



**Open Access Policy**

**Technology**  
**Arts Sciences**  
**TH Köln**

## Mission statement and goals

### Preamble

TH Köln welcomes the worldwide open access initiative. Its culture of openness presents the basis for academic education and is, therefore, an integral part of TH Köln's mission statement.<sup>1</sup> The Open Access Policy builds on and replaces the university's Open Access Declaration drawn up in 2013. TH Köln expressly supports the goal of open access in the sense of the Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge in the Sciences and Humanities<sup>2</sup> and the opening of the scientific publication system in the mission statement of the priority initiative "Digital Information" of the Alliance of Science Organisations in Germany<sup>3</sup>. TH Köln therefore continues to expressly encourage its members to publish their research work without restrictions online and, by doing so, to participate in scientific discourse.

### The Open Access Policy of TH Köln ...

- ... supports the open access movement and the culture of openness.
- ... positions itself in the discourse on open access.
- ... encourages its members to publish open access.
- ... recommends open access publication paths.
- ... names concrete measures for open access transformation.

Furthermore, in its Research Strategy 2030, TH Köln advocates the publication of scientific findings in open access<sup>4</sup> and creates the necessary framework for open scientific practice with its Open Science Policy<sup>5</sup>.

## Definition and principles

Open access refers to unrestricted and free reading access to published research results and their subsequent use without technical, financial or legal barriers. Following the Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge in the Sciences and Humanities, the principles of open access include that scientific publications should be freely accessible worldwide and may be copied, used, distributed, transmitted and edited for any responsible purpose.<sup>6</sup> The demand for free access refers

<sup>1</sup> TH Köln (2018). [Hochschulentwicklungsplan 2030](#), p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Max-Planck-Gesellschaft (2003). [Berliner Erklärung](#).

<sup>3</sup> Alliance of Science Organisations in Germany (2017). [Den digitalen Wandel in der Wissenschaft gestalten. Leitbild 2018-2022](#).

<sup>4</sup> TH Köln (2021). [Forschungsstrategie 2030](#), p. 4.

<sup>5</sup> TH Köln (2022). [Open Science Policy](#).

<sup>6</sup> Max-Planck-Gesellschaft (2003). [Berliner Erklärung](#), p. 2.

to all types of publications and includes articles in journals, contributions to conference proceedings and anthologies as well as monographs. The authors' copyrights are not affected.

Publishing in open access increases the visibility of research results and accelerates innovation processes. Researchers are thus supported in their research process and the reach of publicly funded research is increased. TH Köln is committed to open access as a publication standard and, based on its responsibility for comprehensive access to research findings, sees open access as an essential feature of open science and an essential requirement for shaping social innovation.

TH Köln expressly welcomes the following **open access publication paths**:

- *Diamond open access*: First publication as an open access article in a journal or publisher's publication without a publication fee.
- *Gold open access*: First publication in an open access publisher's publication with a publication fee.
- *Green open access*: Second publication of a (publisher's) publication on a publication server/repository, possibly with a blocking period or manuscript publication as a pre- or post-print.

*Hybrid open access* describes the option of open access publication of a single article in an otherwise fee-based journal in return for payment of a fee by the author. TH Köln generally rejects this so-called 'double dipping' method. As part of the transformation of the academic publishing system, TH Köln supports this open access publication path only temporarily by participating in corresponding transformation agreements (e.g. DEAL) structurally, but not financially.

With this Open Access Policy, TH Köln would like to contribute to the development of a culture of openness in science and research so that the benefits of open access can fully unfold in science and society. Therefore, TH Köln formulates recommendations and demands as well as general organizational and technical conditions as a clear orientation framework in line with the Open Access Strategy of the universities of North Rhine-Westphalia.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Working group on „Openness“ of the DH.NRW program committee (2023). [Open-Access-Strategie der Hochschulen des Landes NRW](#)

