

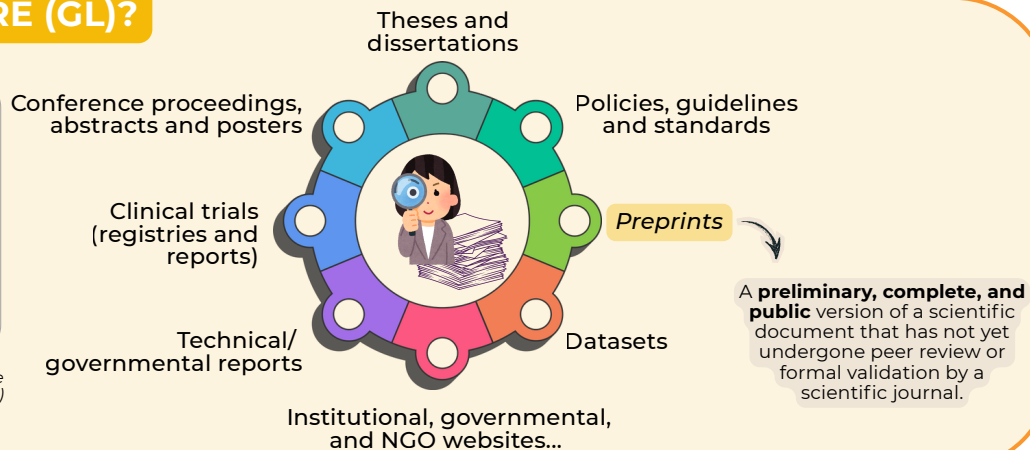
LIBRARY TIPS #18

GREY LITERATURE

WHAT IS GREY LITERATURE (GL)?

- It includes **documents produced by government agencies, academic institutions and other organizations**, that are subject to intellectual property rights, **not controlled by commercial publishers.**

Twelfth International Conference on Grey Literature (Prague, 2010)



WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

- A more comprehensive view of the research:
- Information that may be missing from other sources
 - Different perspectives and broader contexts



- It is especially important for:

- Guidelines development
- Research on emerging topics
- Health Technology Assessment (HTA)
- Scientific evidence synthesis (GL search is recommended by organizations such as Cochrane and JBI)

Reducing publication bias

Complements published evidence by including studies that, because of their negative or neutral results, are less likely to be published.



Latest findings

Study results can be made available one year or more before formal publication.



Greater depth and detail

Unlike journal articles, which are often subject to word or character limits, GL can provide more detailed descriptions of methods, techniques, and results.



HOW TO SEARCH?

The **diversity of sources and formats** makes it difficult to systematically search for GL, requiring **multiple approaches.**



Define the search strategy tailored to the study's objectives, starting with:

- Identify relevant sources (organizations, databases, etc.)
- Determine the types of documents to include
- Use search strategies that are typically simplified/broad



Please be aware of potential limitations when exporting results.

The library can help!

DOCUMENTATION & CITATION

- It is important to record the documents obtained from each source for **transparency and reproducibility** (URL/DOI, access date, etc.).



Follow the **PRISMA-S** checklist to report the provenance of the collected references.

- It is important to cite retrieved documents correctly to ensure proper **attribution and transparency.**

Example (Vancouver style):

Author(s). Title. Preprint Server [Preprint]. Year. DOI.

WHERE TO SEARCH?



- Authoritative** institutional and scientific **websites** (WHO, DGS, Ministry of Health, specialty societies, ...)
- Institutional and subject **repositories** in Open Access
- Web of Science ProQuest Dissertations & Thesis Citation Index
- Databases with preprints filters** (PubMed, Scopus, Web of Science...)

- Examples of **preprint repositories**:



- Europe PMC
- medRxiv
- OSF
- Preprints.org
- SSRN

- Examples of **clinical trial registry platforms**:



- ClinicalTrials.gov
- EU Clinical Trials Register
- CTIS
- International Standard Randomised Controlled Trial Number (ISRCTN)
- International Clinical Trials Registry Platform (ICTRP)

CRITICAL ASSESSMENT

- GL **may not have been peer-reviewed**, therefore it **should be subjected to critical appraisal** that includes an assessment of its quality and reliability.

It is recommended to use the **AACODS checklist** (Authority, Accuracy, Coverage, Objectivity, Date, Significance).



Check if there is a peer-reviewed version

