

Open Research Case Study Author Guidelines

This document provides guidelines to Open Research case study authors on requirements for the format and content of case studies.

Overview

Case studies can be submitted by researchers of all levels including registered PGR students based at the University of Surrey. Submissions may be made as individuals or as teams. For team submissions, team members may include non-research staff (teaching staff, professional service staff) or individuals from outside the University. Each submission will be assessed by the Open Research team for relevance and quality before it is accepted.

Authors must give permission for the University to publish the case study and to disseminate it via internal and external communication channels. Examples of published case studies can be viewed [here](#).

We may in addition invite authors to participate in occasional communication events where their Open Research expertise and experiences can be shared.

Content

A case study of no more than 600 words in length should discuss the use of one or more open practices in the conduct of research and/or communication of outputs to achieve specific research aims or solve particular problems. Authors should use the Open Research objectives, practices, and examples (below) to identify suitable topics for their case study.

We encourage the submission of case studies that explore the challenges and difficulties of making open choices as well as those that celebrate positive experiences and successful outcomes. We are looking for candid accounts of researchers' motivations for making (or not making) open choices, which offer reasoned assessments of the pros and cons of being open, and are honest about where things didn't work or could have been done differently.

Open Research objectives, practices and examples

Objectives

Authors should describe activities that align to one or more of the following Open Research objectives:

- making the outputs of research, including publications, data, software and other research materials **freely accessible**;

- using online tools and services to increase the **transparency** of research processes and methodologies;
- making scientific research more **reproducible** by increasing the amount and quality of information placed on the public record;
- using alternative models of publication and peer review to make the **dissemination** and **certification** of research faster and more transparent;
- using open **collaborative** methods and tools to increase efficiency and widen participation in research.

Practices

The case study should describe one or more open practices. Examples are listed below:

- using publication under an open licence to communicate research outputs, which may include publications, data, software code, and web resources;
- providing an open peer review of a paper submitted under a formal peer review process managed by a publisher;
- creating a public pre-registration of a study design or publishing a study as a Registered Report;
- depositing data, code or software in an open repository, or using openly available data, code or software;
- incorporating open and participatory methods into the design and conduct of research, e.g. by using open notebook-based methods or creating a project using a ‘citizen science’ online platform;
- introducing Open Research concepts and practices into teaching and learning;
- creating new tools or technologies to facilitate Open Research practices, e.g. for combining or repurposing datasets and other research outputs from different locations or disciplines, or for mining content;
- undertaking activities to develop the environment for Open Research, e.g. by engaging in high-profile communications, by influencing a journal to adopt pro-Open Research policies, or by participating in community initiatives to develop data or metadata standards.

Case study examples

These are some examples of suitable subjects for a case study:

- a dataset or software source code created by you has been made openly available and subsequently re-used by researchers or other end-users, e.g., to inform policy making or develop services or products;
- you are a researcher who has created an open web resource and consider the practicalities and challenges of sustaining long-term access and usability;
- you conduct qualitative research exploring sensitive issues and discuss the ethical and practical challenges of sharing data collected from participants;
- you have developed a new software tool to facilitate Open Research, e.g., to combine or repurpose datasets from disparate sources;
- you have created open access assets by digitising resources such as artwork or historical texts

- you have participated in a community group to develop data or metadata standards and tools for your discipline;
- in your teaching you have introduced students to Open Research principles and practices, e.g., by setting replication study assignments.

Submission guidelines

Authors are asked to submit their case studies according to the following guidelines. Submissions should be sent to Prof. Emily Farran, Academic Lead Research Culture and Integrity, at e.farran@surrey.ac.uk. If you have any questions, please contact Emily at the email address given.

Format

Element	Guidance
Format	Case studies should be submitted as a Word document.
Title	20 words maximum. The title should mention the Open Research aspect of the case study.
Introduction	An introductory sentence of 40 words or fewer, that summarises the case study. Example: <i>“Dr Katriina Whitaker, Reader in Cancer Care, and her team of researchers have been embracing the principles of open research, with a focus on the creation, storage and dissemination of research, as well as its preservation for further impact.”</i>
Case study	600 words maximum. The case study should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction, providing a brief description of the case study, highlighting the role the open practices played and the key take-away message(s); • Description of the research context in which the open practices were employed; • What open practices were used and why; • What barriers or challenges were encountered, and how these were handled; • What benefits were realised, and for whom, as a result of using the open practices; • What lessons have been learnt from the experience; • Conclusion, summarising the main take-away message(s). <p>The presentation should be in a flowing narrative. We suggest you use the following sub-headings to structure the content:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The issue/Our aim

Element	Guidance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our approach and challenges • The solution • The outcome/Results <p>While the research context is important to set the scene, the focus of the case study should be on describing the Open Research experience and the resulting benefits, lessons learnt, etc., rather than on detailed exposition of the research itself. See the “Open Research objectives, practices and examples” section above for further guidance.</p> <p>Do not include URLs and references; they can be provided in the following section. Where a reference is made in the text (including reference to primary citable outputs of the activity e.g., publications, datasets, code) it should be marked with the reference number in brackets, e.g. ‘The source code is published on GitHub (1)’. The number should correspond to the numbered reference in the ‘References and further information’ section (see below).</p>
URL, references and further information	150 words maximum. Key references for the case study can be listed here (e.g., to a group website, and to the main open resources being described). Number references where they correspond to numbered references in the case study. References, persistent URLs and unique identifiers (such as DOIs) should be provided for research outputs where possible. Please focus on key references and avoid long lists of publications.
Contact	Provide name, job title, department, faculty, email, ORCID, Twitter (if desired). Please include all names that you would like to be associated with the case study.
Images	<p>Supply at least one and up to three images that can be used in the case study. One should exemplify or illustrate the case study/research if possible. Please include an image of you or your team/lab logo (if this is a team science project) that will be used on the case studies front page. Please send all images as separate high-quality files, as well as embedding them in the appropriate position within the case study.</p> <p>Please specify the source of the image and tell us:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the image University copyright (e.g., a staff profile picture, University Asset Bank image)? • If not, who owns the copyright (e.g., if a photograph taken by yourself in a personal capacity, not for University business, you own the copyright)? • If the image is not University copyright, does the copyright owner give the University of Surrey permission to reproduce and publicly distribute this photograph?

Guidelines adapted from the University of Reading.