
Reports of Meetings

Science for a better life

EuroScience Open Forum, ESOF 2008, Barcelona, 18-22 July

The Euroscience Open Forum (www.euroscience.org/esof.html) was launched a few years ago as a new concept in science conferences: it comprises a forum for discussion of topical issues, an embedded conference (with an exhibition) to showcase European achievements right across the scientific and technological spectrum, and an outreach programme.

The scientific publication game

Mercè Piqueras suggested that EASE should participate, and we agreed to organise an outreach activity and a practical workshop for young scientists, in collaboration with Mediterranean Editors and Translators.

The outreach session was based on a board game, “Get Peered”, devised by Tom Jefferson, Karen Shashok, and Elizabeth Wager and published in the *BMJ* (2003;327:1439-41). Reme Melero and Paola de Castro adapted it so that it could be played on a big screen with participants from our audience. There are four players, representing scientists who are trying to publish their research. They throw dice, then move around the board, landing on squares that speed their progress (sleeping with the journal’s editor, for example) or hinder it (being refereed by an enemy who rejects the paper and may even plagiarise it). Each square is cleverly illustrated by Malcolm Willett, who kindly gave us permission to use his cartoons. When a player lands on a square, the underlying “message” is explained by an EASE member – although salami slicing your paper and obtaining multiple publications for one piece of work advances you in the game, it is bad practice and should be discouraged.

Unfortunately, the entire outreach session was poorly attended, but this gave us a chance to practise playing the game live in multiple languages, with the help of some students. Originally, we had planned a different activity for the workshop, based on the concept of writing a science paper as a puzzle; however, we decided to have another session of “Get Peered”, and this was far more successful. About 20 young scientists and a few older ones attended and most were persuaded to step up to throw the giant dice, then be rewarded with a certificate from Reme.

The game was certainly fun and has potential as a learning activity as well as some light-hearted entertainment. We’re hoping to organise a session in Pisa, and expect some lively debate about the ethics of publication – see you there.

Science journalism

ESOF 2008 also comprised some hundred scientific sessions, including a series on communicating science. The publicity of exaggerated claims such as cold fusion is essentially a loss of objectivity, science’s basic value, argued the German philosopher Marc Dressler in “Ethics in science journalism”. However, when criteria are absent we must rely

on consensus, and when consensus is lacking we resort to the majority standpoint.

Freedom – the ability to refrain – is the prerequisite of morality, as illustrated by the German historian Christian Förster in his talk on German scientists during the Nazi regime. Researchers will use any opportunities if they promise more influence and success, whatever the moral price of their research: all cooperation with the regime was voluntary, not forced.

From the United States, James Cornell reported that only 11% of Americans can name a role model scientist, usually Al Gore and Bill Gates. Science journalists can easily become uncritical “loudspeakers” and neglect negative aspects, and journalists who are dependent on official information, such as from NASA, are most likely to trumpet their masters’ views. At the other end of the spectrum, critical journalists identify themselves with the activist community.

Russian science journalist Viola Egikova gave similar examples from the former Soviet Union. The communist regime boasted about its scientific achievements, and both scientists and journalists joined in, which is why false science was so abundant in the Soviet media. Censorship was more threatening than in Nazi Germany.

In “The pressures on reporting research” Peter Marsh identified that some people enjoy getting upset by what they read, so stimulating the need for sensation. He also argued that Europeans have the right of access to accurate scientific information. Paradoxically, as Peter Reader pointed out, researchers fear that their science is trivialised by the one-liners in science communication, but most researchers can themselves describe the essence of their research in one or two sentences. And scientists associated with governments and industry are not trusted by the public, whereas those associated with NGOs and universities are (*Science* 2008;321:204-5).

Also interesting was the X-change on most evenings, organised by the British Council, where Sue Nelson interviewed some high-profile speakers. Nobel Laureate and rebel Richard Roberts, for example, found that all the Nobel laureates he had polled were aged under 40 when they made their prize-winning discoveries.

But by far the most remarkable statement came from UK television doctor Ben Goldacre: “The world needs fewer science writers and more editors.”

