



Open Research and Innovation Position Statement

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**Research &
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1. What is Open Research and Innovation?

1.1 Across the globe Research and Innovation is undergoing a cultural shift towards embracing and rewarding Open Research and Innovation practices. Although Open Research has been recognised as having multiple meanings, a widely accepted definition is the following:

“an umbrella term used to refer to the concepts of openness, transparency, rigour, reproducibility, replicability, and accumulation of knowledge”
Crüwell et al. (2019, p. 3)

1.2 Open Research and Innovation practices aim to increase the quality of research, improve transparency and reproducibility of research, bolster research integrity, increase inclusivity and collaboration, unlock access to knowledge (e.g. to protocols, data, results, publications, exhibitions, performances, technological software and tools) and ensure public and community engagement.

2. Ulster's Commitment to Open Research

2.1. Ulster University's commitment to Open Research and Innovation practices is aligned with Ulster's current University Strategy- 'People, Place and Partnership'- that places people, and the culture in which they work, as paramount. A culture of Open Research and Innovation is based on mutual benefit, supporting 'People, Place and Partnership', by linking researchers, industry, the charitable sector and the wider public through broadening communication and increasing shared knowledge.

2.2. The University is committed to fostering an Open Research and Innovation culture. Our resolve to embedding Open Research and Innovation at Ulster University is exemplified by these processes being a critical component of our Research Strategy. Our aim is to ensure that Open Research and Innovation approaches are adopted, valued, and supported across all disciplines, whilst also recognising that specific types of approaches may be discipline specific. We also aim to strengthen openness, transparency, and integrity in research engagement with public and community audiences.

2.3. Ulster University aims to ensuring the research conducted within the institution is "as open as possible, as early as possible". The University recognises that legal, ethical, and commercial reasons may constrain engagement with open research practices but expects that at some stage of the research process, research assets will be made openly available, wherever possible. We want to encourage these approaches and processes to be the norm at Ulster University.

2.4. Ulster's commitment to an Open Research and Innovation culture will further the global reach of Ulster University's research by enabling Ulster researchers to engage in international collaboration in efficient and effective ways, accelerating the pursuit of knowledge.

3. Purpose of the Statement

This statement summarises the nature of Ulster's commitment to fostering an Open Research and Innovation culture at all levels of research activity. The statement is informed by external frameworks including the [Concordat on Open Research Data](#), REF Open Access and the development of approaches to the assessment of People, Culture and Environment, as well as funders' Open Access and Open Data Policies (e.g. [UKRI](#), [Wellcome Trust](#), [SFI](#) and [Horizon Europe](#)). It sets out key principles for the conduct and support of Open Research at Ulster University. This Statement also provides the context for developing Ulster's Open Research Action Plan and specific policies addressing areas of Open Research, including, [Open Access for Outputs](#) and [Research Data Management](#).

4. Overarching Open Research Values at Ulster University

Open Research and Innovation at Ulster will build on three overarching values:

- Broadening communications and collaborations both within and outside the institution,

- Strengthening transparency and openness and
- Supporting integrity and rigour in research.

5. What will Ulster University do?

5.1 The University's aim is to facilitate the growth of our Open Research and Innovation culture. We will do this by ensuring appropriate solutions are available to Ulster researchers, including technological and physical spaces to support and foster openness, to increase transparency research practices, disseminate research findings and share research artifacts (e.g. code, data and creative practice). We will ensure that Ulster researchers are supported through training in Open Research practices. We will also recognise and reward openness (e.g. through indicative promotions criteria and access to funds to support open activities).

5.2 The University will support researchers through:

- The development and implementation of an Open Research and Innovation Action Plan.
- The bolstering of the provision of a range of services (Research Performance, University Library) and systems (PURE, ORCID and others) to enable researchers to practise Open Research.
- Developing and embedding open research values as intrinsic to the University's research culture.
- The provision of training, support, and guidance for individual researchers, appropriate to their disciplinary setting.
- Engaging with government and sector organisations, international consortia to ensure policy development and compliance is in keeping with the needs of the University and broader research communities and society.
- Developing and promoting a responsible and fair approach to research assessment and measurement of research impact, beginning with the broader adoption of the principles of DORA throughout the University.

6. What do Ulster University researchers need to do?

6.1 The University relies on its researchers to uphold principles of scholarly rigour so that Ulster research is of the highest research quality. Researchers should actively engage in processes which will enhance transparency, reproducibility, and replicability of their research. This may include, where appropriate:

- Pre-registering research projects and sharing protocols openly;
- Collaborative approaches to dissemination of research including blogging, online editions, releasing teaching materials, pre-print deposit;
- Transparent reporting of research methodologies, statistical analysis and results;
- Making data openly available according to [FAIR Data Principles](#) to ensure it is discoverable, accessible, and reusable.

- Participating in peer review models in which elements of the peer review process are open.

6.2 Increasing the visibility and the reusability of our research, increases opportunities for collaboration and promotes innovation by harnessing our research for new purposes. Therefore, researchers should make research outputs as discoverable and reusable as possible by:

- Ensuring all publications are Open Access.
- Adopting copyright licences which support sharing and reuse for research outputs including data, code, and publications.
- Making outputs as discoverable and connected as possible by using persistent identifiers (such as ORCID IDs for people and DOIs for outputs).

6.3 There are a wide range of cultural contexts (e.g. disciplinary, career stage) that influence both the capacity for, and appropriateness of, fully Open Research and Innovation. However, openness is not 'all or nothing'. Researchers can, and should, adopt processes right now that can advance the overall open research cause, while simultaneously benefitting the individual researcher.

6.4 The University recognises that there may be ethical, legal or commercial restrictions on the degree of openness that can be achieved for some research. Therefore, Ulster researchers are expected to work with high standards of research integrity and transparency, within the guidance provided by Ulster University's Research Data Management Policy and the Code of Practice for Professional Integrity in the Conduct of Research that stipulate how the University manages these issues while ensuring compliance with funder requirements. Researchers are supported by the Research & Innovation's Research Governance team and Open Research Officer to determine the most appropriate approach in such circumstances, which may mean that outputs or data should remain closed or on limited access. The University expects its researchers to explore the range of possibilities for ethically sharing research outputs before any data collection begins.

6.5 At all times, researchers are expected to act in accordance with the expectations of those funding the research, and at least within the minimum thresholds set by regulatory bodies.

7. Links

Specific guidance on open practices and policies are available on the University's Open Research website.

8. Future revision of the statement

This Open Research Position Statement is to be reviewed and updated at least every two years and after major policy changes.

9. Contacts

Questions and queries related to Open Research should be directed to Open Research and Innovation staff via openresearch@ulster.ac.uk.

