Grantees Guide to Research Databases at IDRC

1. How to access commercial databases

Two ways to access:

1. [http://ezproxy.idrc.ca/login](http://ezproxy.idrc.ca/login) (add this link to your favourites in your browser).

OR

http://www.idrc.ca -> Resources -> Researcher Resources -> Resources for IDRC grantees -> click on “research databases”.

2. Enter Username and Password, click on Login

Note: If you have not received your username and password by email or you are unable to enter into the system, contact researchsupport@idrc.ca. Please include your name, current email address and project number (or the name of your IDRC contact person) in your message.
2. How to search commercial databases

1. Once in the system, from the list, select IDRC Discovery Service/Service de découverte du CRDI.

Note that by default, all databases are searched. Once a search has been performed, it is then possible to limit the results to a specific database.

2. From IDRC Discovery Service interface, perform a basic or an advanced search.

Basic Search (default)

To search for a single word or a combination of words in all fields, including keyword, title and author.
For example:
policies
"human resources"
"health determinants"

Advanced Search

To search for more complex word combinations in specific fields (for example, author, title, abstract, subject). Limiting searches to specific fields increases the relevance of your results.
For example:
"health systems" as a title or subject, to retrieve articles for which "health systems" is the main topic.

Note: To search for exact phrasing use quotation marks.

IDRC Discovery Service makes it possible to search the content of external databases simultaneously with EBSCO databases, using the EBSCO interface.
3. Search tips

The following are different methods used to expand your search query. The most useful methods are Boolean phrase searching, proximity searching and wild cards/truncation.

To begin, think of the statement or question for which you want to find resources. Then break it down into major concepts or terms to create your search query.

### Boolean operators

- Combining keywords with «**AND**» means that you want all these words to be included in each result, which will reduce the number of results, but increase their relevance.
  
  Ex. *water AND quality* will find results with both of these words.

- Combining keywords with «**OR**» means that you want at least one of these words to appear in the results, which will increase their number, but reduce their relevance.
  
  Ex. *water OR quality* will find results with at least one of these words.

- Combining words with «**NOT**» means that the results do not contain the specified terms.
  
  Ex. *water NOT quality* will find results for *water* but that do not contain *quality*.

### Proximity searching

- **Near Operator (N)** - Ex. *N5*—finds results within *five words* of each other regardless of their order.
  
  Ex. *water N5 quality* will find results with the words being no more than five words apart from each other.

- **Within Operator (W)** - Ex. *W8*—finds words within the given number of words of one another and appear in that order.
  
  Ex. *water W8 quality* will find water quality but not *quality of the water*. 
3. Search tips (continued)

### Wild cards and truncation

These functions help to create searches where there are unknown characters, multiple spelling or different endings.

**Note:** It cannot be used as the first character of a word.

**Wild Cards:**
- To use the ? wildcard, enter your search terms and replace each unknown character with a ?.
  
  Ex. *Wom*n to find all records containing woman or women.*

- The # wildcard, enter your search terms and place # where an alternate spelling might contain an extra character.
  
  Ex. *type colo#r to find all words containing color or colour.*

**Truncation:**
- Represented by an asterisk (*). To use truncation, enter the root of a search term and replace the ending with an *.
  
  Ex. *comput* to find the words computer, computing, computation, etc.

### Helpful tips

- Although the commercial databases also have a French or Spanish interface, the content is mainly in English or has been indexed in English. Therefore, it is also necessary to search using English terms to get more results.

- Use quotation marks to search for an exact phrase ("West Africa").

- When searching a singular word the plural and possessive forms are automatically added to the search.

- The fields where you search for keywords have an impact on the number of results and their relevance. Searching by «subject» will produce a smaller number of results that are more relevant whereas searching by «keywords» or «anywhere» will generate more results that are less relevant.

- If you start a search with many words and restrict it to specific fields, such as «subject», it is possible that you will not obtain any results or very few. Repeat your search, but this time reduce the number of keywords, use more general concepts, extend the geographic area or extend your search to broader fields, such as «abstract», or leave the field unspecified.

- For more information on how to use IDRC Discovery Service select the Search Help button.
  - In basic search, Search Help button is next to the Create Alert button.
  - In advanced search, Search Help button is next to the Clear button.
4. How to limit results

To limit results after doing a search, use the facets under « Refine Results » to the left of the results list:

- **Expanders**: By default, expanders (related words and search within full text of articles) are applied to the search. To limit results to the exact search term (in this example « water ») or to limit the search to article information (as opposed to within the article itself), click on the appropriate « x ».