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Towards a new information space – innovations and renovations

11th European Conference of Medical and Health Libraries, Helsinki, Finland, 23–28 June 2008

The European Association for Health Information and Libraries (EAHIL), which organized this conference, is a professional association of librarians and information specialists working in health and medical science libraries all over Europe. EAHIL's mission is to encourage professional development and promote cooperation and the exchange of experiences within its members. It has more than 1000 members in over 30 European countries and many other countries worldwide.

The scientific programme of the Conference – which was held at the impressive Finlandia Hall designed by the Finnish master architect Alvar Aalto and attended by more than 420 health professionals – was intense and stimulating. The first two days were dedicated to CEC courses, and over the next four days, plenary and parallel sessions took place, a variety of relevant topics were examined, and a broad range of high-quality oral and poster presentations were delivered, giving both participants and teachers a great opportunity to discuss and to learn and also to strengthen their relations with colleagues and friends.

From paper to virtual

The evolution from print to electronic has affected the whole scientific community, causing drastic changes not only in the publishing of science literature and – broadly – in the dissemination of information, but in medical and health libraries and information and documentation services as well. Editors, publishers, librarians, and information professionals have all had to adjust their roles to the new user's needs and behaviours. Traditional services had to be renewed, new features implemented, and, most of all, new information spaces created. The title of this conference represented well the challenges that health libraries have had to face, moving rapidly towards a new information space by innovation (for instance, through the use of new web-based tools and technologies with Web 2.0 elements) and renovation (services, resources, organisation, workflow, physical environments).

Libraries' holdings and print collections are diminishing drastically, as is the on-site presence of researchers, students, and clinicians who can more easily access journals from their own desktops. Core collections are available via intranet in most research institutes, academies, and hospitals, and expensive online subscriptions are regularly paid each year by most health libraries. "It is the virtual world of cyberspace and the digital sources on the global internet that now dominate the medical information sources," said

Suzanne Bakker, EAHIL President, in the opening address of the conference.

If the information environment is exploding thanks to the bewildering developments in information and communications technology (ICT), the libraries' physical spaces – once collection-centered – will soon have to be completely redesigned to capture the interest of the new generation of users. They'll have to become "new theatres of learning", pointed out Heather Todd, University of Queensland Library, Brisbane. "Libraries used to be designed for librarians, keepers of knowledge ... now they include cafés, a mix of individual, group and casual seating; have wireless access, computer zones, interactive display areas, multimedia booths, laptop powered lockers and so on."

Libraries and social networking

Not only will libraries need to be re-spaced (opening up their fortress-like appearance), they will also need to be spaced-up by implementing various types of social networking, as pointed out by Guus van den Brekel, Central Medical Library, Groningen, The Netherlands, in his presentation. Virtual communities and virtual libraries; virtual communities and collaborative practices; virtual communities and changing information services were the titles of three of the many parallel sessions. Mobile applications such as mobile web 2.0 access to content or PDA (personal digital assistant) services were examined in a dedicated session. Other subjects discussed during the conference included evidence-based practice (the role of the librarian as a facilitator) and education and professional development (the role of the librarian as research collaborator).

The best oral and poster presentations of the conference will be published in the August issue of the *Journal of the European Association for Health Information and Libraries (JEAHIL)*, and the proceedings of the conference are available online on the EAHIL website (www.eahil.net) This site should be visited regularly not only by librarians and information professionals but also by anyone interested in "innovations and renovations" involving the scientific communities at different levels.

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EASE-Forum Digest: December 2007 to March 2008

You can join the forum by sending the one-line message "subscribe ease-forum" (without the quotation marks) to majordomo@helsinki.fi. Be sure to send commands in plain text format because only plain text is accepted by the forum software – HTML-formatted messages are not recognised. More information can be found on the EASE web site (www.ease.org.uk). When you first subscribe, you will be able to receive messages, but you won't be able to post messages until your address has been added manually to the file. This prevents spam being sent by outsiders, so please be patient.

Where to begin writing a paper?

Mary Ellen Kerans had noticed that young non-native speakers of English in Spain started writing their papers with the methods section. Was this widespread or a practice used by non-native speakers because the language of the methods section is easier? Most forum participants favoured starting with the methods. Carol Norris reported that her students in Finland first wrote a rough abstract, then the tables and figures (usually belonging to the results), before going on to the methods. James Hartley did not think the order in which scientific papers are written could be specified. He had started with the introduction in both the articles he was currently writing. The last steps would be finalizing the working title and the references, and writing the abstract. Others also felt that the abstract should be left until last.

