

News notes

NewsNotes are compiled by John 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.

Retractions news

Following the retraction of three papers found to include fabricated data, the editor of one of the papers has expressed his frustration at the time and effort spent working on the paper. The editor, Willem van Schalk, edited the paper for *PLOS One*. The Retraction Watch blog (retractionwatch.com; 11 July 2014) reports van Schalk's experiences, noting that it was difficult to spot the fabrication even in hindsight.

At a recent Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) forum (23 September 2014), the topic for discussion was a proposed standard retraction form. The form, available to download from the COPE website (publicationethics.org/resources/discussion-documents), was suggested by an ex-Editor in Chief of *European Science Editing*, Hervé Maissonneuve. Studies of retractions have found that retraction reports often lack clear explanations.

In an article in *Lab Times* (labtimes.org; 16 September 2014), Retraction Watch founders Adam Marcus and Ivan Oransky ask whether journals should be penalised for retractions. They say, "Clearly, if a paper is retracted, no matter what excuses journals make, peer review didn't work as well as it could have." Marcus and Oransky also propose that journals accrue "reputation points" for clear retraction notices, raising awareness and quick responses.

Retraction Watch (8 July and 14 July 2014) reported on the unearthing of another peer review "ring", creating false identities of peer reviewers to manipulate the editorial process. Following an investigation, the *Journal of Vibration and Control*

retracted 60 articles by Peter Chen from National Pingtung University of Education, Taiwan. The publisher, SAGE, identified 130 possible fraudulent email addresses, and the scandal resulted in the resignation of Taiwan's education minister, Chiang Wei-ling, a co-author on some of the retracted articles.

New journals

The Royal Society has launched *Royal Society Open Science* (rsos.royalsocietypublishing.org), a new, fast, open access journal. As with other broad-based open access journals, RSOS enables easy transfer from the organisation's other journals, article-level metrics, and CC-BY licencing. The Royal Society is waiving article processing charges and publication fees for early submissions.

A forthcoming new open-access journal from the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), the publisher of *Science*, has been criticised in an open letter by a group of 115 researchers, who say the journal's business model would undermine the principles of open access and dissemination of knowledge. The journal, *Science Advances*, is due to launch in 2015. The letter (published on various websites, and reported in the *New Statesman*; newstatesman.com, 29 August 2014) questions the high article-processing charges and relatively restrictive licensing options. The AAAS states that the business model is necessary to support the journal sustainably.

Overleaf

WriteLaTeX has received investment from Digital Science (www.digital-science.com), the company behind Figshare and Readcube, to support the development of Overleaf (www.writelatex.com/overleaf), a collaborative science platform. Overleaf is a simple manuscript editor with real-time collaboration that enables co-authors to automatically create structured, typeset articles. You can read more on the WriteLaTeX

blog (www.writelatex.com/blog; 23 July 2014).

Text recycling guidelines

New guidelines on text recycling developed by BioMedCentral in collaboration with the COPE were published on the COPE website in August (publicationethics.org/resources/guidelines). The guidelines were developed with input from COPE members at a COPE forum.

Nature Communication goes OA

Nature Publishing Group's multidisciplinary online journal *Nature Communications* (www.nature.com/ncomms) has converted to full open access. The journal, launched in 2010 as a "hybrid" subscription/open access journal, is now offering various licencing options, with CC BY 4.0 as default, and article processing charge waivers are available. The move has enabled Nature Publishing Group to join the Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association.

Software Discovery Index

The US National Institutes of Health's "Big Data to Knowledge" (BD2K) initiative (bd2k.nih.gov), launched in 2012, aims to find ways to overcome barriers in harvesting information from biomedical big datasets. A workshop in May 2014 explored one particular challenge: how to locate, cite, and reuse biomedical software. A report of the workshop is now available at softwarediscoveryindex.org and includes many proposals and implications for journals and editors.

New ways to discover content

Paperity (paperity.org) describes itself as "the first multidisciplinary aggregator of open access journals and papers". A small start-up company founded by Marcin Wojnarski, affiliated with the University of Warsaw, Paperity aims to aggregate 100% of open access literature across all fields of research and is seeking the support of journals.

