the sense of a free and open scientific culture for all. The complete transition to open access and the associated replacement of the subscription model will take more time, especially for smaller publishers, which is why it can be assumed that the different models will initially continue to exist in parallel.

1. Principles of publishing within the framework of Open Access at ETH Zurich

In implementing Open Access, ETH Zurich is largely guided by the National Open Access Strategy of swissuniversities. This strategy stipulates that scientific publishing in Switzerland should be open access by 2024 and that all publications financed with public funds must be freely accessible on the Internet.²

The framework conditions for publishing open access and for read-only access are mainly determined between the institutions and the publishers via so-called «read-and-publish agreements», which are offered by the major publishers. In Switzerland, the majority of negotiations with the major international publishers take place at national level via the Consortium of Swiss Academic Libraries³ on behalf of the participating institutions, which also includes the ETH Library. In doing so, it benefits from the discounts and good conditions achieved.

Agreements with other publishers are negotiated and concluded by the ETH Library for the entire ETH Zurich. This results in larger overall volumes, which has a positive effect on the conditions and avoids double-dipping.

¹ <https://rechtssammlung.sp.ethz.ch/Dokumente/134en.pdf>

² Cf. Swiss National Open Access Strategy, https://www.swissuniversities.ch/fileadmin/swissuniversities/Dokumente/Hochschulpolitik/Open_Access/Open_Access_strategy_final_e.pdf, S. 3.

³ <https://consortium.ch/?lang=en>

2. Supported open access publication and financing models

ETH Zurich promotes various open access publication and financing models.

These include:

- **Green Open Access** (self-archiving), which allows self-archiving on an institutional repository (e.g. ETH Zurich Research Collection⁴) after publication in a subscription journal.
- **Gold Open Access** with the first publication in a pure open access journal via an APC publication fee (Article Processing Charges) or in a platinum/diamond open access journal that is financed by a publishing institution or a sponsor.
- **Open Access in hybrid journals** via read-and-publish contracts, whereby the publication is published in a (closed) subscription journal in open access mode in return for an APC publication fee.

3. Funding of open access publication fees (Article Processing Charges, APCs)

The costs for open access publication fees in third-party funded projects are generally covered by the research funding institutions. Researchers are expected to play an active role in raising funds for APCs from research funding bodies. If no funds for publication fees can be raised, ETH Zurich assumes these on a subsidiary basis for its researchers and funds open access publications by corresponding authors from ETH Zurich in accordance with the ETH Zurich Open Access Policy.

The funding of open access publication costs for the provision of information to ETH members is ensured by the ETH Library's budget.

4. Processing of open access publication fees (Article Processing Charges / APCs)

Open access publications are processed centrally by the ETH Library.⁵ The overall overview of the publication output and the associated costs gained in this way enable almost complete and transparent monitoring of the fees for ETH Zurich's information and publication services. This in turn leads to better negotiation results, allows targeted improvements, and avoids decentralized costs, the so-called «costs in the wild».

The following principles apply to central processing:

- The ETH Library advises researchers on all publication-related aspects of their publishing activities, such as publication costs, choice of license, alternatives, conditions imposed by research funders, copyright issues, and supports them throughout the entire publication process.
- The ETH Library ensures that APCs for open access articles from projects funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) and other funders are processed and financed via the associated workflows and supports researchers with up-to-date information on ETH Zurich's funding criteria and processes in connection with their publication activities.
- The ETH Library offers the entire service relating to Open Access and publications from a single point of contact. The costs for these services are not passed on to the researchers and departments – in analogy to the supply of scientific information. This minimizes decentralized billing workflows and the administrative burden on researchers and departments.
- The ETH Library operates ETH Zurich's institutional repository (Research Collection), which also allows members of ETH Zurich to publish outside the traditional publishing route (Green Open Access).

⁴ <https://www.research-collection.ethz.ch/>

⁵ <https://library.ethz.ch/en/researching-and-publishing/publishing-and-registering/open-access-at-eth-zurich.html>
<https://unlimited.ethz.ch/x/HyGSCw>

5. Entry into force

The APC guidelines enter into force on January 1, 2024. They supplement the Open Access Policy of ETH Zurich,⁶ and take into account the National Open Access Strategy of swissuniversities (2017),⁷ the requirements of the Berlin Declaration⁸ and the Open Access statements of LERU.⁹

On behalf of the Executive Board:

The President:	Joël Mesot
The Secretary General:	Katharina Poiger Ruloff

⁶ <https://rechtssammlung.sp.ethz.ch/Dokumente/134en.pdf>

⁷ Swiss National Open Access Strategy, https://www.swissuniversities.ch/fileadmin/swissuniversities/Dokumente/Hochschulpolitik/Open_Access/Open_Access_strategy_final_e.pdf, S. 3.

⁸ <https://openaccess.mpg.de/Berlin-Declaration>

⁹ <https://www.leru.org/publications/leru-statement-on-open-access-to-research-publications>