Every case is different, Will Hughes agreed. He thought the sections of the paper should be written in the reverse order to that in which they appear. Researchers should start by thinking about what kind of conclusions they wish to draw. He presumed they will have done the work and read the literature before they start writing.

Returning and tailoring papers

Margaret Cooter guided the "where to begin" discussion to how strict journals are about sending back papers that violated their "instructions to authors" and how much authors change their papers to fit the journal they are submitting to. Sylwia Ufnalska supposed that journals receiving a large number of submissions would be more likely than less popular journals to return manuscripts that violated their instructions. "Hazardous" was the word used by James Hartley for the practice of resubmitting the same article to another journal without adjusting the paper to the "new" journal's style or making changes consequent upon reviewer's comments.

Alas, instructions to authors do not make good "bedtime" reading. Helle Goldman of *Polar Research* bemoaned that their carefully crafted instructions are ignored, despite the journal's receptiveness to feedback from contributors and attempts to tailor instructions to avoid more of the aberrations frequently found in submitted manuscripts. Nevertheless the journal's practice was to point out problems with format and presentation after the reviewers' comments were in, rather than to return manuscripts at the outset. Helle did think it was pushing things a bit far when the covering letter sported the name of the previous journal to which the manuscript had been submitted.

The ophthalmology journals Diana Epstein manages immediately return manuscripts which do not comply with their instructions for correction. She added that the

same reviewer might be invited to review by the "new" journal and then the reviewer might not be amused to see that none of the suggestions made had been implemented. She was aware, however, that the American Academy of Ophthalmology considered reviewers have the right to refuse to review a paper they had seen before. In my view a reviewer has an ethical obligation rather than a right to refuse to review again for another journal, although finding an alternative reviewer could be problematic where there were only a few experts in a field.

Andrew Davis wrote that whether the journals he had been associated with returned papers without review would depend on how interesting the topic was and whether the authors could reasonably be expected to put in the work to bring the paper into line with the instructions. He also mentioned that at a recent Elsevier seminar, resubmission of unchanged manuscripts had been identified as the biggest problem facing journals.

Vivienne Mawson had been following the debate in the hope that it would evolve into a discussion about how editors could guide wayward creatures (ie authors) into better ways. Could editors agree, for example, on the use of italics, how papers should be cited in text, and the formatting of references? If copy editors did not have to waste time over such niggly matters they would have more time to improve readability. Mary Ellen Kerans thought that the effect of journals cutting back on serious copyediting was that whereas one could once be confident that journal copyeditors would impose style, now authors are taking more and more responsibility for journal style.

How plagiarism is found and handled

Mary Ellen Kerans asked editorial board editors if their manuscript editors notified them of plagiarism in articles that they had accepted. She also asked manuscript editors if they noticed plagiarism and, if so, if they notified anyone.

Colette Holden responded that as a freelance editor of books she would occasionally notice plagiarism if she used a sentence or phrase in the manuscript she was editing in a keyword internet search. She always informed her in-house contacts if the sentence or phrase came up as being credited to another author. She acknowledged, however, that the match could be coincidence rather than plagiarism. Aleksandra Golebiowska, who is an in-house editor, also tended to come across plagiarism or unacknowledged quotations when searching phrases online. She notified the managing editor on these occasions.

Cutting and pasting from articles being cited in a manuscript is something Kersti Wagstaff reported she often detected in the manuscripts she copy edits. Frequently the

manuscript will have been written by a “very-non-native-speaker” author (eg Japanese), for whom cutting and pasting is easier than summarizing in different words. Mary Ellen thought many of us would include “cutting and pasting” in the category of more “venial” plagiarism. Her impression was that journals are now less tolerant of copying whole phrases, even when they are referenced to their source, (unless the words are within quotes) than they had been 15 years ago. She thought this was partly because copied phrases make an article stale and unfocused. “Patch writing”, where single-sentence phrases or larger chunks are repeated from elsewhere, she added, needed to be paraphrased to re-focus and contextualize so that the reader’s attention was directed to the newly contributed scientific information. Mary Ellen’s team notify the editorial office when they come across extensive cutting and pasting. In less extensive cases, they handle the problem directly with the author and advise the author how to avoid plagiarism if rewriting is needed. Here she usually “edits out” the plagiarism in one or two sections to show the author the sort of rewriting that is wanted.

