

News Notes

News Notes are taken from the EASE Journal Blog (<http://ese-bookshelf.blogspot.com>). Please email items for inclusion to John Hilton (hilton.john@gmail.com) with "News Notes" as the subject.

TinyURLs may be given to save space and aid reading; full URLs (clickable links) can be found on the EASE Journal Blog.

Free access to UK research?

The UK Government has published a report that calls for all publicly funded research to be made freely available. The report says: "Government will work with partners, including the publishing industry, to achieve free access to publicly-funded research as soon as possible and will set an example itself." Research councils will be required to ensure compliance with existing mandates to "deposit published articles or conference proceedings in an open access repository at or around the time of publication" and will be investing £2 million (€2.4 million) to develop a 'Gateway to Research' website that could also include non-publicly funded research.

New journal from FEBS

Another News Notes, another new open biology journal. The Federation of Biochemical Societies (FEBS) has launched a new 'open-access' journal called FEBS Open Bio (www.elsevier.com/locate/febsopenbio). The journal, published by Elsevier, is open for new submissions and also for direct transfer of articles rejected by other FEBS publications (FEBS Letters, FEBS Journal and Molecular Oncology). All articles will be freely available on Elsevier's SciVerse ScienceDirect platform (www.sciencedirect.com), although the usage rights are more limited than with other fully open-access journals.

Cell art

The Cell Picture Show (www.cell.com/

[cell_picture_show](#)) is a website run by the journal Cell, showcasing stunning images from cell biology. Each image is accompanied by an explanation of the science illustrated by the image, and submissions are welcome.

WK acquires Medknow

Medknow Publications (www.medknow.com), an open-access publisher based in Mumbai, India, has been acquired by Wolters Kluwer Health, the home of Lippincott, Williams & Wilkins, UpToDate and Ovid, and other brands. Medknow has built its reputation through alliances with professional societies, and Wolters Kluwer sees the acquisition as a way of increasing locally written content and incorporating open-access platforms into its business model.

European science advisor

Professor Anne Glover, a molecular and cell biologist, has been named as Europe's first chief scientific adviser. Nature News (15 December 2011) reported how the president of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso, announced the appointment on 5 December, more than two years after pledging to create the post. Professor Glover has been chief scientific adviser to Scotland's government since 2006, and her new role will include policy advice, guidance on interpreting uncertainty and strategic planning for emergencies, and communicating science. Many view the appointment as a long overdue solution to an apparent lack of reliable, independent scientific advice in European policy-making.

Research integrity in the UK?

In a recent editorial in the BMJ (2012;344:d8357), the journal's editor in chief Fiona Godlee and Liz Wager, chair of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE), ask why the UK lags behind many other countries in establishing a body to oversee research integrity, noting insufficient support for the UK Research Integrity Office (www.ukrio.org) and the Research Integrity

Futures Working Group. Research misconduct is certainly flourishing and its definition could be expanded to include suppression of data and failure to publish research. A possible solution is for institutions to appoint research integrity officers, overseen by a statutory authority.

Hungarian science moves forward

The funding of science in Hungary has lagged behind European neighbours in recent years, with a corresponding drop in scientific output. Nature (2011;480:305) reports how a major restructuring of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences is designed to address this, following the model of The Max Planck Society and other Western European research organisations. József Pálincás, the academy's president, is overseeing the creation of ten new multidisciplinary research centres with new management structures, supported by a 20% increase in government funding. Further information in an article on page 23.

Can OA help global science?

At the Berlin 9 Open Access conference (www.berlin9.org), held in Washington DC, USA in November 2011, there was discussion about the impact of open access on the dissemination of research and the uptake of research findings in developing countries. A related article on the SciDev.net website (tinyurl.com/ease-news6) noted a recurring theme that the traditional journal article model is not the best way to serve global scholarship, especially when methods of evaluating research quality and output tend to reflect developed countries' practices and agendas. The Global Open Access Portal (tinyurl.com/ease-news7), launched by UNESCO, is designed to engage policy-makers with open-access approaches to dissemination and research evaluation.

