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## A researchers' thoughts on Open Access publishing: interview with Mark Ryan

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To explore WUR researcher's attitude towards Open Access (OA) publishing, I interviewed [Mark Ryan](#), a Digital Ethics Researcher at Wageningen Economic Research, focusing on areas or robotics, Artificial Intelligence, and digital developments and responsible innovation.



### **Question: Why did you choose to publish your research Open Access (OA) and what are the benefits for you?**

**Mark:** I chose to publish my research OA because it is much more open to the public, everyone can engage with my work. Before I went to college, I was hugely interested in philosophy and psychology but was always blocked by paywalls for articles that I wanted to read. So, I do not want the same thing happening to others with an interest to further expand their knowledge in these areas.

I am an early-career academic, so publishing OA is a must for my career. If my work is not OA, it would impact the readership of my work, reduce the amount of references I obtain, and have a negative impact on my academic profile. If someone finds your article on Google Scholar, but cannot access it because of a paywall, they will just read a similar paper that *is* open access.

### **Question: Do you think OA publishing has improved your career and, if so, in what way?**

**Mark:** Yes, even as an early-career academic, I have received several citations from my work, and it has been easier to disseminate through channels like LinkedIn and Twitter. Of course, there are ways around the paywalls of journal publications, but it is often awkward and not the best presentation of your work (e.g. pre-publication prints).

### **Question: Are there any challenges regarding OA publishing for you?**

**Mark:** There are none that I can really think of, off hand. Unfortunately, to publish OA, you have to go through the large publishing companies, who benefit from the free labour of academics (editors, reviewers, and authors), while receiving huge funding from the Universities and Institutions that pay for

licences to their journals.

**Question: Do you think Open Access (OA) publishing is becoming a bigger feature of the publishing landscape in your field? If so, in what way?**

**Mark:** It is already a huge feature of the publishing landscape in my field. Most of the journals that I publish in, offer OA publications. However, often going through their articles, less than 50% of these articles are OA, unfortunately. It is a huge disadvantage to those academics and their work. There is an economic divide between those who publish OA and those that cannot. Wealthier universities and countries can pay the extortionate licencing fees to these companies, while many poorer countries do not have the same resources to do so. This is something that should be spoken about and worked on in the future to provide an equal playing field for all who wish to publish.

**Question: Which components of the renewed OA website pages are handy for you?**

**Mark:** the [renewed OA pages](#) are informative; hassles are taken out. Also, the [Quickstarter](#) is straightforward and easy to follow. I have not been aware of the existence of the [WUR Journal Browser](#) and think this is a very useful tool to find out about discounts, but also to discover similar journals, check indexes and find out where other WUR colleagues publish in.

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