The one editorial board editor who contributed to the discussion, Will Hughes, said that it was referees who usually passed suspicions of plagiarism to him. His task as an editor-in-chief was to investigate. He had found that even some apparently blatant cases of verbatim copying had innocent explanations, with genuine mistakes on the part of submitting authors. Therefore, he was cautious where there appeared to be plagiarism and before making allegations would request information about the origin of passages or data in a paper. His journal received 200 new submissions last calendar year and he had cause to investigate 1-3 times a year. In Will’s experience, problems of this nature can be extremely complex, both technically and emotionally, and the sensitivities are very difficult to deal with. He advised that it does not help anyone to launch accusations without first entering into dialogue with the people who appear to have misbehaved.

Can data be used freely, or is permission required from copyright owners?

Authors often use datasets from outside sources in their scientific papers. Some sources are available for anybody to use provided the source is cited (eg data sets from statistical offices), wrote Marcin Kozak, who then asked about other sources such as a book, article, or software. Do you need to obtain permission from the copyright owner to compare known methods in statistics papers? Rhana Pike thought if data sets are published anyone could use the data for reanalysis because it is the form of the presentation that is copyrighted rather than the information contained in the written document. However, copyright may protect “compilations” of information such as catalogues, databases,

dictionaries, directories, and tables, even though individual facts or items in the compilation were not protected.

Pippa Smart illustrated how form rather than content is protected by explaining that no permission would be required if you used only the source data to calculate your own results which you then published, citing the dataset on which you based your analyses. Reproducing source data sets, eg in tables or figures, within your article to illustrate your research would require permission, unless the amount copied was small enough to fall within the “fair use” defence to copyright infringement.

Andrew Davis listed the ways in which data are legally made available to the public and pointed out that illegally obtained data are not free for use; taking photographs of data without the owner’s permission is a growing problem. Another irritation Andrew highlighted is that increasingly data repositories are asking for direct payment for data and hiking up their prices. He felt this problem should be given urgent attention not only because some of the data have been obtained with the support of public funding but also because charging for data hinders comparison between results.

Another iniquity pointed out by Andrew was that coauthorship was increasingly being demanded as a condition for providing data, even though the Vancouver guidelines (www.icmje.org) exclude the mere provision of data as a criteria for authorship. (For the arguments for and against software developers being included as authors see Welker JA and McCue JD. Authorship versus “credit” for participation in research: a case study of potential ethical dilemmas created by technical tools used by researchers and claims for authorship by their creators. *J Am Med Inform Assoc* 2007;14(1):16–18.) Andrew had recently had such an experience requesting DNA sequences. Andrew urged that all scientists adopt Professor David Tilman’s policy: “We’ll never extract everything possible from our data so, after three years from collection, all our data is freely available on our web site.”

Reme Melero drew attention to an Open Access data tool for the much-needed integration of data between different disciplines. The approach borrows from licensing concepts established in the open source movement for developing free computer program software. More information is available at <http://sciencecommons.org/projects/publishing/open-access-data-protocol/>

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The Editors' WebWatch

The Editors' WebWatch is a membership-driven resource guiding editors and writers in the sciences to websites and services of interest. Suggestions for the February issue should be sent to ese.webwatch@gmail.com. We are using the Editor's Bookshelf blog at <http://ese-bookshelf.blogspot.com> to collect entries; contributions are welcome.

OSH links

www.jniosh.go.jp

The Japan International Center for Occupational Safety and Health (OSH), <http://www.jniosh.go.jp/icpro/jicosh-old/english/>, has an excellent website in its own right. It has a link to a map of the world – <http://www.jniosh.go.jp/icpro/jicosh-old/english/links/> – where you can click on the different regions and then the countries, to link up with the OSH bodies in the respective countries.

Open data repository

www.osti.gov/dataexplorer

The US Department of Energy has launched a tool to find scientific data generated in the course of research sponsored by the department in various science disciplines. The data include computer simulations, numerical files, figures and plots, interactive maps, multimedia, and scientific images. The site is intended to be useful to students, the public, and researchers who are new to a discipline or looking for experimental or observational data outside their area of expertise. The search interfaces allow the user to understand, analyse, and use the data in the context of a user's own research.

