



NHMRC & MRFF Open Science Policy: Research papers

Background

In early 2026, the NHMRC (National Health and Medical Research Council) and MRFF (Medical Research Futures Fund) issued a joint [Open Science Policy](#) which replaces the Open Access Policy.

The changes encourage planning for openness across the research life cycle and cover research papers, data and related outputs. Intellectual property remains protected, but the Policy promotes collaboration and transparency, particularly for research involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

NHMRC grant holders must comply from 2 February 2026; the requirement applies to MRFF grant opportunities opening from 1 January 2026. To check whether the new requirements apply to a specific grant opportunity, see the opportunity guidelines on [GrantConnect](#).

This guide covers **research paper requirements** only; for broader policy and grant compliance, consult the [Research Office](#).

New requirements for research papers

- All research outputs to clearly acknowledge the funder(s) and include the unique grant identification number(s).
- At least one version of any research paper must be made **immediately** open access without any embargo period at the time of first online publication and openly licensed with a Creative Commons [CC BY licence](#).

Versions of research papers include preprints, peer reviewed preprints, author accepted manuscripts or the version of record.

- Must include a data availability statement.
- Metadata for research papers should be made open access in an institutional repository (e.g. [OPUS](#)) as soon as possible, but no later than 3 months after first online publication.

The table below summarises the 3 routes for immediate open access, with exceptions allowed for research involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders people and communities and research restricted by IP or commercialisation agreements. See the [policy](#) for full details.

Routes to Open Access	How it works	Support
Version of record or journal-based open access	Publishing in an Open Access journal	<p>Some journals charge fees (APCs or Article Processing Charges) for publishing in this model.</p> <p>UTS has Read and Publish agreements with specific publishers which may cover some or all of these fees. See the Library web site for details.</p>
Author Accepted Manuscript or repository-based open access	Deposit your author accepted manuscript in an open online repository	<p>UTS Library manages the institutional repository, OPUS, which is compliant with the Open Science Policy. By depositing in OPUS, you also meet the metadata requirements.</p> <p>Ensure the publication record is linked to the correct grant record prior to depositing to OPUS. More details are on the Symplectic Sharepoint.</p> <p>While there are no fees for this route, you need to protect your rights to deposit by adding a rights retention statement prior to signing agreements with the publisher. The Open Science policy provides this example:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">"This research was funded in whole or part by <i>[insert funder and grant number]</i>. For the purposes of open access, the author(s) has applied a CC BY licence to any Author Accepted Manuscript version arising from this submission".</p>
Preprints	Deposit in a recognised preprint server or archive	<p>Recognised preprint servers include for example arXiv, bioRxiv, Peer J Preprints. See more in this preprints directory.</p> <p>While many publishers allow preprint deposit prior to publication, check journal policies to confirm any restrictions.</p>

Note that the following are **not** considered compliant or good practice by NHMRC or MRFF:

- Do not deposit in social media or file sharing sites like Research Gate or Academia.edu
- Hybrid journals do not meet the intent of the policy, unless covered by a [Read and Publish agreement](#). These journals are subscription-based and charge APCs to make individual articles open access.

Further support

Get advice on the following from experts in the Library or Research Office:

- Help depositing to OPUS, the UTS institutional repository: [Ask a Librarian](#)
- Copyright advice including open licencing and rights retention: copyright@uts.edu.au
- Data availability statements, see the Library's web site on [meeting funder requirements](#) or contact data.librarians@uts.edu.au
- For grant advice, consult the [Research Office](#)