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Editorial

Equitable Access, Open Science, and the Future of Publishing in Geochemistry and Cosmochemistry

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The landscape of academic publishing, including in geochemistry and cosmochemistry, is evolving toward greater openness and accessibility. This editorial outlines the vision for *Advances in Geochemistry and Cosmochemistry*, a diamond open access journal that eliminates article processing charges and prioritizes equitable access to scientific knowledge. The journal's commitment to Open Science as well as diversity in authorship and editorial representation aims to address systemic inequities in research publishing. Drawing on the success of journals like *Volcanica*, we emphasize the importance of fostering inclusivity and interdisciplinary research in Earth and planetary sciences. By adopting a community-driven approach, *Advances in Geochemistry and Cosmochemistry* seeks to create a publishing platform that reflects the values of excellent and cutting-edge science, equity, diversity, and innovation, ensuring that knowledge is accessible to all, regardless of geographical or financial limitations.

1 Introduction

The scientific publishing landscape is undergoing a widespread transformation, particularly with the growth of open access (OA) models (Suber, 2012; Piwowar et al., 2018). The Open Science movement, driven by the desire to make research accessible to all, has fostered a fundamental rethinking of the way we disseminate knowledge (Tennant et al., 2019). Despite this, access to high-quality scientific output remains financially prohibitive for many (Pourret et al., 2021b). While open access aims to remove barriers for readers, article processing charges (APCs: fees paid to publishers to cover the costs of OA publication) have shifted the financial burden onto authors, institutions and funding agencies, leading to concerns about equity in research publishing (Ross-Hellauer et al., 2022). In Earth and planetary sciences, including geochemistry and cosmochemistry, these trends pose a significant challenge

to equitable participation in global knowledge production (Pourret et al., 2020a,b).

As we launch *Advances in Geochemistry and Cosmochemistry*, it is essential to outline our vision and goals for the future. We draw inspiration from recently launched diamond open access (DOA) journals established by the geoscience community, which have introduced a new, inclusive, and community-driven publishing model (Farquharson and Wadsworth, 2018; Rowe et al., 2022; Thomas et al., 2023; Fernández-Blanco et al., 2023). Here, we detail the ethos of *Advances in Geochemistry and Cosmochemistry*, and how we aim to provide an alternative to the dominance of commercial publishers by fostering open access without financial barriers to authors.

2 The changing landscape of academic publishing

The academic publishing landscape has undergone a profound transformation over the past two decades, driven by the digital age and the growing push for OA. Traditionally, scientific articles were locked behind library doors and, more recently, costly paywalls, restricting access to those who could afford expensive subscriptions. Today, however, various OA models are dismantling these barriers, making scholarly research more widely accessible. These models include:

- Gold OA: Authors or their institutions pay an APC to make the article immediately available to everyone.
- Green OA: Authors deposit an unformatted version of their manuscript in a repository, sometimes after an embargo period imposed by the publisher.
- Diamond OA: No APCs are charged to authors or readers, as journals are funded by institutions, grants, or scholarly communities.
- Hybrid OA: Subscription-based journals offer an OA option where authors can pay an APC to make specific articles freely available.

This shift has been propelled by key policy interventions, such as the European Research Council's (ERC) mandates and initiatives like Plan S, which require publicly funded research to be published in OA formats. These efforts directly challenge the dominance of traditional subscription-based journals (Guédon et al., 2019; Moore, 2021). However, concerns persist regarding double-dipping where publishers charge authors APCs for OA while continuing to profit from subscription fees (Asai, 2023). Addressing this issue requires greater transparency in publishing costs to ensure equitable access to research.

While OA publishing promotes accessibility, it also introduces significant challenges. Typical APCs range from US$2,000 to US$5,000 (Pourret et al., 2020a,b) but can exceed US$12,000 for a single article in highly ranked journals (Rowe et al., 2022). These costs disproportionately affect researchers and/or institutions with limited funding or from developing countries, exacerbating disparities in publishing opportunities (Pourret et al., 2021b; Ross-Hellauer et al., 2022), researchers who cannot afford to pay and choose to have their work published behind a paywall, will lose recognition and visibility compared to colleagues who can afford the APCs.

In many countries, APCs are covered using research grants funded by national research agencies. As the demand for OA grows, ensuring fair and sustainable publishing models remains a critical issue. Addressing these financial barriers, expanding DOA, and implementing more transparent cost structures are essential steps toward a more equitable and accessible scholarly publishing ecosystem.

