

# Mastodon for researchers: A quick start guide

## WHAT IS MASTODON?



joinmastodon.org

- Community-driven: an open, non-commercial social network that puts you in control
- No algorithms: posts appear in chronological order
- Decentralized: choose a server with rules and privacy policies you trust
- Independent: not controlled by corporations—communities decide

## CHOOSING YOUR SERVER

- Local server choice does not limit your ability to interact with the broader community
- You can change server and keep your followers
- <https://joinmastodon.org/servers>

### Academia-focused servers

- [social.edu.nl](https://social.edu.nl) - For staff, students, groups & organizations in Dutch higher-ed by SURF; personal support and moderation
- [akademienl.social](https://akademienl.social) - Dutch academia (run privately)
- [hcommons.social](https://hcommons.social) - Scholars, practitioners in humanities
- [science.social](https://science.social) - General science community
- [fediscience.org](https://fediscience.org) - Science-focused, run by FediScience e.V.
- [scicomm.xyz](https://scicomm.xyz) - Science communication
- More servers/communities:  
<https://edu.nl/yj6kp>

## SETTING UP YOUR PROFILE

- Create an account and complete it before following people
- Bio text is essential for visibility
- Use featured hashtags
- Choose to be found (or not) (settings → privacy/reach)
- Add up to 4 custom fields (e.g., discipline, institution, ORCID, links)
- Verification possible  
<https://joinmastodon.org/verification>

Follow us on Mastodon:  
<https://social.edu.nl/@Bibliotheclaris>

## POSTING

- 500 characters per post
- Write an #introduction and pin it to your profile
- Use hashtags (#OpenScience) for discoverability; use #CamelCase for accessibility (words uppercase, no space)
- Attach files (images, videos) or create polls
- Choose post/reply visibility: global, quiet, followers-only, or direct
- Switch languages for wider or local reach
- Edit published posts for clarity and transparency
- Use Content Warnings (CW) for sensitive/long content
- Add ALT Text for images to improve accessibility

## COMMUNITY BUILDING

- Follow colleagues using their full address (e.g., @username@instance)
- Look for field-specific hashtags (#biology, #histodons, #OpenScience)
- Browse local/federated timelines or directories e.g., <https://fedi.directory>

## USEFUL LINKS

- <https://fedi.tips>
- <https://github.com/nathanlesage/academics-on-mastodon>
- Shifting your research from X to Mastodon? Here's what you need to know  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.patter.2023.100914>