

# 2020 Open Access Survey

## KEY FINDINGS

### THE AMERICAN CHEMICAL SOCIETY GAUGES AUTHOR AND RESEARCHER SUPPORT FOR OPEN ACCESS PUBLISHING

The global research community is undergoing a transition toward open access publishing, an important subset of open science. ACS is responding to this transition by providing solutions designed to stimulate participation in both open access and open science across our global community of authors and researchers, while maintaining high quality standards in peer review and digital publishing practices.

Globally, more researchers are increasingly under funder and institutional mandates to publish open access. These trends, along with changing researcher attitudes toward open access are important drivers in the overall open science movement.

To better understand author and researcher sentiment towards open access, ACS sought feedback from their community of authors and researchers through an online survey and in-person focus group sessions in early 2020. The response to these research efforts was robust, with more than 2,500 authors and researchers participating across the United States, China, Japan, South Korea, India, Australia, Germany, United Kingdom, France and other European countries.

“I believe that all scientific publications that are, will, and were published should be fully and freely available to anyone in the world.”

- ACS AUTHOR AND RESEARCHER



## ACS AUTHORS AND RESEARCHERS EXPRESS GROWING INTEREST IN OPEN ACCESS PUBLISHING OPTIONS IN THE FUTURE

As ACS authors and researchers consider the various journals that are available to them to publish their research, open access options are increasingly important.

In the recent survey of ACS authors and researchers, 46% indicate it is “extremely” or “moderately important” to publish their *next article* open access, while 66% place the same level of importance on publishing open access in the next five years, an increase of 20 percentage points.

ACS recognizes the growing interest in open access publishing among its members, and recently launched an open science resource center (ACSOpenScience.org), to help researchers, librarians and administrators find information on open science and open access publishing, and to learn how to comply with funder requirements and enable researchers to check if they are compliant.. The resource center also allows visitors to search ACS’s complete list of ACS Read + Publish Agreements.

## ACS AUTHORS AND RESEARCHERS PRIORITIZE OPEN ACCESS OPTIONS WHEN CONSIDERING WHERE TO PUBLISH

ACS authors and researchers are navigating among a variety of publication options for their research and prefer journals with at least some open access resources.

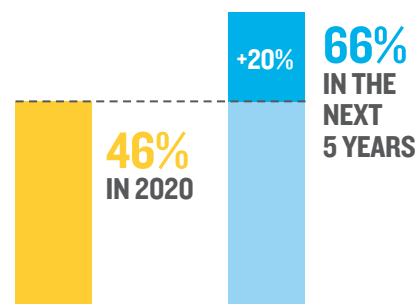
Of those ACS authors and researchers who expressed a preference for a type of publication, the majority (65%) would opt to publish in a traditional journal with open access options, and secondarily in a fully open access publication (29%).<sup>1</sup>

Just 6% prefer a traditional journal without open access options. To respond to the diverse needs of its members and the growing interest in open access resources, authors can publish in one of the twelve ACS fully open access journals or in over 60+ hybrid journals through an ACS Read + Publish agreement or by selecting the open access program.

<sup>1</sup> Among those ACS authors and researchers that expressed a preference for the type of publication in which to publish. A third of ACS authors and researchers (34%) did not express a preference and are not included in the results above.

### Asking the ACS Research Community:

*How important is it to you to publish your research articles as open access? (Showing % “extremely” or “moderately important”)*



### Asking the ACS Research Community:

*Would you prefer to publish in a traditional journal (HYBRID open access) with open access options or a publication that only publishes open access articles (GOLD open access)? (Excludes those with no preference)*

#### Traditional journal with open access options



#### Fully open access publication



#### Traditional journal without open access options



## ACS AUTHORS AND RESEARCHERS SUPPORT THE PRINCIPLES OF OPEN ACCESS AND RECOGNIZE THE BENEFITS TO SHARING THEIR RESEARCH

The interest in open access resources is growing given perceived advantages to this publication channel among authors and researchers.

More than half of ACS authors and researchers (51%) cite publishing open access as important because they personally support open access principles.

Similarly, more than half of ACS authors and researchers (51%) also recognize a central benefit of publishing open access as increasing the visibility of their research.

## ACS AUTHORS AND RESEARCHERS ARE TRANSITIONING TO OPEN ACCESS PUBLISHING AND ARE SATISFIED WITH THE EXPERIENCE

Publishing open access is becoming increasingly common among ACS authors and researchers, and those authors and researchers are increasingly satisfied with the publishing process.

In 2020, fully two-thirds of ACS authors and researchers (67%) reported that they have ever published open access, an increase from 60% in 2018 and 65% in 2019.

What's more, ACS authors and researchers who publish open access are increasingly satisfied with the process of publishing. Of those publishing open access in the 2020 survey, 67% were satisfied with the experience of making their article open access ("completely" and "somewhat satisfied"), a growing trend from 60% in 2018 and 65% in 2019.

ACS Publications offers a number of services designed to support authors in the publishing process. These resources can be found at <https://publish.acs.org/publish>.