Creative Commons V4

The Creative Commons (CC; creativecommons.org) organisation

has announced the beginning of an open discussion process to create version 4.0 of the CC licence suite. For the first time, the development process started before a new version had been drafted, giving stakeholders more chance to contribute. The new version is expected to be available in late 2012. You can read more on the CC wiki website (wiki.creativecommons.org/4.0).

PubMed Health expands

The US National Library of Medicine has announced an expansion of PubMed Health (www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmedhealth) to include clinical databases from NLM's National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI), the UK Centre for Reviews and Dissemination (www.york.ac.uk/inst/crd), the Cochrane Collaboration (www.cochrane.org), the US Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (www.ahrq.gov), and other agencies. PubMed Health organizes systematic reviews, summaries and guides for consumers and clinicians.

Data Dryad evolves

Dryad is an international repository of data underlying peer-reviewed bioscience articles. It is overseen by a consortium of journals and is developed by the US National Evolutionary Synthesis Center and the University of North Carolina Metadata Research Center. Towards the end of 2011 it celebrated its 1000th data package and its 100th journal. Some of the journals have also integrated their manuscript processing with Dryad, with BMJ Open being the first medical journal to join the ranks of mostly evolutionary biology and ecology journals. All data stored in Dryad uses a Creative Commons zero (CC0) designation, with which data depositors waive all rights to the data.

Peer review: who loses?

While there is never a shortage of debate on peer review in the blogosphere and Twitterverse, an interesting perspective was recently provided by Tim Vines, managing editor of *Molecular Ecology and Molecular Ecology Resources*,

on the Society for Scholarly Publication's Scholarly Kitchen blog (scholarlykitchen.sspnet.org; 8 Dec 2011). Vines discusses the relationship between a journal's acceptance rate and the role of peer review. Authors often struggle to pick the right journals for their paper (either too likely to be rejected, or too likely to be accepted) and may view the peer-review process as a lottery. This places an extra burden on reviewers as the papers are reviewed multiple times until they find their place in the journal hierarchy.

Preparing for publication

The role of publication in research communication may seem fundamental, but for some researchers preparing a research paper is not at all easy. Publishers for Development (Pfd), a joint initiative of the Association of Commonwealth Universities and the International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications (www.inasp.info), recently ran a workshop in Cameroon to help local researchers prepare their work for publication. The workshop was supported by Taylor and Francis/Routledge. The recent Pfd Conference, held in London on 2 December, focused on east and southern Africa, and many of the presentations are available on the Pfd website (<http://www.pubs-for-dev.info/2011-conference>).

Publishing new species online

One interesting aspect of publishing in zoology or botany is the submission of a paper describing a new species. The International Commission of Zoological Nomenclature (ICZN) and the International Code of Botanical Nomenclature require that new species are published in a durable (ie paper) medium in addition to any electronic medium. But with the rise of online-only journals, this requirement looks increasingly problematic. An interesting post on the PLoS ONE blog (blogs.plos.org/everyone; 11 November 2011) describes how that journal arrived at a compromise with ICZN. The resulting agreement, whereby PLoS ONE agrees to make available a printed

and amended version of the relevant paper, has been published on the ICZN website (iczn.org) and within the PLoS ONE author guidelines.

Repository overhaul

JISC, the UK body that advises on digital technology for academia, is working with UK Research Councils to build a next-generation research repository infrastructure. The 'RIO Extension project' will gather requirements from universities, funders and researchers, and aims to provide the education and research sectors with robust repositories that they can use to assess output and impact. There is an 'InfoKit' available at www.jiscinfonet.ac.uk/infokits/repositories.

Post-acceptance queries

What is your journal's policy for post-acceptance queries? PLoS ONE, a journal that has no author proof stage, has described its process on its blog (blogs.plos.org/everyone; 13 December 2011).

