

Retain Your Rights!

RESEARCHERS 6 steps to retain your rights CHECKLIST



STEP 1 BE IN THE LOOP

- ✓ **RESEARCH INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES:** Investigate your institution's and funder's guidelines concerning Rights Retention and Open Licensing and inform your publisher if you are required to.
- ✓ **KNOW THE BASICS:** Understand the basics of copyright and the significance of maintaining adequate rights to publish openly by calling on experts at your institution or by drawing on other resources.

STEP 2 MAKE INFORMED CHOICES

- ✓ **MAKE INFORMED CHOICES ABOUT WHERE TO PUBLISH** and check what the publisher's policies are with regard to rights and open licensing before deciding where to publish. Find a colleague who is willing to explain which journals in your field are respectful of authors' wishes to retain rights.

STEP 3 FIND A HELPING HAND

- ✓ **BEFORE SIGNING PUBLISHER CONTRACTS:** Get help from your library, department management or legal to examine the details of your agreement, particularly those sections that discuss Rights Retention, Copyright, and Open Licensing. Look for language that either transfers copyright to the publisher, or language that grants the publisher an exclusive licence. In such cases, also be sure that the agreement includes clear specifics on whether the author retains any rights and which uses are allowed by the new copyright holder. Ask for open licences: CC BY gives much more freedom to reuse than CC BY NC ND.
- ✓ **DISCUSS THE OPTIONS INTERNALLY.** Ask your librarian or other experts at your institution to update you on the choices you have and consult your institution's OA policy. Ask them to advise you before signing any agreements.
- ✓ **REACH OUT FOR SUPPORT:** Contact your institutional support services if you're uncertain.
- ✓ **USE RESOURCES:** Leverage existing templates for pre-submission letters or other tools (<https://bit.ly/projectretain>). If you have colleagues who care about retaining their rights, ask them for advice and guidance or alternatively discuss the topic with them.

STEP 4 EXERT YOUR RIGHTS

- ✓ **MAKE A CONCERTED CHOICE:** be clear on who owns the copyright and then be aware that you can retain your rights instead of transferring copyright to publishers. Don't sign an exclusive licence or transfer your publishing rights. Read Peter Suber's article on 'non exclusive rights' Suber P (2022) Publishing without exclusive rights. J Electron Publ 25: <https://doi.org/10.3998/jep.1869>
- ✓ **SPECIFY YOUR PREFERENCES:** If confronted with a copyright choice before submitting your article, clearly communicate your desired copyright and licensing conditions and use that as a basis for a discussion with your publisher.

STEP 5 HIT THE SPOT

- ✓ **CHERISH YOUR FREEDOM:** By adhering to the previous steps, make the choice that works for you.
- ✓ **PASS THE BATON:** Now that you know how to exert your rights, help your peers to do the same by telling them how and why you did it!

STEP 6 ENGAGE AS AN EDITOR

- ✓ **INFLUENCE CHANGE AS AN EDITOR:** If you serve as a journal editor, initiate discussions on revising copyright policies to support rights retention and open licensing.