3 The role of open access in equitable science

The negative impact of APCs can be particularly acute in fields that rely on expensive analyses and instrumentation, such as geochemistry and cosmochemistry (Jain et al., 2021). In response, alternative models such as DOA have gained attention. This model aims to foster a more inclusive scholarly publishing environment by removing financial barriers on both sides (Fuchs and Sandoval, 2013; Crawford, 2024). In Earth sciences, multiple successful DOA journals have recently been launched which rely on funding from non-profit organizations, academic societies, host institutions and volunteer effort from the community (Farquharson and Wadsworth, 2018; Rowe et al., 2022; Thomas et al., 2023; Fernández-Blanco et al., 2023). These initiatives exemplify a pathway toward more equitable access to scientific knowledge, free from the financial gatekeeping introduced by APCs, though scaling such models to meet global publishing needs remains a complex task (Crawford, 2024).

In geochemistry and cosmochemistry, the traditional journals (e.g. *Geochimica et Cosmochimica Acta, Chemical Geology, Earth and Planetary Science Letters* (Elsevier), *Meteoritics & Planetary Science* (Wiley), *Contributions to Mineralogy and Petrology* (Springer Nature), to cite but a few) operate as hybrid OA or subscription only journals. To this day, only one journal offers a DOA model in geochemistry and cosmochemistry: *Geochemical Perspective Letters*, which is owned, managed and operated by the European Association of Geochemistry, opened for submission in 2015 and focuses on short format, high impact articles (less than 3000 words). There is, therefore, a clear gap that needs to be filled in the DOA space for longer-format geochemistry-related scientific outlets, which *Advances in Geochemistry and Cosmochemistry* aims to fill. This approach ensures that research published within our journal is accessible to all, regardless of available financial resources. Additionally, our journal will consider multilingual content (either via additional abstracts in a language relevant for the study or via special issues in languages other than English along with an English version), a step toward enhancing global accessibility, especially for non-English-speaking researchers.

Open Science also includes open and equitable access to research data, software and any other outputs that are critical for evaluating and replicating scientific results. *Advances in Geochemistry and Cosmochemistry* follows community guidelines and the recommendations of the Coalition on Pub-

lishing Data in the Earth and Space Sciences (COPDESS; Klöcking et al., 2023). The journal therefore requires that all necessary supporting material be deposited in a repository committed to the FAIR principles (findable, accessible, interoperable, reproducible; Wilkinson et al., 2016) by the time of submission. For research data, discipline-specific repositories are strongly recommended, since they provide curation tailored to geochemical and cosmochemical data and metadata. This curation ensures that analyses are sufficiently well documented to allow quality assessment and reuse by third parties, improving the overall quality and value of the dataset (Klöcking et al., 2023, 2025). In addition, *Advances in Geochemistry and Cosmochemistry* recommends that, whenever possible, data should be geolocated and samples should be uniquely identified through registration of an International Generic Sample Number (IGSN). *Advances in Geochemistry and Cosmochemistry* commits to provide actionable links to IGSNs in published articles.

Key Features of diamond open access in *Advances in Geochemistry and Cosmochemistry*

- **No APCs**: Facilitates publication for everyone, including underfunded researchers, promoting equitable access to scientific publishing.
- **Free accessibility**: Ensures knowledge is available globally, with unrestricted reader access to all articles.
- **Data availability via online repositories**: All data and code necessary to evaluate and replicate the findings need to be deposited in open, FAIR-aligned repositories with a DOI at time of submission.
- **Copyright**: Authors retain copyright ownership to their respective contributions.
- **Open licenses**: All articles will be published under the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC-BY 4.0) by default, supporting broader distribution, open sharing and fair reuse. Other licenses will be considered by the executive editors upon justified request at the time of submission.
- **Institutional support**: Journal infrastructure is supported by our host Uppsala University Publications who provides web hosting, access to a customized version of Open Journal System, DOI indexing and permanent archiving.
- **Single or double-blind peer review:** Flexible peer review model allowing evaluation of manuscripts allowing anonymization of both author and reviewer identities.

4 A journal led and run by the community

An intrinsic motivation for the creation of *Advances in Geochemistry and Cosmochemistry* is to help drive a positive change in geochemistry and cosmochemistry publishing, specifically by emphasizing community involvement. As such, the initial group working on the development of *Advances in Geochemistry and Cosmochemistry* conducted and released surveys to consult and get feedback from the community on the proposed aims and scope, governance, journal name and visual identity. This was then followed by open recruitment calls to recruit members of our function and editorial teams.

