

A Guide to Sharing Your Research Online

Find out how to share your research publications online, including publishing open access, the benefits of social media, making use of research evaluation and analytics tools, and how to use persistent identifiers. This will improve not just the impact of your research but also your own profile as a researcher.

Make your work open access

The single best way of increasing the reach of your research is to make sure it's openly accessible. You can publish in an open access journal or make a copy of your work available via an open access repository. Posting your work as a pre-print (before review and publication) can also lead to more academic impact. And making the data underpinning your research openly available will increase the potential for distribution by allowing others to reuse and build upon it.

Open access repository:

A database of publications, which may also provide access to full-text, including articles, books, datasets and reports. Many institutions manage their own repository. Even if your work was not published openly, using a repository allows your work to be accessible via aggregators and search engines like Google Scholar, Core, BASE, Unpaywall and Open Access Button. Open access work is more downloaded and more cited than work only available through subscription.

Create an ORCID profile and a Google Scholar profile

ORCID (Open Researcher and

Contributor ID) is a non-profit organisation which maintains an international registry of unique identifiers for researchers. Any individual can sign up for one at orcid.org. They are used internationally by funders and publishers, help with clarification when researchers have similar names, and link researchers to publications.

ORCID also allows you to create a public profile of your outputs and activities, which will appear in Google searches and make your work more discoverable. You can also create a profile on [Google Scholar](https://scholar.google.com), and add your publications to increase the discoverability of your research.

Use social media

You can use social media, like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Youtube or TikTok to:

- Promote your ongoing research and new publications
- Develop new professional connections and become involved in international, online research networks
- Gain feedback about your new research outputs
- Measure the impact of a new publication using analytics tools.

Twitter is one of the most popular social media

platforms for researchers. Academic-specific social networking sites can also be useful, include Humanities Commons, Academia.edu and ResearchGate.

Twitter

As many researchers, organisations, groups and societies maintain a presence on [Twitter](#), it's an ideal platform for promoting new research. Bear in mind:

- It can take a while to generate a following. Start engaging with other people's tweets, and follow relevant or interesting accounts (including individuals, organisations and societies). Your first tweets may not get much attention, but this is okay
- Use a range of hashtags, but check what they're already being used for before you start. These are keywords (e.g. #archaeology) that help you reach a wider audience even if others are not following you
- Have an interesting hook or call to action to increase engagement, and post timely content wherever possible
- Use images, gifs and video. Algorithms prefer moving content, so gifs or videos improve your chance of appearing on your followers' newsfeeds. They'll also catch attention better than text only posts

- Keep an eye on analytics to see when your tweets are best received, and bear in mind time zones if you're posting content relevant to international audiences
- You can use [Twitter Analytics](#) to assess which tweets have been successful.

Blogs

Blogs give you a chance to communicate your research in a more conversational tone, and you can reach different audiences.

Existing blogs may accept a guest blog from you, or you can use a platform such as [Medium](#) for a one off post. You could also set up and maintain your own blog or website. For more information on writing for blogs see LSE's [Writing for Research](#).

Humanities Commons

[Humanities Commons](#) is a not for profit social networking site for those working across the humanities. You can maintain a profile about your research interests and publications, as well as engage in conversation with other researchers through forum discussions.

Use your existing networks

One of the ways to promote a new article is by using

your existing connections. Many people are members of email discussion lists, where it's normally acceptable for members to post information about new articles, events and conferences. A simple way of promoting a new research output is including a link in your email signature, as well as a link to your social media profile(s).

If you work at an institution with a press or social media team, they may offer assistance in a number of ways, including writing about your work or producing a news feature for a significant piece of research. If you're a member of a society or professional organisation, explore opportunities to promote your work through their networks too.

Use the DOI (Digital Object Identifier) link

Most research outputs are provided with a 'persistent identifier', most commonly a DOI. These are unique and persistent links that take the user directly to the publication, even if the website changes in the future. DOIs are usually a series of numbers and create a clickable link when attached at the end of 'https://doi.org'.

As well as ensuring a link will

work in the long term, using a DOI also makes it easier for analytic tools to track the online reach of your article.

Use research metrics and analytics tools

One of the main methods of research evaluation is qualitative peer review (formal or informal). However, there are a number of other ways you can measure the impact of a publication.

Altmetric

This service tracks mentions of publications (where the DOI has been used) on social media platforms, blogs, news websites, Wikipedia and elsewhere. It also counts some traditional bibliometric measures, like citations. It then assigns an 'Attention Score' showing how one publication compares to similar articles.

The [Altmetric Bookmarklet](#) is a free plug in for your internet browser. Once installed, go to the webpage for a publication and click the Bookmarklet icon to see the Altmetric information. Mentions may be neutral, positive or negative, and some topics do not necessarily lend themselves to a wide ranging online discussion. However, using Altmetric may allow you to identify positive engagements

and follow up with individuals talking about your research.

Citation Count

The citation count is the number of times a publication has been cited, and could be taken as a measure of academic impact. Counts vary from different sources (e.g. Web of Science, Scopus and Google Scholar), since they use different databases.

Google Scholar has good coverage of academic literature, including unpublished research, and will allow you to easily track citation counts for your articles. You can see this count on your personal profile, or by searching for an article and finding "Cited by" underneath each record.

When looking at citation count, or other metrics that draw on them like H-Index, please note:

- Avoid comparing articles of different age and in different subject areas, as you won't be comparing like for like
- Some publication types are more cited than others (like review articles)
- Some journals are not well indexed, and citations may be missed
- Self-citations are usually counted
- Citations do not say whether

an article was negatively or positively received.

Responsible metrics:

Many research organisations and funders now promote the 'responsible use' of metrics. Many common metrics, like H-Index and Journal Impact Factor, are biased or flawed in many ways and can result in the unfair assessment of individuals. Instead, it is generally recommended that a range of robust and transparent metrics are used, including peer review, and that the biases found in any metric are taken into account.

Offline research impact

This short guide has focused on online research impact. However, impactful dissemination activity often happens offline too. Digital promotion shouldn't replace activities like delivering conference and seminar papers, talking with colleagues and peers, and engaging with relevant societies and stakeholders.

Further resources

[The British Library's A Guide to Open Access](#): a short introduction to the concept of open access and how to make research outputs openly available.

[Social Media for Academics](#) (2nd ed., Sage, London): in-depth and practical guidance for researchers planning to use social media.

[The A–Z of Social Media](#): a series of links and short tips about social media from Times Higher Education.

[Economic and Social Research Council Impact Toolkit](#): provides guidance to social science researchers looking to improve the impact of research or run public engagement activities.

[shortDOI](#): a service to generate shorter versions of DOI links.

The British Library

Scholarly Communications Toolkit

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