Fixing science journalism

It's not difficult to find reports of science or health stories in newspapers that exaggerate or mislead. As science editors, we are well positioned to spot such errors, but how good are we at describing and publicising those errors? An enterprising blogger used an innovative online tool called Prezi (prezi.com) to elegantly illustrate the errors in a story in a UK regional newspaper. The resulting presentation was posted on the Neurobonkers blog (tinyurl.com/ease-news2). As well as acting as an excellent teaching aid, the presentation had an impact: the story was withdrawn from the newspaper's website. But not before it was picked up by two national newspapers, who amended their stories following complaints to the Press Complaints Commission.

FORCE11

Force11 (www.force11.org) is a "virtual community working to transform scholarly communications through advanced use of computers and the Web." The group has

published a manifesto (Improving Future Research Communication and e-Scholarship; available at www.force11.org/force-11-publications) and maintains databases of relevant blogs and publications.

From blog to article

Many blogging scientists use the WordPress platform, and now they can also use WordPress to write and publish scientific papers. Annotum (annotum.org), launched in November 2011, is an open-source, open-access WordPress theme that enables users to define a post as an article (as opposed to a blog post) that also has internal structure. Furthermore, it uses the National Library of Medicine's standard XML format. The theme also allows multiple authors and different contributor roles. Future versions may support revisions and collaborative writing.

Living reviews seek funds

The SciFund Challenge (scifund.wordpress.com) was an experiment in attracting science funding by crowdsourcing: using social media and tools to directly engage with (and obtain funds from) the public. It raised over \$75,000 during November 2011. One of the projects is a proposal to create 'living review' articles that would be updated directly with data obtained directly as research proceeds, without an intermediate publication stage. There is (much) more detail at tinyurl.com/ease-news8.

How to retract?

The Retraction Watch blog (retractionwatch.wordpress.com) has highlighted what it says could be a model retraction. The retracted paper ("The cellular source for APOBEC3G's incorporation into HIV-1") was published in January 2011 in the journal *Retrovirology*, published by BioMedCentral. The retraction notice appeared in December 2011 and relates to the inappropriate use of figures in the paper. Having been informed of the error by colleagues, the journal's editor raised the issue with the author, who confirmed the errors and apologised to all concerned.

While this may be a benign retraction informed by post-publication feedback, sometimes retractions can be spurred by a different sort of feedback. The same blog tells the story of a retraction from the American Journal of Obstetrics & Gynecology (AKA "the Gray Journal"). The retraction notice cited several reasons, including the author failing to "disclose a potential financial conflict of interest with a manufacturer of pregnancy tests", and a lack of "credible scientific reason given for conducting the study". The retraction followed a request from a lawyer representing another manufacturer of pregnancy tests. It's a long and complex story that reveals a far from model retraction, but it is well worth a read for any journal editors dealing with financial conflicts of interest.

Binary Battle winner

The Public Library of Science (PLOS; www.plos.org) and Mendeley (www.mendeley.com) have announced the winners of their Binary Battle (dev.mendeley.com/api-binary-battle): a challenge for developers to come up with innovative ideas for more open and collaborative research. The top prize went to openSNP (opensnp.org), with additional prizes for PaperCritic (papercritic.com) and rOpenSci (ropensci.org). Competitors were given access to the two companies' APIs, giving them access to social and demographic information about research. OpenSNP is a "community-driven platform for publicly sharing genetic information". The aim is to allow crowdsourcing of associations between genetic traits and their physical manifestations. The Mendeley blog (www.mendeley.com/blog) features an interview with the openSNP team.

Two new CONSORT extensions

The CONSORT statement (www.consort-statement.org) on improving the quality of reporting of randomised controlled trials (RCTs) was first published in 1995, with updates and extensions since then. Two new extensions were announced by the CONSORT Executive in December

2011. The first, which covers the reporting of health-related quality of life outcomes, is being co-developed with the International Society for Quality of Life Research, the MRC Midland Hub for Trials Methodology Research, and the MRC ConDuCT Hub for Trials Methodology Research in collaboration with journal editors, policy makers and patient representatives. A consensus meeting was held in London in January 2012. The second extension, for reporting RCTs of social interventions, is a collaboration with the Centre for Evidence Based Intervention at the University of Oxford and the Centre for Outcomes Research and Effectiveness at University College London.

