NIH Public Access Policy

Take a Class

The Galter Library teaches a related class called NIH Public Access Policy and Publication Management with My NCBI. See our Classes schedule for the next available offering. If this class is not on our upcoming schedule, it is still available to you or your group by request.

The NIH Public Access Policy

The NIH Public Access Policy implements Division F Section 217 of PL 111-8 (Omnibus Appropriations Act, 2009). The law states:

The Director of the National Institutes of Health ("NIH") shall require in the current fiscal year and thereafter that all investigators funded by the NIH submit or have submitted for them to the National Library of Medicine's PubMed Central an electronic version of their final, peer-reviewed manuscripts upon acceptance for publication, to be made publicly available no later than 12 months after the official date of publication: Provided, that the NIH shall implement the public access policy in a manner consistent with copyright law.

You are not required to submit manuscripts for work that was funded by grants or awards given prior to NIH Fiscal Year (FY) 2008—which began October 2007—although you may do so if you choose and if you own rights to the material. Compliance is connected to current NIH funding as of FY2008, and the date of acceptance of the publication.

Here are the requirements of the mandate.

The Policy applies to any manuscript that:

- Is peer-reviewed;
- And, is accepted for publication in a journal on or after April 7, 2008;
- And, arises from:
  - Any direct funding from an NIH grant or cooperative agreement active in Fiscal Year 2008 or beyond, or;
  - Any direct funding from an NIH contract signed on or after April 7, 2008, or;
  - Any direct funding from the NIH Intramural Program, or;
  - An NIH employee

If you are publishing a manuscript based on NIH-grant-funded data collected during the mandated period you must comply, even if the publication is made long after the grant has expired.

Do you need a PMCID for every paper you publish?

Not necessarily.
If you have never had NIH funding, your manuscripts do not require PMCID numbers, even if they were published after NIH FY2008.

If you publish manuscripts that were not directly supported by NIH funds active in FY08 or beyond, they do not require PMCID.

If you had NIH funding that terminated before FY08 and you published manuscripts based on those awards after FY08, they also do not require PMCID.

You do need PMCID for any peer-reviewed manuscript that was directly supported by NIH funding at the time the work was done, regardless of when it is published.

What about biosketches? Do all publications on a biosketch require PMCID?

No.

You can list manuscripts (and non-manuscript outputs such as software, books, etc.) without PMCID in a biosketch. The NIH recognizes that not all publications in a biosketch will be NIH-funded, so there is no requirement to have PMCID for every publication you list in your biosketch.

However, you must obtain PMCID for any publications in your biosketch that were supported by NIH funding. Publications that do have PMCID must include them in their biosketch entries, in NLM/NIH format:


What is the PMCID? How is it different from the PMID?

The PMCID is the PubMed Central ID. It is the identifier that is required on all NIH-funded manuscripts in your bibliographies that were funded according to the NIH Public Access Policy (peer-reviewed manuscripts published after April 7, 2008 and funded by NIH awards active on or after April 7, 2008). It is a unique identifier assigned to each full-text manuscript deposited to PubMed Central, the NIH database of full-text literature.

The PMCID is what the NIH will look for in your progress reports, biosketches, etc.

How is it different from the PMID?
The PMID is the PubMed ID. It is a unique identifier assigned to every abstract or citation listed in PubMed. It is not a substitute for the PMCID. PMIDs have nothing to do with the Public Access Policy.

How do I know if a PMCID has been assigned to my manuscript?

The BEST way to check for PMCID and NIH Policy compliance is to use the compliance tools at your profile in MyNCBI. See the MyNCBI section of this guide or the MyNCBI guide at the NIH website.

Otherwise, if you do not know if your publisher has submitted your manuscript to PMC for you, you can easily tell from PubMed search results:

After running a search in PubMed, any articles in PMC will display the text “Free PMC Article” in the summary display of your results.

The neuropsychological profile of Alzheimer disease.

When you view the Abstract view in PubMed, you will see the full PMC displayed below the abstract. You can also check the PMID to PMCID Converter available from the NIH. Enter PMIDs, even as a batch, and retrieve PMCID,s if they have been assigned.