Sparrho (sparrho.com) is a new service that aggregates and

recommends scientific papers and resources based on keywords and user feedback. The idea is that you supply keywords, then go through the search results, identifying them as relevant or irrelevant, thus refining the search strategy. A news feed then keeps you updated.

European scientists protest

In October, thousands of scientists across Europe took part in protests against research budget cuts, reported *New Scientist* (news scientist.com; 20 October 2014). This followed the publication of an open letter to governments and the European Union drawing attention to “the crucial contribution of a strong research sector to the economy”. The letter is published at openletter.euroscience.org, and a blog post (blog.euroscientist.com) describes *Homo scientificus europaeus*, an endangered species.

New at Learned Publishing

A special open access issue of the Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers’ journal, *Learned Publishing*, focused on data publishing. The issue, available at www.ingentaconnect.com/content/alpsp/lp, includes seven articles covering the key topics in the area. This issue was published with the support of Wiley and guest edited by Alice Meadows and Dr Fiona Murphy from Wiley. EASE Council member, Pippa Smart, is the new interim Editor in Chief of *Learned Publishing*.

Rich citations

PLOS has developed an enriched citation format, with the aim of better distinguishing between the various functions served by citations and better mapping of citations across the literature. PLOS aims to enrich citations with “...detailed information about the citing paper, the cited object, and the relationship between the two.” They will also be in human- and machine-readable format under an open license. You can read more at blogs.plos.org/tech; 22 October 2014 and explore the way it works for PLOS papers at alpha.richcitations.org.

Indexing and impact services: beware

Several companies offering a range of dubious or bogus “impact factor” and indexing services have been highlighted on the Scholarly Open Access blog (scholarlyoa.com) in recent months. Of course there are many legitimate and respected services, so it pays to do some research before choosing where to index and how to measure the impact of a journal.

How to make more published research true

In 2005, *PLOS Medicine* published a very highly cited paper by John Ioannidis from Stanford University, USA, titled “Why most published research findings are false” (2005;2(8):e124). Now, Ioannidis has published a follow up titled “How to make more published research true” (*PLOS Medicine* 2014;11(10):e1001747). In the paper, Ioannidis highlights the need to adopt multiple practices that improve credibility in specific fields, to rigorously evaluate interventions to improve research, to understand the motivations of stakeholders, and to change the reward systems for science.

New article type in eLife

The journal *eLife* has introduced a new article type called Research Advances. The aim is to allow authors to publish “significant additions” to their articles as separate publications. An editorial in the journal explains the concept in more depth (2014;3:e03980), outlining how the additions could include new techniques or methods that strengthen, refine or challenge the original findings. Research Advances will usually be peer-reviewed by the same reviewers that worked on the original paper.

ImpactStory changes approach

ImpactStory (impactstory.org) is an independent altmetrics service that aims to give researchers a convenient showcase for their scholarly output and its impact (“Your CV, but better”). In August the previously free service moved to a subscription model. Alongside this change are some new

features. The site has been redesigned to make it more customisable, and you can now share articles, slides and other content directly via ImpactStory alongside the metrics. These changes are described in the ImpactStory blog (blog.impactstory.org), which also provides insights into the broader issues around altmetrics and what you can do with them.

COASP reports

The sixth Conference on Open Access Scholarly Publishing (COASP), organised by the Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association (OASPA; oaspa.org) was held at UNESCO in Paris in September 2014. Sessions at the meeting explored the diverse roads taken to open access and open communication, and some of the innovative progress made in tackling the details while acknowledging the significant barriers that remain. A report of the meeting by Mark Patterson, executive director of *eLife*, was published in *Research Information* (researchinformation.info; 19 October 2014), and you can watch all the presentations on the OASPA website (oaspa.org/conference).

ICSU endorses OA

On 2nd September, the International Council for Science (ICSU) issued a statement endorsing open access and providing recommendations for guarding against misuse of metrics when evaluating scholarly output. ICSU, which represents national scientific bodies and international scientific unions, sets out five key goals for open access (no financial barriers for researchers, no financial barriers for users, no restrictions on reuse, quality assurance, and archiving) and 12 recommendations to help achieve the goals. The full report, titled “Open access to scientific data and literature and the assessment of research by metrics”, is available on the ICSU website (www.icsu.org/publications)

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