From the lab

www.lablit.com

LabLit.com is dedicated to real laboratory culture and to the portrayal and perceptions of that culture – science, scientists and labs – in fiction, the media and across

popular culture. The site is intended for non-scientists as well as scientists, and the goal is to inform, entertain, and surprise.

New search engines



www.searchme.com

Searchme.com is an unusual search engine. It's written in Flash and has an iPhone-like interface with pixellated previews of the websites. Is it too unwieldy and graphical to catch on? It does provide OpenSearch (a collection of simple formats for the sharing of search results; <http://www.opensearch.org/>), so you can use it to search straight from your browser.

www.cuil.com/info/

Another new search engine is Cuil, pronounced "cool". This "interesting alternative to Google" has been out since the end of July (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cuil>). The blog reports 50 million searches

on the first day (<http://www.cuil.com/info/blog/>)

Corrupt Word files?

www.openoffice.org
www.repairmyword.com

Most of us have had the experience where Word refuses to load a file, "Open and Repair" doesn't work either, and all you can get in a text editor is stray chunks of the original text separated by reams of nonsense.

I understand that OpenOffice often does the trick for Word 2003 files – it has a different way of parsing them, so it can extract things

Another option is "Repair My Word", which claims to recover text from damaged or corrupt Word files that won't open normally. It says it will repair Microsoft Word 6.0, Word 95, 97, 2000, XP, and 2003 for Windows. GetData, who supply this free, also supply tools for repairing Excel files, zip files and other formats.

New words

www.wordspy.com

Word Spy is a website and mailing list for keeping up with neologisms. Some of them, like "pedestrian scramble", I've actually seen in the wild. And I did laugh at "social networking".

Colin Batchelor
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Thanks to Carole Goldsmith, Alison Clayson, Richard Hurley, Margaret Cooter

News Notes

News Notes are taken from the EASE Journal Blog (<http://ese-bookshelf.blogspot.com>). Please email items for inclusion to Richard Hurley (rhurley@bmj.com), with "News Notes" as the subject.

Publishers pay to deposit research

Publishers, such as Nature Publishing Group (NPG) and Oxford Journals, are meeting the costs of depositing research in open access repositories to help scientists meet the requirements of research funders. The US National Institutes of Health, for example, require research that it funds to be made freely available no later than a year after publication. David Hoole, head of content licensing at NPG, said "Our primary focus is getting the deposit into PubMed Central and UK PubMed Central running smoothly for as many NPG journals as possible." NPG will deposit the manuscript as submitted by the author, but Oxford will deposit the published version. See www.iwr.co.uk (<http://tinyurl.com/4jvngc> and <http://tinyurl.com/523cqp>)

Researchers embrace journalists

More than half of researchers questioned rated their contact with journalists as mostly good, and four out of 10 found media coverage beneficial to their career, a survey reported in *Science* has found (2008;321:204–205). More than two thirds of researchers had contact with the media during a period of three years, and researchers in Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Japan, and the United States had similar numbers of interactions with journalists and were similarly content. The survey dispels the idea that scientists avoid journalists and are disappointed with the way that they communicate science to the public.

Dictionary to drop words

Collins is threatening to drop obscure words from its English dictionary this year because it can't fit them all in. But its ruthlessness is tempered with a touch of clemency – and it's great public relations: it will save any of the words that appear six times in the company's database of recent word

usage in the media. Celebrities have chosen a word to rescue from a list of 24. Andrew Motion, the UK poet laureate, is lobbying for the retention of "skirr," which is the sound that the birds' wings make in flight. And Stephen Fry has chosen "fusby," which means short, stout, or squat. See <http://www.telegraph.co.uk> (<http://tinyurl.com/4v29t6>)



The face of PubMed

The PubMed Faceoff site (www.postgenomic.com/faces) displays PubMed results using a set of human faces, with features determined by the age, citation count, and journal impact factor associated with each paper. You can tell at a glance which papers are new, exciting, and high impact and which are languishing, uncited, and unread. The visualisation uses Chernoff Faces, a technique developed in the 1970s that depends on our ability to detect small differences in the size, shape, and expressions of human faces. Each dimension in a dataset is mapped to a different facial feature: the slant of eyebrows, size of nose, chubbiness of cheeks. See <http://network.nature.com/> (<http://tinyurl.com/42zy97>)

Law demands patients' consent

UK data protection legislation insists that biomedical journals must always have explicit consent to publish medical information about an identifiable living patient, Jane Smith explained in the *BMJ* (2008;337:a1572). Doctors should

ask for consent before they lose touch with patients; alternatively, complete anonymisation might be a solution to not having consent. The *BMJ* used to waive the need for consent occasionally, but has revised its guidelines for authors.