### Asking the ACS Research Community:

*Why is publishing open access an important consideration for you? (Among those who have published open access, multiple selections allowed)*

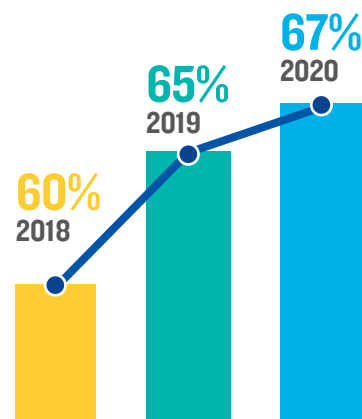
**I personally support open access principles** 51%

**I want to increase the visibility to my research** 51%

**Funder requires that I publish open access** 16%

### Asking the ACS Research Community:

*How satisfied have you been with the process of making your article open access? (Among respondents who have published open access, showing % total satisfied, including "completely satisfied" and "somewhat satisfied")*



## ACS HELPS SUPPORT AUTHORS AND RESEARCHERS IN FUNDING FOR OPEN ACCESS PUBLISHING

The majority of ACS authors and researchers (56%) are unsure as to whether their institution has an agreement with ACS to support the Article Publishing Charges (APCs) associated with the open access publications offered.

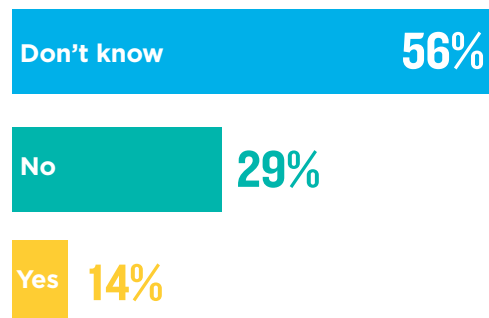
As the transition to open access publishing continues, ACS authors and researchers are increasingly utilizing funding to support their APCs and relying less on personal funds to cover this publication expense. In 2020, 70% of ACS authors and researchers who have published open access have utilized government-based funding/research grant to cover APCs, while just 4% relied on personal funds.

Through the new ACS open science resource center, researchers can quickly search to determine whether their institution has signed an ACS Read + Publish agreement enabling streamlined open access publication. At the same time, researchers can easily find step-by-step instructions on how to publish open access.

Researchers who aren't covered under an ACS Read + Publish Agreement will also find valuable tools to better understand the intricacies of open access publication. They will learn how to more effectively introduce their research to new audiences, fulfill funder requirements and propel science forward. With information on pricing, licensing options and open access policies, the open science resource center helps support researchers. Visit [ACSOpenScience.org](https://ACSOpenScience.org) for more information.

### Asking the ACS Research Community:

*Does your institution have an agreement with ACS to support Article Publishing Charges (APCs)? In other words, does your institution offer the option to cover the cost of Open Access publishing?*



“I feel I can increase my citations by publishing open access. It’s nice to know that my research is accessible by everyone, not only scientists and academics.”

- ACS AUTHOR AND RESEARCHER

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The 2020 Open Access Publishing survey was fielded by ACS via an online survey platform May 28 – July 15, 2020 among authors and researchers that had published in ACS journals in recent years. A total of 2,511 ACS authors and researchers responded to the survey from the United States, Japan, South Korea, China, India, Australia, United Kingdom, Germany, France and other European countries. The respondents were largely from academic institutions and a mix of corporations, government agencies, non-profit/not-for-profit organizations, and research institutes. The 2019 Open Access Publishing survey was fielded February 13 – March 8, 2019 with a total of 6,792 respondents. The 2018 Open Access Publishing survey was fielded July 31 – August 17, 2018 with a total of 2,367 respondents.

In addition to the survey research, ACS Publications conducted a series of in-person focus groups with researchers that had published in ACS journals previously and university librarians that support researchers in their publication process. A total of five in-person focus groups were held in February 2020 in Europe. The focus groups were conducted by a staff member of ACS and followed an established discussion guide on open access publishing topics.

## ABOUT THE AMERICAN CHEMICAL SOCIETY

The American Chemical Society (ACS) is a non-profit organization chartered by the U.S. Congress. ACS's mission is to advance the broader chemistry enterprise and its practitioners for the benefit of Earth and its people. The Society is a global leader in providing access to chemistry-related information and research through its multiple research solutions, peer-reviewed journals, scientific conferences, eBooks and weekly news periodical *Chemical & Engineering News*. ACS journals are among the most cited, most trusted and most read within the scientific literature; however, ACS itself does not conduct chemical research. As a specialist in scientific information solutions (including SciFinder® and STN®), its CAS division powers global research, discovery and innovation. ACS' main offices are in Washington, D.C., and Columbus, Ohio.

## CONTACT

For additional support, please visit the website <https://acsopenscience.org/contact/> or contact us at [ACS\\_Pubs\\_Assist@acs.org](mailto:ACS_Pubs_Assist@acs.org).

[ACSOpenScience.org](https://acsopenscience.org)

“Publishing open access is the right thing to do. We’re using public funds to do our research so the public need to have access to the results of our research.”

– ACS AUTHOR AND RESEARCHER



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