

James Madison University

From the Selected Works of Elizabeth Price

2016

Review of Sherpa RoMEO and Sherpa Juliet. In
Open Access Publishing & Scholarship edited by
M. Mallon.

Elizabeth Price, *James Madison University*



Available at: <https://works.bepress.com/elizabeth-price/10/>

Subject:

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SHERPA RoMEO and SHERPA JULIET

www.sherpa.ac.uk/romeo and <http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/juliet>

Visited: Spring 2016

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SHERPA RoMEO is a searchable database of publisher's policies to help academic researchers self-archive their work without violating their publishing agreements. Its companion site, SHERPA JULIET, is a database of funding agencies' grant conditions that are related to the self-archiving or open access publishing of research publications and data. Both tools are based at the University of Nottingham and are part of how SHERPA Services "is investigating issues in the future of scholarly communication."

Of the two, RoMEO is relevant to a wider variety of researchers. Its primary goal is eliminating confusion for authors who support open access or want to make their peer-reviewed scholarship available to a wider audience. Using the basic search function, one can search by journal title, partial journal title, ISSN or publisher. RoMEO does not apply to book publication agreements.

RoMEO uses colors to code different levels of self-archiving permissions. They apply to pre-prints (the draft of a manuscript submitted for peer-review), post-prints (the version of the manuscript submitted for printing after peer-review) and the publisher's version/PDF (the version of record that is published on the publisher's website). Green is the most open access friendly, indicating that an author can archive the pre-print *and* post-print or publisher's version/PDF. Next is blue, which indicates an author can archive either the post-print or publisher's version/PDF. Yellow indicates an author can archive *only* the pre-print. Last is white, indicating that the publisher does not formally support archiving.

SHERPA assumes most researchers understand the distinctions between the various versions of an article. Providing more explicit, easier to locate definitions and even examples of a pre-print, post-print and publisher's version of a sample article would be beneficial.

Another minor quibble about the RoMEO color scheme is the inclusion of green and yellow (gold). These colors are not used the same way that green and gold are used in other open access settings. This could cause confusion among some users and may need to be explained.

After locating a journal title, the display entry includes the RoMEO assigned color, details about paid OA options, the date the entry was last updated, and any conditions that the publisher applies to the archiving (such as publishing only in an institutional repository; or requiring a link to the publisher version; or prohibiting the use of the publisher's version/PDF). The information on each entry is easy to understand, is organized to aid comprehension, and is well documented with links to original publishing policies or supporting materials.

According to the website, the RoMEO database consists of 2,183 publishers and more than 22,000 journals from around the world (as of February 2016). Journal information is provided through the British Library's Zetoc, the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), and *Entrez*. Community contributors also provide updates to existing policies, and users can suggest or request journals to add.

An advanced search function allows users to search by RoMEO assigned publisher ID, RoMEO color level, and update date. Currently RoMEO is available in English, Hungarian, Dutch, Portuguese, and Spanish.

RoMEO is a tool that savvy researchers can use to “shop” journals for more favorable distribution options by comparing the permissions and policies of each journal they are considering before submitting their article for publication. For an article already published, RoMEO can clarify how it can be shared online in order to prevent any takedown notices from being issued. However, authors should remember that RoMEO is only a guide and that their signed contract may trump more recent publisher policies.

JULIET mostly appeals to academic researchers who do grant-funded studies. It allows the user to search by country or by funder, such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Once a grant-making organization is selected, the entry breaks down the policies for both research data and the resulting publications (separated into archiving restrictions, publishing restrictions, and general conditions). For example, the publishing restrictions for the Gates Foundation are:

- **Whether to Publish:** Requires publication in OA publications.
- **Where to Publish:** In a peer-reviewed open access journal or as an article with immediate paid-for open access.
- **Publishing Conditions:** Costs of open access publication may be reimbursed by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

This information is drawn from funding agencies' policies and updated by community contributors. Links to the original policy and supporting information are included on each entry. JULIET leaves researchers with no ambiguities about what kind of archiving is required for their publications and data. Unfortunately, it covers only the largest foundations in the United States. Users can provide information about additional funders through the site's Notification Form.

In Short: Public services librarians in academic settings who are fielding questions about self-archiving, data archiving or grant mandates should refer researchers to SHERPA RoMEO and JULIET before they post to subject or institutional repositories or apply for grants.

Highly recommended

University of Nottingham. (2016). *SHERPA JULIET*. Retrieved February 23, 2016 from <http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/juliet>

University of Nottingham. (2016). *SHERPA RoMEO*. Retrieved February 23, 2016 from www.sherpa.ac.uk/romeo