The same issue of the *BMJ* considers the ethics surrounding an article that the *BMJ* rejected because consent had not been obtained that was subsequently published in a different journal. See also www.ico.gov.uk/upload/documents/library/data_protection/practical_application/health_data_-_use_and_disclosure001.pdf

Calling writers on diabetes

The Alliance for European Diabetes Research (www.euradia.org) wishes to draw the attention of the media and freelance journalists to its next press conference, near Frankfurt, Germany, on 26 November. In 2008 the alliance began a two year survey to identify gaps and highlight strengths to devise a strategy for diabetes research in Europe (DIAMAP, www.diamap.eu). The alliance includes the major European diabetes stakeholder organisations and drug companies. EURADIA has been instrumental in highlighting the need for increased and better coordinated funding for diabetes research.

Scientific integrity – on the wall

Justin Bilicki won this year's Science Idol competition, an cartoon contest with the theme of scientific integrity. Twelve of the finalists' cartoons are available as a 2009 calendar from the US Union of Concerned Scientists' website. The union says, "Recent investigations and surveys show that political interference in science has harmed the ability of federal agencies to protect our health, safety, and environment. We are building a foundation to guide the next president in restoring scientific

integrity to federal policy making. The next president and Congress must renew the independence of science at federal government agencies and create a thriving scientific enterprise." See www.ucsusa.org/scientific_integrity/science_idol

US launches open data repository

The US Department of Energy has launched a tool to find scientific data generated in the course of research sponsored by the department in various science disciplines (www.osti.gov/dataexplorer). The data include computer simulations, numerical files, figures and plots, interactive maps, multimedia, and scientific images. The site is intended to be useful to students, the public, and researchers who are new to a discipline or looking for experimental or observational data outside their area of expertise. The search interfaces allow the user to understand, analyse, and use the data in the context of a user's own research. (www.knowledgespeak.com 2008 Jul 4)

Standards versions of articles

Recommendations for describing different versions of journal articles have been released by the National Information Standards Organization in partnership with the Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers. The guidance, from the technical working group, gives "a simple, practical way of describing the versions of scholarly journal articles that typically appear online before, during, and after formal journal publication." The guidelines aim to reduce the problem of multiple versions at different stages of the publication process being available online. The group explored the lifecycle of journal articles to identify common stages that describe the evolution of articles. See www.niso.org/publications/rp/RP-8-2008.pdf

Director and students in dispute

The director of the German Max Planck Institute for Biological Cybernetics has claimed that the journal *Human Brain Mapping* acted incorrectly when it published data taken without permission by research

students, *Nature* reports (2008;454:6–7). He says that the students' interpretation is incorrect, that the paper could mislead the field, and that the journal has denied him a right to reply. The students told *Nature*, "We are confident, and rigorous peer review agreed, that the data are appropriate. ... We stand by the conclusions we made in our paper."



Who does peer review?

Ai Lin Chun, associate editor for *Nature Nanotechnology*, was asked who becomes peer reviewers, in the Nature Network forum. She looks for referees with a good publication record. Most are established academics, but younger researchers recommended by their professors who do a good job might be asked again. "I enjoy referees who provide a thoughtful, well balanced report with suggested improvements for the authors." Timeliness is also important: "We do have a chasing system, but it is certainly not my favourite thing to do." And bad reports don't help, regardless of status: "We feel less enthusiastic in asking them to review again after a few bad occasions." See <http://network.nature.com/groups/nnano/forum/topics/1761>

UN criticises UK libel laws

The United Nations' committee on human rights has attacked UK libel laws for discouraging coverage of matters of public interest: British libel laws have "served to discourage critical media reporting on matters of serious public interest, adversely affecting the ability of scholars and journalists to publish their work, including through the phenomenon known as libel tourism," the committee said. In "libel tourism" wealthy plaintiffs can sue in the High Court in London over articles that

would not warrant an action in their own country. The UK government has been urged to require a would-be claimant to prove malice by a publisher or author. (*Guardian* 2008 Aug 14, www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2008/aug/14/law.unitednation)