Other identifiers

What if you can’t find the PMCID?
If you have checked the converter or looked in PubMed, and your manuscript’s listing does not have a PMCID, there are a few possibilities:

- If you have a new publication (within 3 months of publication date), and your publishing journal has deposited the manuscript for you, you may see the phrase “PMC Journal-In Process”. You can use this designation in your progress reports, but only temporarily, until the PMCID has been assigned.
- Your journal’s publisher may not submit articles to PMC for their authors. If that is the case, you will be required to submit the article yourself, using the NIH Manuscript Submission System. Using this method, you will receive an NIHMSID, which is also a temporary identifier which can be used until the PMCID is assigned. Please note, however, that the NIHMSID is NOT acceptable more than 3 months after the manuscript’s publication date.

To check all possible methods of submission to PubMed Central, and the identifiers that they generate, see the NIH’s page on submission methods.

Since 2013: Increased enforcement of NIH Policy for Progress Reports

In February of 2013, the NIH announced that it will begin enforcing the Public Access Policy for all noncompeting grant renewals beginning in July 2013. What does this mean?

From the announcement:

For non-competing continuation grant awards with a start date of July 1, 2013 or beyond:

1) NIH will delay processing of an award if publications arising from it are not in compliance with the NIH Public Access Policy.
Posting manuscripts to PubMed Central for NIH-funded research

Federal legislation is in effect which mandates that researchers funded by NIH grants awarded April 2008 or after must submit an electronic version of final, peer-reviewed articles within 12 months of publication.

Many journals will deposit manuscripts to PubMed Central automatically. Others will deposit articles for authors upon request. You may never have to worry about depositing a manuscript to PMC yourself.

If your journal doesn't deposit for you, it is our recommendation that the submissions are made by authors who are responsible for the final revisions of the manuscript(s) and who have access to NIH grant numbers. It takes only about 10 minutes to submit a manuscript.

Below is information about the policy and links to the submission system.

Which journals will submit your manuscript for you?

Before you begin the submission process, check to see if the journal you are publishing with is one of the PubMed Central journals that will submit the manuscript for you.

There are four methods for submission of manuscripts to PubMed Central:

- **Method A** - Individual journal submits final published manuscripts to PMC automatically without author involvement
  - You can find a list of PubMed Central (PMC) journals at the NIH submission policy site.
- **Method B** - Author asks publishers to submit a specific manuscript to PMC, usually for a fee
  - List of publishers who will submit to PMC
- **Method C** - Author (or an author-assigned designee) will submit accepted peer-reviewed manuscript (final author copy) to NIH Manuscript Submission system (NIHMS)
- **Method D** - Publisher will deposit final peer reviewed manuscript to NIHMS (but not to PMC) at the request of the author, but the author approves the submission through NIHMS
  - List of publishers who will submit to NIHMS

For complete details on submission methods, who approves submissions and details of what version of the manuscript should be submitted, refer to the NIH Public Access Policy's web page on submission methods.

Things to know before you submit to NIHMS

If the journal does not submit to PubMed Central for authors, these authors must self-submit. If multiple PIs are involved, one should be designated as corresponding and submitting author.

Before submission authors need to determine any stipulations journals may have placed on submission by authors. These stipulations can be found on the publisher's copyright agreement form or on the publisher's web pages for submission. Some considerations and stipulations are:
Copyright concerns and issues

It is important to address copyright issues before submitting a manuscript to the NIH Public Access Manuscript Submission system (NIHMS).

- If you have signed a contract with a publisher transferring rights to your manuscript to them, you will have to obtain permission to submit your manuscript to NIH for public access.
- Authors are urged by NIH to avoid signing such agreements, since they will not allow the author to comply with the policy.
- The NIH provides sample language to request in future copyright agreements with journal publishers:

  "Journal acknowledges that Author retains the right to provide a copy of the final manuscript to the NIH upon acceptance for Journal publication, for public archiving in PubMed Central as soon as possible but no later than 12 months after publication by Journal."

- If an author has submitted a manuscript to the NIH Public Access system that is copyrighted to a journal, journals may request to have the material removed from the Public Access system.

For other information on copyright issues, please consult the NIH Policy's copyright page.

Please be aware that these are suggestions and guidelines as recommended by the NIH policy pages. They are not intended to be interpreted as legal counsel.

The NIH Public Access submission and information pages

Here are the links to the submission system and helpful pages from the NIH:

- Submit your manuscripts at the NIHMS submission site
- There are also excellent submission tutorials located the NIHMS site
- The home page for the Public Access policy is a good starting place to read the policy and to link to other helpful pages
- The NIH maintains a comprehensive FAQ page for the NIH Public Access policy
- There is also a comprehensive NIHMS FAQ page available at the NIHMS site

Submitting the manuscript

If you need to submit your paper to NIHMS yourself or for a colleague, below are some step-by-step instructions on
Log in to the NIHMS System through the link to the right of the "NIH Researchers" heading on the submission page.

