SHOULD I PUBLISH IN, OR BE AN EDITOR FOR, AN OPEN ACCESS JOURNAL?
A BRIEF GUIDE

WHERE CAN I GO TO LEARN MORE ABOUT OA?
Learn more by starting with these resources to find brief descriptions of the two main varieties of Open Access (OA): Green and Gold OA publishing.

SPARC Open Access Resources
Open Access Directory (OAD)
Open Access Bibliography
Open Access by Peter Suber
Open Access: What You Need to Know Now by Walt Crawford

Follow up with your subject librarian to learn what resources and support for OA exist at EMU.

WHY SHOULD SOMEONE PUBLISH IN AN OA JOURNAL?
OA lowers permission and price barriers between your research and potential readers, enabling access by researchers unlikely or unable to subscribe to a specialty publication and to teachers, journalists and the general public. Also, many studies demonstrate that OA literature receives more citations.

The Case for OA by PLOS,
OpCit Article on OA Impact

As you may know, the cost of most journals has increased exorbitantly within the last 10 years. As a result of publishers continuing to raise their prices, academic libraries with flat budgets, such as ours, have to subscribe to fewer journals each year.

DOES THE JOURNAL I’M CONSIDERING MEET OA STANDARDS?
There are a plethora of OA journals of widely varying quality. Fortunately, the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), a comprehensive source for OA journals, has developed quality control standards for inclusion. In addition, you can look for membership in the Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association (OASPA) which has produced a code of conduct for OA publishers.

IS THE PUBLISHER REPUTABLE?
First, consider asking your library liaison or check the publication on Ulrich’s, a database that contains information on journals and publishers. An OA journal that is included in a major index such as Web of Science has been critically reviewed and is likely a widely recognized and reputable OA journal. Google Scholar is comprehensive and free, but its selection criteria are
DOES IT HAVE ANY INDICATORS?
Whether or not you believe in indicators such as the h-index and impact factor, they can provide you with helpful information about a journal’s influence. If an OA journal is relatively new, you can evaluate the publisher by checking indicators for their other journals. *SJR*, *SNIP* and *Eigenfactor* are second-generation metrics that attempt to compensate for impact factor’s failings and are worth reviewing. One final indicator, more qualitative, is to look up the editorial board, authors and other people associated with the journal and research their backgrounds.

IS IT IN YOUR ACADEMIC DATABASE AND SEARCH ENGINE AND IS IT ARCHIVED?
As you know, the Bruce T. Halle Library subscribes to major specialized academic databases and search engines that are used to search for literature. Go to the databases you usually use and check whether or not the OA journal is abstracted there.

Also, check to see if the journal is archived, or preserved for future use in case the publisher ends its support or goes out of business.

Portico and LOCKSS are the two most prominent archiving services and are good places to start your search.

CAN I SELF-ARCHIVE & WHAT ARE MY RIGHTS?
 Publishers’ policies and conditions regarding self-archiving and other OA options can be confusing, but SHERPA RoMEO’s Directory lays details out clearly.

You may still need to contact the publisher and ask about specific details, but before doing so, visit Creative Commons to better understand copyright licensing practices and SPARC to learn more about your rights.

OTHER FACTORS TO CONSIDER?
The choice of whether or not to be an author or an editor for an OA journal can be difficult, so don’t stop with the list above. Ask your peers, subject librarian, community forums and social networks for advice as well.

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