The AGC editorial board is currently composed of 53 members and is structured around an executive board, handling editors and function teams. Whilst this number of board members may seem large for a burgeoning journal, it is driven by the desire to limit the workload on any single individual and share the decision-making as much as possible. We envisage this board to grow slightly in the coming months/years to accommodate a growing number of submissions. In doing so, we will strive to achieve balance between geographical representation, professional backgrounds and career stages whilst maintaining academic rigor. We recognize that our inaugural editorial board is heavily composed of members from institutions in North America and Europe, and we will aim to address this imbalance in geographical representation in upcoming recruitments.

5 Equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility in publishing

Advances in Geochemistry and Cosmochemistry is committed to embedding equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility (EDIA) into our editorial practices, so that diverse voices are represented and supported.

Reflecting insights on systemic imbalances in access to scientific publishing, our journal will address these barriers through several key initiatives:

1. **Inclusive editorial boards**: By selecting editorial board members and reviewers from diverse geographical regions, professional backgrounds, and career stages, we aim to create a balanced and inclusive approach to publication whilst maintaining academic rigor. This includes setting diversity goals and monitoring them to ensure that perspectives from historically underrepresented regions and communities are fully integrated.
2. **Outreach to underrepresented groups**: Researchers from underrepresented regions and backgrounds face unique challenges, such as limited funding, access, or networking opportunities. Our journal will actively encourage and seek out submissions from these groups, aiming to diversify the body of research in geochemistry and cosmochemistry and to enrich scientific discourse with new and varied perspectives. In addition, researchers from low income countries may be impacted by research practices akin to parachute science (e.g. Adame, 2021). *Advances in Geochemistry and Cosmochemistry*'s editorial policy stresses that local sample and data providers should be represented in author lists using appropriate contributor roles in the CRediT attribution section. Furthermore, submissions focused on particular geographic areas should also suggest at least one local researcher as reviewer in order to maximize the diversity of reviewers.
3. **Mentorship and skill development**: To foster equitable participation, *Advances in Geochemistry and Cosmo-*

chemistry will offer mentorship and training opportunities in editorial and peer review skills, specifically targeting early-career researchers. This initiative aligns with current recommendations from inclusion advocates, who stress that mentorship can play a crucial role in reducing disparities in academic publishing and strengthening career trajectories in scientific fields (Zambrana et al., 2015).

Beyond serving as a platform for cutting-edge research, *Advances in Geochemistry and Cosmochemistry* will also support conversations on how the principles of EDIA can be embedded within scientific research itself. Research suggests that diverse teams in science yield more innovative and impactful discoveries, benefiting the entire community (Pourret et al., 2021a). To this end, we will encourage contributions that explore the value of diverse perspectives in scientific inquiry.

6 The future of Open Science in geochemistry and cosmochemistry

The future of scientific publishing in geochemistry and cosmochemistry depends on adopting equitable, accessible, and sustainable models that can withstand the challenges of a rapidly changing research landscape. *Advances in Geochemistry and Cosmochemistry*'s mission goes beyond merely publishing research: we aim to contribute to a global movement aiming to redefine how scientific knowledge is shared globally. By eliminating APCs, actively promoting diversity and inclusion, and promoting best practices in data and software availability, we hope to develop a journal that resonates with the values of the global scientific community.

The success of *Advances in Geochemistry and Cosmochemistry* ultimately rests on the community we serve. We invite researchers, students, educators, and practitioners from all areas of geochemistry and cosmochemistry to join us on this journey. By building a collaborative and supportive publishing environment, we aspire to create an ecosystem where knowledge flows freely across borders and socioeconomic barriers. This collective effort will not only empower the next generation of scientists but also ensure that discoveries and innovations in geochemistry and cosmochemistry reach a global audience, contributing to a more informed and scientifically engaged society. Together, we can shape a publishing platform that is equitable, diverse, and transformative—one that aligns with the core values of inclusivity and accessibility that science seeks to uphold.

We are excited to take these steps forward with a commitment to fair and impactful science, believing that this collaborative model will inspire similar efforts in other disciplines and help realize the potential of scientific knowledge as a global public good.

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7 Competing interests

The authors declare no competing interests.

8 Data and code availability statement

No data or code were generated or analyzed during this study.

Licence agreement

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