Select the proper category for your submission type:
- You need an eRA commons profile to submit as a P.I. (eRA button). If you are not the PI but you do have an eRA Commons account, you can use the eRA button to start as well.
- You need either an eRA Commons account (eRA button) or a myNCBI account to submit on behalf of someone else (NIH login button).
  - If you choose the NIH login button, a pop-up window will prompt you to log in to your myNCBI account. If you do not have one, you can register for one at this time. There is no fee for creating a myNCBI account.

After logging in via the proper channel, click the button labeled "Submit New Manuscript".

What info do you need to begin?

- Using Option 1, enter:
  - The manuscript title
  - The name of the journal
- Alternately, you can also search for the manuscript in PubMed, or you can start with a listing from your My NCBI My Bibliography (Options 2 or 3)
- Grant number - Because this information is needed, it is recommended that someone familiar with the work submit the manuscript. This is often either the principal investigator or first author of the paper, but a research administrator or program assistant with delegate responsibilities can also submit. Note: If the work is funded by several grants, they may be entered in a single submission.
All the files necessary: **What formats of file should you submit?**

- Use the final, peer-reviewed and edited version
- This will usually be the double-spaced document format you use to submit for review.
- Do NOT use the journal-formatted "reprint" PDF, unless the journal allows you to submit the formatted version
- Your manuscript can be a Word document or any format that is required by the journal to which you submitted.
- Include any and all figures, tables, etc. They can be either embedded in the manuscript or included as separate files, but they must be submitted.
- Use the links supplied on the NIHMS starting page to help answer your questions about file formats.
- There is a "Help" link at the top of the site that you can use to get help, and there are help links on each page to prompt you with information for each step of the process

Hit the buttons labeled for the next step on each submission page to proceed through the submission process (e.g. "Add Funding", "Upload Files", "Check Files", etc). You will be prompted to supply all the necessary information. If you wish to discontinue the process, you may hit the "Cancel Submission" button near the lower left of each page. You can also save and quit at any step of the process and log back in to continue later.

**NLM Skill Kit: NIH Manuscript Submission System**

**NIH Public Access Submission Process**

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**Approve the submission**

After a manuscript is submitted to NIHMS using Methods C or D (see above section on which journals will submit for you), either the PI or the submitting author (person designated as "Reviewer" in the NIHMS system) will receive up to two e-mails from the NIHMS prompting approval of the submission. At this point, Reviewers will be prompted to create an eRA Commons account if one is not already in existence.

Submission approval includes verification of the manuscript files and grant award(s). This is the point at which publisher-stipulated embargo periods may also be added, if the manuscript has been submitted by a third party. Final review of the web version before PMC posting is the final step of the approval process.

NIHMS sends reminder e-mails to the Reviewer if the initial requests for approval are overlooked. Authors should be aware that **submission of the manuscript is not sufficient for compliance with the NIH mandate: Approval of the manuscript is necessary for full compliance.**

**If Publisher submits manuscripts for authors**

PI/Submitting author/Reviewer will receive e-mails from NIHMS:

1. **Approve PDF Receipt**: Reviewer is asked to review the PDF, confirm that it is the correct manuscript and enter grant information. NIHMS will then convert the PDF to a web-suitable version.
2. **Approve Web Version**: Reviewer is prompted to do a final review of the web-formatted version to be posted to PMC.

**If PI submits**

PI will receive only one e-mail from NIHMS:

1. **Approve Web Version**: PI is prompted to do a final review of the web-formatted version to be posted to PMC.

**If third party submits on behalf of PI/Reviewer**

PI/Reviewer will receive two e-mails from NIHMS:

1. **Approve PDF Receipt**: Reviewer is asked to review the PDF, confirm that it is the correct manuscript, enter grant information and assign any publisher-stipulated embargo period (maximum of 12 months allowable by mandate).
NIHMS will then convert the PDF to a web-suitable version.

2. **Approve Web Version**: Reviewer is prompted to do a final review of the web-formatted version to be posted to PMC.

If you are submitting on behalf of an author or PI, be aware that only an author or principal investigator can be named as a Reviewer in the NIHMS system. A third party cannot be a Reviewer of the manuscript.

