News Notes

NewsNotesarecompiledbyJohn Hilton (hilton.john@gmail.com)

Some of these items are taken from the EASE Journal Blog (http://esebookshelf.blogspot. com) where full URLs may be found

Peer review debate

In April, a panel debate titled 'Peer Review is broken, how do we fix it?' was held at City University, London, UK. It was organised by a group of science journalists who run the Peer Review Watch blog (peerreviewwatch. wordpress.com). The event attracted a wide following on Twitter (see tinyurl. com/ease-news28) and some of the sessions are captured on the blog website. The resulting discussions are a stimulating overview of the current status of peer review.

ACS ChemWorx

ACS ChemWorx (acschemworx.acs. org) is a new "research management and storage system that combines reference discovery and management, professional networking, group and task management and manuscript preparation in a single interface" specially designed for researchers working in chemical sciences. The free resource, developed by the American Chemical Society, aims to bring together the key things researchers need to prepare articles. And what about editing? Well the resource also offers standard and premium English editing services, both at a cost.

OA in the UK

The UK government has confirmed its support of Gold open access (OA) as it seeks to implement the findings of the Finch Report (www. researchinfonet.org/finch). David Willets, the Minister for Universities and Science, noted that publication cost was a valid use of research funding and urged publishers and other parties to work together to develop a sustainable approach. The UK's position is in contrast to the support for Green OA shown by some other countries. The four UK higher education funding bodies (www.hefce.ac.uk; March 2014) have also issued a policy explicitly linking public access with research evaluation. And one of the largest research funders, the Wellcome Trust, has detailed its expenditure on article-processing charges (see blog.wellcome.ac.uk; 28 March). The organisation spent a total of £3.9 million for 2126 articles in 2012-2013.

New form for DOAJ

The Directory of Open Access Journals (doaj.org) has issued a revised application form for journals wishing to be listed (doaj.org/ application/new). The publication of the new form coincides with new inclusion criteria and a new process for reviewing applications. Journals already listed in DOAJ will have until the end of the year to provide additional information.

LIBRE: open peer review platform

After some delays, a prototype of Open Scholar's LIBRE peer review platform has been made available for testing. LIBRE is a free, online system that facilitates an "author-guided open peer review process" (www.openscholar.org.uk/libre). It is designed to be implemented at any time during an article's lifecycle, and uses open metrics to enable users to explore options to construct indices.

Stem cell paper attracts controversy

Post-publication peer review showed its strength in February following the publication of a paper in *Nature* (2014;505:641) detailing a process for the creation of stem cells using an acid bath. Concerns about apparently duplicated images in the paper were raised on blogs and on the PubPeer site (pubpeer. com), and there was further concern about other alleged irregularities and the lack of reproducibility. The researchers' institution, the RIKEN Center for Developmental Biology (CDB) in Kobe, Japan, responded quickly, finding two unintentional mistakes and four other issues, still under investigation. *Nature News* (18 March) and the Science Exchange blog (blog.scienceexchange.com; 15 March) report on the confusion surrounding the article's status, with the authors considering a retraction.

New megajournals

Two new megajournals were announced in recent months. *Royal Society Open Science* is, as the name suggests, a broad open-access science journal from the Royal Society (royalsocietypublishing. org/royal-society-open-science). *Science Advances* is a sister journal to Science. There's more in *Science* (2014;343:709). Both journals will accept papers rejected from the publishers' other journal. Are megajournals risky publication venues? A blog by the Impact Story team explains how to avoid the perceived dangers (blog.impactstory. com; 3 April).

OA Button 2

The student team behind the Open Access Button, the browser bookmarklet that enables users to log and annotate encounters with journal paywalls, have announced plans for a second version of the button, to be released in late 2014, and have started a crowdfunding campaign to raise funds (blog.openaccessbutton.org; 22 April 2014).

Joint Declaration of Data Citation Principles

FORCE11's Data Citation Synthesis Group has published a joint declaration of data citation principles following a broad collaborative development process. The principles are available on the FORCE11 website (www.force11.org/datacitation) and are intended to embed good practice in the citation of data in any publication. Interested parties are encouraged to use and endorse the principles.

