

Undergraduate Research Office Undergraduate Open Access Fund Rules & Regulations

The purpose of this fund is to support undergraduate student researchers at the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences (FMHS) to publish in open access publications. Open Access publications refer to peer-reviewed publications which are published online and are freely available immediately after publishing. The creation of the Undergraduate Open Access Fund (UOAF) is part of the Undergraduate Research Office's (URO) mandate to facilitate the publication of undergraduate student research conducted at the FMHS. URO administers the UOAF under management by the Vice Dean: Research and Internationalisation.

Funding available

Amounts of up to a maximum of R5000, determined by open access costs, will be awarded per article and per student per year. The UOAF can accept a maximum of ten applications per annum. URO reserves the right to increase or lower the annual ceiling limit for the UOAF at any time in order to ensure that as many authors as possible are able to utilise the Fund. Awards will be contingent on availability of funding.

Types of charges covered

Article processing charges (APCs) for publishing scholarly articles in open access, peer-reviewed journals accredited by the Department of Higher Education and Technology (DHET) and eligible for subsidy from the DHET.

Eligibility for funding

- Any undergraduate student author of the article to be published who is registered for or completed an undergraduate degree at the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences (FMHS), SU.
- The student applicant may submit an application for funding for articles published within one year of graduation, provided that the article is based on research conducted during their FMHS undergraduate degree.
- Only one application per published article may be submitted even where multiple students are listed as co-authors.
- If more than one application is submitted by student/s in a calendar year, priority will be given to first-time applicants. Decisions will be made based on availability of funds.
- Only articles published within the most recent calendar year are eligible for funding.
- The article must be DHET-subsidy carrying and be published in a DHET-accredited, peer-reviewed journal.



- Applicants who have already received funding (e.g., Undergraduate and Honours Research Project Fund, grant, donor, or faculty funding) to specifically cover publication costs are not eligible for funding.
- The article to be funded must list the FMHS at SU as the author-affiliated institution for all SU students and staff.
- Publications on platforms, by publishers, or in publications considered “predatory” will not be funded.
- The UOAF will fund open access publication fees to a maximum amount per author per annum. This amount will be based on availability of funds and will be determined annually.

Co-authorship: Collaboration with non-SU authors

The UOAF supports collaborative research and authorship. In the case of co-authorship with authors from outside Stellenbosch University, SU authors may apply for their portion of the APCs. The UOAF will support the prorated portion of the APCs for SU authors only up to R5000, except on motivation for consideration for funding the full amount of up to R5000 (e.g., in the case where non-SU co-authors are self-funded students).

Submitting an application

Authors applying for funding should complete an electronic version of the Undergraduate Open Access Fund application form and submit the completed application form together with the following appendices via email to the Head of URO: Dr Debbie Marais (debbiem@sun.ac.za):

- Published article or proof of article’s acceptance by the publisher.
- A copy of the publisher’s invoice.
- Proof of SU’s payment to the publisher (copy of FNB/RMB payment sheet).
- A screen print of the transaction screen FFB007P of the cost centre on the SUN system, on which the payment transaction appears. **NB: Funds can only be transferred into K (research) cost centres.**
- Proof of student registration at SU.

Application vetting

Once an application has been received by URO, the following vetting protocol will be followed.

- The overall application is checked for eligibility (fees requested, content type, access restrictions etc.)
 - The journal’s open access credentials are checked against the DHET accreditation list.
 - The article must be peer-reviewed and subsidy-carrying. Note: case reports are generally not subsidy-carrying.
 - The authors are checked for eligibility and institutional affiliation.
- The Head of URO, together with the Vice Dean: Research and Internationalisation, assess the findings along with the entire application and make the final decision.
- The decision on whether or not the application has been successful is communicated via email to the main applicant/respondent by the Head of URO.
- The entire application vetting process takes approximately 20 working days.

Payments

Payment is to be made after the relevant article has been accepted for publication. Proof of acceptance from the publisher must be submitted to the Undergraduate Research Office for payment to be processed.

Important: Authors paying publisher fees prior to their UOAF applications being approved should note that receiving funding via the UOAF is not guaranteed. Funding approval is dependent on the availability of funds.

Please note that funds can only be transferred into a K (research) cost point – i.e., a cost point number that starts with a K.

a) Payment of articles authored by SU authors only (not co-authored with authors from other institutions)

Upon approval of the application for funding, the Undergraduate Research Office (URO) will

- Reimburse the author for the applicable fees paid by the author to the publisher concerned, up to a maximum of R5000, in the instance where the applicable author fees are paid by the author(s) prior to applying for funding.
- Reimbursement is in the form of a corrective journal entry (as recommended by University Finance Division) and is completed by the Head of URO. This corrective journal entry is a transfer of the expense (payment of article fees) from the UOAF to the main respondent/author's departmental fund (K cost point). The detail of the relevant K cost point/account should be supplied by the applicant to enable the corrective journal entry.

b) Payment of articles authored by SU authors and co-authored with authors from other institutions

- As indicated above, where articles are co-authored with authors from other institutions, the UOAF will support the prorated portion of the author fees for Stellenbosch University authors only, up to a maximum of R5000.
- Upon approval of the application for funding, Stellenbosch University authors concerned should pay the entire publication fee owing directly to the publisher. They may submit proof of payment of author fees for the article. URO will reimburse the prorated portion of the author fees, in the form of a corrective journal entry, which is the transfer of the expense (or part of the expense) from the Open Access Publication Fund to the main respondent/author's departmental fund (K cost point).

Adapted from the Stellenbosch University Library Service's Open Access Publication Fund Policy, version December 2019