

This information sheet provides general information regarding copyright and sharing your research papers (journal articles, book chapters, conference papers, etc.) to commercial websites such as ResearchGate and Academia.edu.

Copyright Implications

When you submit your paper for publication, most publishers require you to transfer your copyright to them. This means you are no longer the copyright holder and you may require permission of the publisher to copy and communicate your paper. This includes depositing your paper in an online repository.

Check the publishing agreement of your paper to confirm what you are allowed to do. For example, you may only be permitted to deposit the accepted version of your manuscript (not the published version) and there may be an embargo period in force (generally 12 to 18 months).

There is a risk in not complying with publisher agreements. In 2013, Elsevier sent 2,800 take-down notices to Academia.edu asking the site to pull down publisher versions of papers that did not comply with the terms of their publishing agreements.ⁱ

Features of commercial websites vs espace

Websites such as Academia.edu and ResearchGate are for-profit companies. In using these sites you are providing your information free-of-charge to a commercial social media platformⁱⁱ. In return, these companies provide a range of services to users such as advanced analytics on who is viewing your publication, and suggestions on potential collaborators.

As for-profit companies, there will continue to be new features introduced to support their business model. For example, there was a recent controversy where Academia.edu circulated an email asking scholars to pay a small fee to get their papers recommended on the site.ⁱⁱⁱ

	espace	Commercial sites (e.g. Academia.edu & ResearchGate)
Not-for-profit	✓	✗
Users are free to access papers without registration	✓	✗
Content contributed to other research databases, including Trove and OCLC WorldCat	✓	✗
Statistics on usage is not tied to individual users and their reading patterns	✓	✗
Provides long-term storage and access, in a secured, stable environment	✓	✗
Does not spam readers or contributors	✓	✗

	espace	Commercial sites (e.g. Academia.edu & ResearchGate)
Provides a seamless workflow with University systems	✓	✗
Fulfils requirement of Curtin Authorship, Peer Review and Publication of Research Findings Policy	✓	✗
Fulfils requirements of ARC and NHMRC Open Access Policy	✓	✗

Further information

Copyright queries

Visit the [Copyright at Curtin](#) website or contact the [Library-Copyright](#) team.

espace queries

Visit [espace](#) (Curtin's institutional repository), the [Guide to espace](#) library guide, or contact the [espace](#) team.

ⁱ Gary Hall, 'Does Academia.edu mean open access is becoming irrelevant?', 18 Oct 2015, <http://www.garyhall.info/journal/2015/10/18/does-academiaedu-mean-open-access-is-becoming-irrelevant.html>

ⁱⁱ <http://osc.universityofcalifornia.edu/2015/12/a-social-networking-site-is-not-an-open-access-repository/>