

## Open Access Publication in European Astronomy

Scientific publication is the central tool with which science is shared among researchers and with a wider audience. As such it is a central element of the collective quest for knowledge.

In recent years scientific, administrative and political bodies have been discussing the best way to organise this aspect of research with the aim of ensuring that publicly funded research results are available widely and reach their public in the most efficient way. This discussion is labelled “open access” (OA).

The European Astronomical Society, EAS, published late in 2013 a report on this subject, entitled “Exploring the road to Open Access Publishing”. The EAS wishes to express that as astronomy and astrophysics research is primarily based on data acquired through capital-intensive instruments, on the ground or in space, the cost of publication per se is a small fraction of the overall research endeavour.

The EAS report makes a number of specific recommendations. These are:

1. The highly regarded astronomy journals must maintain their quality based on peer-review by independent professional experts in the field.
2. Any publishing system must maintain a “version of record” in a sustainable way, which is also capable of migrating to newer technical systems.
3. There should be no undue restriction on scientists to publish in the journals of their choice at the rate science developments demand.
4. If there is a mandate for astronomy to go to “gold” open access, the responsible agencies must provide the funds needed to maintain the quality and academic freedom as described in recommendations 1, 2 and 3.
5. The publishing practice in astronomy is de facto very close to full “green” open access; this will continue to be the case provided the current infrastructure for green OA with a central, widely accepted repository is maintained. (*The definition of gold and green open access may be found e.g. in the EAS report.*)
6. Because research in astronomy as well as astronomy publishing is a highly international activity, all responsible agencies are urged to come to an agreement about the mode of and transition to OA Publishing. If the transition were to be made, the high-quality big non-profit journals should do this simultaneously.

The Council of the EAS wishes to bring these recommendations to the attention of the appropriate representatives in the European and national science funding agencies, astronomical journals, and European and national science administration centres.