## Recommendations and requirements

1. TH Köln recommends its members to publish their research results as a **first publication** in open access.
2. TH Köln asks its members to use their **secondary publication right**<sup>8</sup> and to make all closed access publisher's publications additionally accessible via repositories. TH Köln publications should be published via one of the two publication servers: [ePublications](#) or [Cologne Open Science](#).
3. In order to ensure easy re-use of the content, a free license (e.g. a [Creative-Commons license](#) in the current version) should be issued. Like the Alliance of Science Organisations in Germany, TH Köln recommends issuing a CC-BY license.<sup>9</sup>
4. TH Köln encourages its members to make use of their copyrights and to transfer only **simple rights of use** when concluding publishing contracts in order to retain the authors' rights to their own work and, if necessary, to continue to enable distribution by other means.
5. When planning and implementing third-party funded projects, TH Köln recommends that its members check the funding regulations of the external funding bodies for the **funding of open access publications** and to plan for open access publication at the application stage.
6. TH Köln recommends publishing the research data generated as part of a research project in open access, provided there are no legal or ethical restrictions. The recommended handling of research data in accordance with the FAIR principles is regulated by the *Leitlinie zum Umgang mit Forschungsdaten* (guideline on the handling of research data).<sup>10</sup>
7. In order to create a suitable monitoring of open access at TH Köln, TH Köln asks its members to enter their publications in the **Digital University Bibliography** of TH Köln and to use an ORCID-ID.

<sup>8</sup> The secondary publication right under Section 38(4) of the German Copyright Act gives authors the right to make their contributions available open access via a secondary publication under certain conditions. This right also applies if secondary publication is prohibited in the publishing contract.

<sup>9</sup> The Alliance of Science Organisations in Germany and the cOAlition S recommend the use of the Creative-Commons-CC-BY license for scientific publications. CC-BY is the freest license type, with which authors grant others the greatest possible reuse options for their work while ensuring that they themselves are named as the author of the original.

<sup>10</sup> TH Köln (2021). [Leitlinie zum Umgang mit Forschungsdaten](#).

## General conditions and programs at TH Köln

1. The University Library informs and advises TH Köln members about open access and coordinates the open access activities of TH Köln. It sensitizes the various target groups of the university through suitable offers such as individual advice and trainings. The publication service has been established as a central point of contact for all questions relating to publishing and provides support in clarifying legal issues, also with regard to predatory publishing.
2. TH Köln supports open access by encouraging its members to make their publications available via two **publication servers**, ePublications and Cologne Open Science. It also uses the Digital University Bibliography to monitor the publications of university members and to make the proportion of open access publications visible.
3. TH Köln supports the use of **persistent identifiers**<sup>11</sup> for open access publications and freely accessible research data by assigning the identifiers DOI<sup>12</sup> and URN<sup>13</sup> in our publication services. By becoming a member of ORCID (Open Researcher and Contributor ID), TH Köln encourages its members to use ORCID to make their own publications uniquely identifiable.
4. TH Köln operates an **open access publication fund** for the co-financing of gold open access publications. With this fund, TH Köln financially supports the publication of journal articles and book publications in gold open access.
5. TH Köln is involved in the **transformation of academic publishing to open access** by participating in various initiatives and projects (e.g. the DEAL project) and thus contributes to the establishment of open access as a publication standard. TH Köln is also committed to improving **cost transparency in the publication system**.
6. TH Köln is involved in **infrastructural networking** and exchanges information on open access with other actors and higher education institutions, such as the state initiative openaccess.nrw or within the open-access.network project. Furthermore, TH Köln supports projects that focus on providing internal infrastructure for diamond open access publications in academic sponsorship (scholar-led publishing).

<sup>11</sup> A persistent, i.e. permanent identifier is an identifier that uniquely identifies and addresses a network publication permanently and independently of where it is stored.

<sup>12</sup> A DOI (Digital Object Identifier) is the most common persistent identifier for online articles in scientific journals.

<sup>13</sup> An URN (Uniform Resource Name) is a persistent identifier assigned by the German National Library.

## Contacts

### *Scientific publications*

Publication service of the University Library ([publikationsservice@th-koeln.de](mailto:publikationsservice@th-koeln.de))

### *Open research data*

Department of Research and Knowledge Transfer

Research data management ([forschungsdaten@th-koeln.de](mailto:forschungsdaten@th-koeln.de))

### *Open educational resources*

Center for Academic Development ([digitalelehre@th-koeln.de](mailto:digitalelehre@th-koeln.de))

### *Open science communication*

Publication service of the University Library ([publikationsservice@th-koeln.de](mailto:publikationsservice@th-koeln.de))

## Imprint

TH Köln - University of Applied Sciences  
Gustav-Heinemann-Ufer 54  
50968 Cologne

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