
Enhanced Open Access Service Quality

- **Product:** RapidILL

Keywords: RapidILL, Open Access, OA, Easy Lending, Unpaywall, CDI, Central Discovery Index, Resend

Story:

The RapidILL Open Access service, also known as “Easy Lending”, is a key component of the borrowing workflow and works by automatically matching borrowing requests to available open access resources. When a match is successfully found, the system downloads the file and delivers it via the requesting library’s configured preferred delivery method. Delivery for filled open access requests happens within minutes, and the borrowing library sees the request is filled by the lender symbol OPEN.

To date, we’ve managed quality control for this service through heuristics to limit instances of problematic matches and files being sent to the borrowing library. The following are common issues the service can encounter:

- Matching to an incorrect article
- Content is only the article abstract
- Content is NOT the published version of article
- Linked PDF is empty or cannot be opened
- Readability issues in some downloaded content (illegible/obscured text, images)

Our traditional heuristics only addresses issues with abstract-only content and PDFs that are empty or cannot be opened. We recognized there was an opportunity to leverage AI to further improve the service.

Solution:

We’ve introduced a new AI component to replace the older quality control process. This updated workflow has significantly improved results over the older method. Here is the updated workflow:

1. Borrower submits request to RapidILL
2. RapidILL checks the CDI for an OA match
3. If a match is found, RapidILL downloads the PDF, or produces a PDF from the accessed content if a PDF is not available.
4. The new AI component checks the PDF for the following:
 - a. Is the matched article what was requested
 - b. Is it the full article and not just an abstract

- c. Is this the published version of the article
- d. Are there any issues with readability in the file
5. If file passes quality control, the file is then delivered to the borrowing library
6. If the file does NOT pass the QC, the request is then matched to partner libraries in the RapidILL system for fulfillment'

Additionally, when the open access resource is in HTML format, the updated process will attempt to locate a link to the full text PDF from the HTML. If the process is successful in locating a PDF, it will download and run the PDF through the quality control to ensure the PDF is suitable for the request.

Notes:

Some RapidILL libraries have previously decided to opt-out of the Open Access service for reasons noted in the above Story. As the Open Access service is now dramatically improved, we recommend reconsidering this decision and asking RapidILL support to re-enable the service for you to benefit from these enhancements.

The RapidILL team is always working on ways to improve the Open Access service and the RapidILL system in general. If you encounter any issues with a filled Open Access request, please let us know [through a support case](#) so we can review.

If you run into an issue with a request, and you would like it to be fulfilled by a different lender in the RapidILL community, you can use the Resend action via the RapidILL web page (see the [Status Check documentation](#) for more details). While Resend is generally used to ask the lender that filled the request for a Resend, using this action on an OPEN filled request simply moves the request to a new lender. Adding a Resend message that explains the reason the OPEN file was not sufficient for your user will help us understand how we might want to update and improve the service.

Note that if you use Rapido, you can use the [Resupply action](#) to move the request to a new lender.

-
- **Article last edited:** 15-Dec-2025