- **Limit the search to articles available in full text.**

- **Limit the search to a range of publication dates by entering different years or by sliding the scale.**

- **Limit the search to journal articles, books, magazine articles, etc. by selecting the appropriate category under « Source Types ». Click on « Show More » for more options.**

- **Limit results to articles from a specific journal. Click on « Show More » for the complete list of journals included in the results.**

- **Limit results to a specific language under « Language »**

- **Limit results to a specific database under « Content Provider »**
In IDRC Discovery Service, you will find the following links which gives you access to the full text (only most common links illustrated below):

- Article available in PDF format.
- Available through IDRC’s e-journal subscriptions.
- Article available in HTML format.
- When an article is not directly available online, this link makes it possible to send a request to the IDRC document delivery service.

Click on "Request Document Delivery".

The Document Delivery Service login page will be displayed.

- Enter your Login ID and Password (same as the ones used to access the research databases).

Note: Grantees can only request articles and book chapters, which will be sent as email attachments.
6. Saving searches

All of your searches in IDRC Discovery Service can be saved if you have a My EBSCOhost account. This can help you keep track of your searches and to reuse them again quickly.

To enter your folder at the top of the tool bar click Sign In and follow the instructions to create your account and/or sign in.

Note: To create a My EBSCOhost account, access IDRC Discovery Service and click Sign In button

Then select Create a new Account next to the Login button and complete the account creation process. My EBSCOhost accounts are free and independent of your login credentials to access IDRC resources.

1. Run a search and view the results.

2. Click the Search History link, then the Save Searches/Alerts link. Saved Search/Alerts screen appears. If you have not signed in to My EBSCOhost, you will be prompted to do so.
3. Enter a **Name** and **Description** for the search.

4. In the **Save Search As** field select one of the following options:
   - Saved Search (Permanent)
   - Saved Search (Temporary, 24 hours)
   - Alert - If you selected Alert, additional fields are available. For more information, see section 7. Creating search alerts on page number 9.

5. Click **Save** to save a search.

The **Search History/Alerts** screen is redisplayed.

**Note:** The next time you log into My EBSCOhost, the search is saved and you can quickly pick up where you left off without having to type everything again. You can also edit previous searches.
There are two ways to create a search alert to receive an automatic notification when new articles on your topic become available.

As you go through the steps to save your searches, you can select Save Search As and select Alert.

1. You will set a search alert by selecting options in:
   - Run Alert For (How long until the alert expires)
   - Alert Results Format (Amount of information the alert provides)
   - E-mail Properties: make sure you include your email address
   - To make it easier to recognize in your inbox, give it a subject

Click **Save** to save the Search Alert.

OR

**Search Results: 1 - 10 of 9,812,160**
Go down to **Create an Alert** and click on **E-mail Alert**.

[Image of Create Alert interface]

**Sign In** and select your preferences for the **Search Alert** and then click **Save Alert**.

**Note:** The first email will contain the results of this first search. Subsequent emails will be shorter and will only be sent if there is a new article that matches your search criteria.
Publicly accessible, the IDL is a collection of documents and research outputs generated as part of projects funded by IDRC or by IDRC awardees or employees since the Centre’s creation in 1970.

Two ways to access:
1. [https://idl-bnc-idrc.dspacedirect.org/](https://idl-bnc-idrc.dspacedirect.org/)
OR
www.idrc.ca -> Funding -> Research tools -> IDRC Digital Library (IDL)

2. Do a basic search by entering search terms in the **Search** box and clicking **Go**.

3. Use the **Advanced Search** to apply **filters** to focus your initial search. Combine keywords and choose which fields to search.

To access a document in the IDL:

1. Si le document est en libre accès, cliquez sur la vignette.
2. If the document is not Open Access, click on the lock icon to complete the document delivery form. The request is sent to IDRC’s Research Support team.
9. Key contacts

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<th>IDRC Research Support</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Problems accessing commercial databases or the IDRC Digital Library (IDL)? <a href="mailto:researchsupport@idrc.ca">researchsupport@idrc.ca</a></td>
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<td>• Problems finding the full text of an article? <a href="mailto:docdeliv@idrc.ca">docdeliv@idrc.ca</a></td>
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