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**Managing your publications through My NCBI**

In early summer of 2010, the NIH changed the method of management of manuscripts for authors:

As of July 23, 2010, PD/PIs will be unable to enter citations manually into eRA Commons and must use My NCBI’s “My Bibliography” tool to manage their professional bibliographies.

My Bibliography can be found by logging in to My NCBI. The My NCBI sign in link can be found in the upper right corner of any NCBI database page (such as PubMed or the NCBI home page).

If you don’t have a My NCBI account, you can create one on the page that opens.

**If you have an eRA Commons account, link your eRA Commons login to My NCBI**

- Log in to My NCBI
- Click on your username in the upper right corner of your My NCBI page to access your NCBI Account Settings page
- In the Linked Accounts section, click on the "Change" button
- In the All Available Partner Accounts section, search for "NIH" or scroll down to NIH & eRA Commons. Click that link.

You will be taken to the eRA Commons login page, where you should log in with your eRA Commons username and password.

Then you will see the NIH & eRA Commons account in your Linked Accounts.

**Here are the steps to follow to set up your My Bibliography in My NCBI**

- Log in to My NCBI
- You will now be in your My NCBI home page. You can see My Bibliography both on the left side of the page and
also on the right under Collections

- If you have been named a delegate for someone else's bibliography, it will also show up under Collections
- Note: you can drag and move individual sections of your MyNCBI page to suit your liking
- To manage your bibliography, click on the Manage My Bibliography link under your bibliography, or click on My Bibliography in the Collections menu

- If you don't have any publications in My Bibliography yet, just click on any of the buttons on the right side of the page to add citations:
  - Add from PubMed - opens a dialog box that will search PubMed
    - Type in your name to search, or search terms, select the publications you wish to add and click the Add to My Bibliography button
If you have publications that are not listed in PubMed, choose the **Add Manually** button. Use the drop down menu in the **Add Citation Manually** box to add a citation by typing all of the relevant information, then click the **Add Citation** button at the bottom when you’re done.

**New as of April 2016:** you can add citations to your My Bibliography by uploading a MEDLINE or RIS format file. This means that you can export a list of citations from EndNote or other citation manager (use the "RefMan (RIS)" export style in EndNote), and import that list to My Bibliography.

To attribute funding from grants to citations and check compliance with the NIH mandate to deposit manuscripts to PubMed Central (PMC)
When viewing your bibliography, click the small arrow next to **Display Settings**, now select **Award** under **View**. You can also sort by **Public Access Compliance** and group by **Award**. (The Award view will only be an option if you log in to My NCBI with your Commons username and password)

- **Click Apply**

Please note: You do NOT need an eRA Commons account to create a My NCBI account. However, if you want to link NIH grants to publications within My Bibliography, you will need an eRA Commons account. You can have a status of "Assistant" or "PI" to manage grants in the eRA Commons+My NCBI system.

Now more information will appear on your page:

- A red dot with an exclamation point next to a publication indicates that the manuscript is subject to the laws of the NIH mandate but **is not compliant**

- A yellow dot means that the citation has been submitted to the NIH Manuscript Submission system or has been submitted by the journal to PMC and is considered **in process**

NIHMS-submitted manuscript example
A green dot with a checkmark means the citation is compliant with the NIH Public Access Policy. You may also see a PMCID in this view.

Articles that were accepted for publication prior to April 7, 2008 are not covered by the NIH Public Access Policy. These citations will be marked as N/A for Not Applicable (this status is also automatically applied to citation types that are not journal articles, e.g., book chapters, patents, presentations).

Click the Add award or Add or delete award link next to an article to open the funding attribution wizard. You can also click the colored dot or Edit Status to launch the wizard.

If you click on Edit Status or the red dot, you have the option of indicating that a publication was not funded by NIH money and therefore not subject to the terms of the NIH Public Access Policy, click No and you are done with your compliance reporting for that manuscript.

Otherwise, click Yes, and the wizard window will expand, allowing you to submit the manuscript to NIHMS, or indicate other arrangements or conditions.
If you click on Add award or Add or delete award, the funding attribution wizard will show you Your Awards and Other Awards available for you to assign to manuscripts.
Click checkboxes next to awards you wish to add to a manuscript.
You can also click checkboxes next to multiple citations and use the **Assign Awards to Citations** button to associate multiple papers to a grant
If you want to search for grants to assign, use the **Search/Add Other Awards** tab in the **Assign Awards** box to search for grants by grant number or investigator name
Click Save when you are done with the Awards wizard
- My NCBI will notify award owners when citations have been associated to their awards and will also add the publications to their bibliographies, if they are not already listed there.