Predatory publishers?

A list of 'predatory, open-access publishers' maintained by Jeffrey Beall, a librarian at the University of Colorado, USA, as a guide for researchers and those involved in research evaluation, provoked a lengthy debate on what distinguishes a predatory journal from a 'legitimate' journal. Beall's aim was to identify publishers that use mass mailing techniques, have poor or non-existent peer review, and unsustainable business models. Can you guess which publishers feature on the current list? You can read the list and the subsequent debate on Beall's blog (metadata.posterous.com/83235355). One publisher that has come under fire from Beall and others is OMICS Publishing Group (omicsonline.org). In a revealing interview by Richard Pounder (tinyurl.com/ease-news3), the head of OMICS responds to complaints of mass mailing and accusations of 'borrowing' journal names from other publishers, as well as publishing an article that should never have passed peer review.

Scholarly societies and OA

'How many scholarly societies publish OA journals, and how many OA journals do they publish?' is the question addressed by an updated report from Caroline Sutton of the Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association (OASPA; www.oaspa.org).

org) and Peter Suber of the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC; www.arl.org/sparc). Sutton and Suber found 530 societies publishing 616 full OA journals, and have made their data available for anyone to add or edit (tinyurl.com/ease-news4).

ISBNs for digital books

If an ebook is republished in a different digital format then made available to a retailer to rent, would either step require a new ISBN to be assigned? This is just one of the issues addressed by a new policy statement from the Book Industry Study Group (BISG). The statement (Best Practices for Identifying Digital Products) is available on the BISG website (bisg.org) and is primarily for North America, with endorsements from the US National Information Standards Organisation and the Independent Book Publishers Association.

HTML5 and EPUB3

How much do you know about HTML5 and EPUB3? The first is a developing markup language with better support for multimedia and graphical content, and the second is the latest iteration of an ebook standard, but they are both central to the future development of digital publishing, with EPUB3 designating HTML5 as the language to be used for ebooks. You can read more (and download free ebooks) about both on the O'Reilly Radar blog (tinyurl.com/ease-news5).

DIY article metrics

Google Scholar Citations (scholar.google.com/citations) is a new way for authors to track their own citation metrics. Authors can identify their own articles by selecting from groups identified statistically from a Google Scholar search then calculate their h-index, i-10 index and total citations. The metrics can be automatically updated and reviewed manually, and you can make your profile public if you wish.

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Renewing the Hungarian research network

The Hungarian Academy of Sciences is not only a traditional learned society, it also runs a network of research institutes employing about 15% of Hungarian researchers. This research network produces about one-third of all Hungarian scientific results, mainly in basic and partly in applied research. In spite of the network's relatively good performance at the national level, by 2011 it became evident that it was in need of a complete renewal, as it had not changed much since the 1970s (when it was established) other than gradual fragmentation and ageing.

In May 2011, re-elected President of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences József Pálkás (a physicist and former Minister of Education) announced his strategic plan for the renewal of the Academy's research network. The first phase was realized over seven months: on 1 January 2012, the 38 research institutes and 2 research centres were replaced by 10 research centres and 5 research institutes. The forthcoming two years will see some more structural changes and a "disciplinary fine-tuning". During this second phase, the renewed institutes and centres will develop their own respective strategies while strengthening the overall infrastructure of the entire institute network. Research will be conducted in a more cost-effective, strategy-driven way in a bid to achieve excellence, sustainability and competitiveness.

What is happening nowadays at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences is considered a timely structural change, one worth emulating by other sectors of Hungarian society as well.

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EASE MEMBERSHIP NEWS

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(More information on page 12)