

Researchers:

When deciding where to submit your manuscript, please consider the following. Your goal is to be read by the widest possible audience. Other, more or less noble goals, such as contributing to scientific knowledge or becoming famous, are also best achieved by being read by the widest possible audience. Your paper will be read only if it accessible.

One way to do this is to post your paper on the web, on open archives such as [arXiv](#), [PubMed Central](#) or [HAL](#) as well as on your personal webpage or on a webpage belonging to your department, group, university, etc. Almost all publishers allow you to post preprint versions, and to leave your version posted after the article is published; check [here for the conditions](#) imposed by each publisher. See the [EU open access petition](#).

Another consideration is the journal to which you submit. Commercial journals (Elsevier, Springer, Wiley, Taylor and Francis, etc.) tend to cost six to ten times more (per article, per page, per citation) than journals published by professional societies (American Physical Society, Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics, etc.) or by universities. Surprisingly, this ratio has risen drastically since 1990, just as the advent of word processing and electronic typesetting drastically decreased publishing costs. Do you really want your work to appear in a journal which libraries cannot afford to buy? Do you want to contribute your time and effort -- and that of the institution which pays you -- to researching, refereeing and editing for these journals?

The best place to read about these issues is on the [journal pricing page of Ted Bergstrom](#), professor of economics at UCSB, whose academic specialty is the pricing of academic journals. Use [this site](#) to compare journal prices in your discipline.

Do you remember George Orwell's 1984? Commercial publishers plan to argue that open access to scientific literature constitutes a form of censorship. To do so, they have hired the same public relations expert who was hired to defend Enron executives and to harass Greenpeace; read [PR's 'pit bull' takes on open access](#) if you have access to Nature. In a similar vein, Gordon and Breach [sued](#) the American Institute of Physics and the American Physical Society and threatened to sue the American Mathematical Society to suppress articles comparing costs of physics and math journals, claiming that such comparisons threatened marketplace competition. Do you ever use the website [Mathworld](#)? Did you know that it was almost suppressed by CRC Press (part of the Taylor and Francis group)? Read [The Story of Mathworld](#).

Here is a [letter by the editorial board of Topology](#) announcing the resignation of the entire board in protest of the pricing policies of Elsevier. Here is the [letter by Donald Knuth](#) (inventor of TeX) to the editorial board of the Journal of Algorithms, another Elsevier journal, which led the board to resign and found a different journal. See also [Returning Scientific Publishing to Scientists](#) and [the Scholarly Societies Project](#). See the [Powerpoint presentation](#) on nonlinear journals given at the SIAM conference on Applications of Dynamical Systems at Snowbird, Utah, 2005.

Or just type [Crisis in Scientific Publishing](#) into Google and browse.