To name a delegate to allow access to your My Bibliography
- Make sure you are viewing your My Bibliography in My NCBI
- Click on Edit Settings for My Bibliography
- Scroll down the page to where you see the Delegates section and click on Add a Delegate
- Now you can add e-mail addresses of people you would like to manage your bibliographies.
  - Note: Adding delegates will allow them to make additions to your bibliography, but they won’t be able to make award-publication associations unless they sign in with their eRA Commons login
    - They can, however select publications and print out properly formatted bibliography reports
  - The people you delegate will get an e-mail asking them to confirm the connection
  - They will then be able to see your bibliographies under the Collections section of My Saved Data in their own My NCBI accounts

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Including PMCID in EndNote bibliographies

EndNote versions X3 and later have a style called NIH. Whenever possible, use this style for grant submissions and annual reports to the NIH. This style follows the guidelines specified by the NIH, and includes the PMCID in the correct location at the end of citations of articles that have been assigned a PMCID.

If your version of EndNote does not include the NIH style, you can download it from EndNote’s website. The file name is “NIH.ens”. Save the file in the Styles folder of your EndNote program, or, if you browser asks you to specify a program to open the style, designate EndNote as the program to open the file.
Here's an example of the NIH style as it would appear in a bibliography:


You may wish to edit this style, if, for example, you want to remove the "Epub" date or the PMID.

EndNote Assistance is available at Galter Health Sciences Library:
Galter Library Education Team
312-503-8109

or from the Northwestern Main Library (NUL):
NU Library EndNote guide

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**Printing a PDF version of your My Bibliography Compliance Report**

The 2013 changes to non-competing progress reports require that investigators comply with the NIH Public Access Policy by assigning all publications to their proper grants on their progress reports. This can be done through the [electronic RPPR system](#) or researchers can generate PDF versions of their award compliance through My NCBI for submission with [form PHS2590](#).

To generate a PDF of your compliance from MyNCBI:

- Open **My Bibliography** and select **Award** view under **Display Settings**
- Use the filter boxes on the right to filter the publications in your bibliography to apply the filter Linked to My Awards
  - You can also choose to apply a filter for just the year of the progress report
  - Click **Apply filters** button
Click checkboxes next to publications you want to include in the progress report, or click All to select all of the publications displayed, along with the awards to which they have been assigned.

Click the PDF Report button.

A pop-up box will prompt you to add the PI's first, middle and last names, and a starting page number for the report.

Click Download PDF button.

A PDF will be generated which will display the first, middle and last name fields on the upper right corner of all the pages included in the report. The compliance status will be shown in the first column and the corresponding citations will be listed in the second column of the report.

Resources

Here are some of the links that are found throughout this document, plus some handy tools and resources from the NIH and Northwestern.

NIH Resources

- [Revised Policy on Enhancing Public Access to Archived Publications Resulting from NIH-Funded Research](NOT-OD-08-033)
- [Reminder Concerning Grantee Compliance with Public Access Policy and Related NIH Monitoring Activities](NOT-OD-08-119)
- [Overview of the NIH Public Access Policy]
- [NIH Submission Methods]
- [NIH Grants Search Tool]
- [NIH Public Access Policy Frequently Asked Questions]
NIHMS Resources

- NIHMS Home Page and Log-In
- NIHMS Tutorials for Submitters
- NIHMS FAQs
- NIHMS Help Desk

Northwestern Office for Sponsored Research

Northwestern's OSR has offices on the Evanston and Chicago campuses. Each department has its own Grants Officer at OSR. Consult the OSR Staff page to find your department's Grants Officer (click on the "Find My Grants Officer" link near the bottom of the OSR contact page).

Scholarly Communications Resources at NU Libraries

- Scholarly Communication LibGuide at the Northwestern Library website

Need some assistance?

Request a class or training for your department. The Galter Library has a class: NIH Public Access Policy and Publication Management with MyNCBI.

Library staff are available to answer questions.

- **On the Chicago campus:**
  - Pamela Shaw, Biosciences & Bioinformatics Librarian
  - Email Pamela
  - 312-503-8689

- **On the Evanston campus:**
  - Cunera Buys, Data Management Librarian
  - Steve Adams, Life Sciences Librarian

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