JournalGuide, Journalysis, JournalMap

Three new resources aim to help authors navigate the extensive landscape of journals. JournalGuide (www.journalguide.com) was developed by Research Square, and is a way for authors to find a suitable venue for their research. It is limited to biomedical fields at present and encourages authors to comment on their experiences with particular journals. This latter aspect is more explicitly addressed by Journalysis (journalysis.org), a free service developed by a researcher at Bangor University. The idea is that authors can access a database of journals and post reviews of their experiences and read those of others. Finally, JournalMap (www.journalmap.org) is a search engine that enables geographic (location and biophysical) mapping of research articles alongside keywords.

Keeping updated on ethics

Wiley has published a second edition of its Best Practice Guidelines on Publishing Ethics (exchanges.wiley.com/ethicsguidelines). The free guidelines include resources from the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) and other organisations. In March, COPE held its European seminar in Brussels, Belgium, and you can read more in the April edition of *COPE Digest: Publication Ethics in Practice* (publicationethics.org/cope-newsletter). Also in April a special issue of *Euroscientist* journal was devoted to ethics in science research, with a European perspective. See euroscientist.com/ethics.

Open Science: the book

Ever wondered what open science is, and what it could be? *Opening Science – The Evolving Guide on How the Internet is Changing Research, Collaboration and Scholarly Publishing* is a new book that aims to open the door on this topic. It is available for free at www.openingscience.org, and you can read more about the project on the Impact of Social Sciences blog (blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences; 19 Feb 2014)

Reporting guideline initiative

A collaboration of 28 major rehabilitation and disability journals is aiming to improve research reporting standards through adoption of reporting guidelines. The journals will require authors and reviewers to use relevant reporting guidelines when working on any manuscript submitted to any of the journals. The ultimate aim is to improve the evaluation and clinical applicability of published findings. There are more details on the EQUATOR Network site (www.equator-network.org)

More stings and retractions

A French computer scientist, Cyril Labbé, identified a series of published articles composed by the SCIgen software, which generates superficially convincing but nonsense scientific articles. As a result, the publishers IEEE and Springer are dealing with over 100 nonsense papers published in peer-reviewed conference proceedings between 2008 and 2013. Springer intends to remove the articles rather than retract them, because they were nonsense, not misleading or inaccurate. Meanwhile, the "worst science paper ever" has been created by Tom Spears, a journalist with the *Canadian National Post* newspaper (nationalpost.com; 23 April 2014). The nonsense paper was submitted to 18 'predatory' journals, only two of which turned it down, and one of which offered Spears a place on the editorial board.

Elsevier under pressure

Elsevier has been under scrutiny from academics who have noticed that some articles available on the ScienceDirect platform are behind a paywall despite being open access. Elsevier blamed technology problems and has committed to reimburse anyone affected. Problems apparently continue on a few articles. A summary of the events can be read on the Techdirt blog (techdirt.com; 21 March 2014). More recently, Sir Timothy Gowers, a Fields medallist based at Cambridge University, has been contacting major universities in the UK to uncover the financial

details of their licensing arrangements with Elsevier, and has blogged about the topic in depth (gowers.wordpress.com; 24 April 2014).

Citation analysis of data sets

Data curation can sometimes be undervalued as a scientific activity, simply because it traditionally doesn't result in 'publication'. This devaluation may undermine moves to share and cite data in scientific publications. Where is the incentive to curate research data? A recent study published in *PLOS One* (2014;9:e92590) explores the bibliometric impact of curated and accessible data sets archived at the UK National Oceanographic Data Centre. The datasets were highly cited, although in inconsistent formats, suggesting researchers should curate their research data so that bibliometric impact can be measured.

SHARE

The Shared Access Research Ecosystem (SHARE; tinyurl.com/ease-news29) is "a higher education and research community initiative to ensure the preservation of, access to, and reuse of research outputs". It's a joint initiative of the Association of Research Libraries, the Association of American Universities, and the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities. In February, the project launched its notification system plan, which details steps to ensure that scholarly research outputs are "discovered and built upon in a manner that facilitates and accelerates the research process." The aim is to develop robust repository, discovery and aggregation systems to accommodate publications and data, and to encourage innovative use of the holdings.

John Hilton
Editor, Cochrane Editorial Unit,
Cochrane Collaboration, London, UK
hilton.john@gmail.com