Reports of meetings

EASE conference: The complex world of science editing

13–15 June 2014, Split, Croatia

The 12th general assembly and conference of the European Association of Science Editors took place in Split, Croatia (13-15 June 2014) in the facilities of the University of Split School of Medicine. Prior to the conference opening, a workshop on the application of advanced information technologies to scholarly journal publishing was organized by Prof Sun Huh from Hallym University, Korea and the Korean Council of Science Editors. Prof Huh highlighted the information technology (IT) essential for distributing scholarly materials and improving journal visibility. The implementation of advanced technologies requires skills in basic informatics. Training in this field for editorial purposes is not widely available and not easily understandable by non–experts. Prof Huh and his colleagues from Hallym University and CrossRef (USA) made a great effort to introduce theoretical background on developing XML files, Journal Article Tag Set 1.0 (JATS XML), XSL, CSS, and HTML. The workshop was useful for gaining practical skills. All participants had a unique opportunity to convert files into different computer languages with the assistance of the workshop organizers. The following new possibilities were also presented: application of ORCID (scientists' personal digital identification number); basics and practical application of CrossRef XML, CrossMark, and FundRef (by Rachael Lammey, CrossRef, UK); and the use of QR codes for efficient distribution of information (by Jea-Hwa Chang, InfoLumi, Korea). All participants of the workshop were pleased to succeed in developing advanced IT files for articles in their own journals. Thanks to Prof Huh and his team we now understand how IT works for scholarly journals.

The official opening of the conference was marked by a series of welcome talks by Joan Marsh, President of EASE; Ana Marušić, host at the Split University School of Medicine; Branka Ramljak, Vice Rector of University of Split; and Janoš Terzić, Vice Dean of Science of the Split School of Medicine. All participants were entertained by a musical performance of the Split Physicians' Choir and two soloists, Šime Mihatov and Roderick Hunt. That was a pleasant surprise and an excellent introduction to the well-organized conference.

The first plenary lecture was delivered by Nobel Prize laureate, Prof Sir Tim Hunt (UK), who reflected on what constitutes science and on complexities of its definitions. The lecture was followed by an evening reception at Split Mestrovic Gallery with cocktails and local folklore entertainment.

The second day of the conference started with a plenary lecture on inter/multi/trans-disciplinarity by Milena Žic-Fuchs, University of Zagreb. She introduced the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, HORIZON 2020, and addressed the key question that arises from the inter/multi/trans-disciplinarity in scholarly publishing. The plenary lecture was followed by two parallel sessions. The social media session, moderated by Alun Salt, University of Leicester, UK, presented ways for expanding journal visibility beyond traditional channels. He emphasized the importance of social networking and promoting discussions. The session on quality in biomedical translations, moderated by Mary Ellen Kerans, Mediterranean Editors and Translators (MET) Council, Spain, introduced the updated version of the *EASE Guidelines for Authors and Translators*. Other presenters at this session reflected on the complexity of large-scale translations and the role of professional translators in the biomedical science publishing.

A plenary lecture on the efficiency of peer review by Elizabeth Wager, ex chair of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE), explored the evolution of scientific publication, which has not been accompanied by improvements in peer review. Peer review has not changed much over the past centuries and journal editors have to clearly understand what they expect from the process and to take advantage of new technologies for research.

The afternoon session on publication ethics was moderated by leading experts from COPE: Irene Hames (UK), Mirjam Curno (Switzerland), André van Steirteghem (Belgium), and Elizabeth Wager (UK). Four parallel groups were organized to allow each attendee to discuss specific cases from the COPE database. The cases covered a variety of scenarios in scientific misconduct and participants discussed these cases thoroughly. Irene Hames introduced the new COPE Case Taxonomy for improving the classification and discussion of COPE cases in the database. Launched earlier this year, the new taxonomy includes 18 classification categories and 100 keywords to illustrate the expanding complexity of the cases. This eventful day ended at the conference dinner, where informal discussion showed that the world of science editing is inexhaustible.

The next day (15 June) started with a session on publication metrics, moderated by Paola de Castro from Istituto Superiore di Sanita, Rome, Italy. Interest towards these metrics is growing in the scientific community. The use of journal impact metrics has to be appropriate to avoid any abuse. Arjan Polderman, Pharmaceutisch Weekblad, Netherlands, talked about the Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA), which was issued in December 2012 and was signed by EASE. DORA is aimed at avoiding inappropriate use of journal metrics as a means

of assessing individuals' research performance. Remedios Melero, Spanish National Research Council, introduced Altmetrics as an additional and individual quality measure, which combines traditional science metrics with online discussions on social networks. Laurence Mabile, Université Toulouse III – Paul Sabatier, France, presented The Bioresource Research Impact Factor (BRIF) project for standardization of biobank-based research.

The last session of the day was moderated by Ana Marušić. The session was about the importance of editorial research and editorial collaborations. Leading experts from the Asociación Mexicana de Editores de Revistas Biomédicas (AMERBAC), COPE, International Association of Veterinary Editors (IAVE), and MET took part in the session. Participants discussed issues on evidence-based editorial practice and promotion of research integrity.

A brief presentation of the EASE Gender Policy Committee on the sex/gender policies in research reporting and journal management preceded the final plenary lecture. The Committee Chair, Shirin Heidari, *Journal of the International AIDS Society*, stressed that gender inequality in scientific and editorial community still exists. She also presented Common Standards for the implementation of gender policies in journals.

Doug Altman, Centre for Statistics in Medicine, Oxford, UK, delivered the last, but not least, important lecture of the conference. He talked about the research reporting guidelines developed by the EQUATOR Network. Prof Altman presented the results of non-compliance with the guidelines in scientific publications, which has an adverse impact on the evidence base in healthcare. The implementation of the guidelines requires the efforts of the whole scientific community. The EQUATOR Network promotes transparency in research reporting and enhances the quality of scholarly publications.

Joan Marsh closed the conference and awarded the best poster presenters, Geum-Hee Jeong and Sun Huh, from Hallym University, Korea. The conference uncovered the complexity of science editing in elegantly presented lectures and informal discussions. Many questions have been answered, but many more have arisen. The announcement of the next EASE conference that will be held in Strasbourg in 2016 promises many more questions and answers.

Vesna Šupak Smolčić
Research Integrity Editor, Biochemia Medica;
Department of Laboratory Diagnostics, Clinical Hospital Centre, Rijeka, Croatia;
Department of Medical Informatics, University of Rijeka School of Medicine;
vesnasupak@gmail.com

Editorial team of *Biochemia Medica* at the welcome reception of the EASE 2014 conference

Watch the opening ceremony:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2wfga8mFgug