Publishers appoint US director

The Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers (ALPSP) has appointed Isabel Czech as Executive Director, North America. Ian Russell, the association's chief executive, explained, "The membership of ALPSP is growing and much of that growth is from members in the United States and Canada. We have created this new position to help support the membership in North America." Czech has spent more than 30 years working in publisher relations at Thomson Scientific, now a part of Thomson Reuters. ALPSP's 350 organizational members in 37 countries publish more than 10,000 journals, about half the world's total. (<http://www.alp.org/>, <http://tinyurl.com/3fdvbw>)

On the Nature of PLoS

A story in *Nature* about the finances of open access journal publisher the Public Library of Science (PLoS) has attracted criticism in the blogosphere. Nature Publishing Group publishes traditional subscription journals, and its news piece has been criticised for lacking objectivity. Declan Butler's story began: "PLoS, the poster child of the open access publishing movement, is ... relying on bulk, cheap publishing of lower quality papers to subsidise its handful of high quality flagship journals." He went on to mention *PLoS One's* approach to peer review and PLoS's use of unpaid staff. A selection of criticisms is at http://scienceblogs.com/clock/2008/07/on_the_nature_of_plos.php

Open access: no more citations

Articles available for free online are no more likely to be cited than articles published in a subscription journal, but online access is greater, a randomized controlled trial has shown (*BMJ* 2008;337:a568). The trial comprised 1619 research articles

and 11 journals published by the American Physiological Society. Fiona Godlee, editor of the *BMJ*, said, "The fact that these initial results suggest open access increases usage but not citations fits with the way in which citations are largely generated by people who already have access to the literature and for whom open access is therefore less of a benefit." (<http://www.iwr.co.uk/>, <http://tinyurl.com/4rep3>)

Long papers get cited more

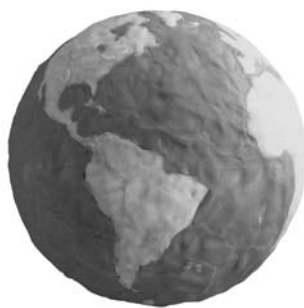
The median number of citations rises with the length of the paper, an analysis of 20,027 peer-reviewed astronomy papers published in 2000–2004 (<http://arxiv.org/abs/0809.0692v1>). On average, 2–3 page articles had six citations, and 50 page articles 50 citations. "I expected that shorter papers would be cited more than longer ones," said Jörg Dietrich, of the European Southern Observatory. "I assumed that people don't have time to read long papers." With the increasing use of citation statistics as indicators of performance, there is a danger that a paper's length might be increased to gain citations. (*Nature* 2008;455:274–275)

"With credit comes responsibility"

The *Lancet* has censured a lead author who claimed honorary authorship as a reason for not overseeing a paper that the journal had to retract. The author's university has accepted this defence even though the author had signed a statement before publication confirming that he had made a substantial intellectual contribution. "Using gift authorship as an excuse for not taking responsibility ... should not be tolerated," the *Lancet* says. The research was retracted after legal and other irregularities became apparent—for example, in the way patient consent was obtained. See the paper (*Lancet* 2007;369:2179–2186), the retraction (2008;372:789), and an editorial about authors' responsibilities (2008;372:778).

Researchers post data online

Some scientists are posting all their research data online as soon as they produce it, in the interests of collaboration and to improve communication, *Nature* reports (2008;455:273). The risks include not being able to publish in a journal – for example, the American Chemical Society doesn't allow prepublication in any form; having data stolen by rivals; and missing out on patents. Using a wiki with time stamps could be a way of showing evidence of priority. In research involving privacy of patients or animal experimentation, data should not be made fully or immediately available.



Latin American journals get boost

The number of Latin American and Caribbean journals indexed in the Web of Science has doubled to 159 after Thomson Reuters changed their selection criteria to get the most influential, regionally important journals in the index. Abel Packer, at the Latin American and Caribbean Center on Health Sciences Information, said, "This notable increase ... matches up the efforts and advocacy that [the centre] has made in the last decades to enhance visibility and accessibility of the scientific production published in ... the region. The increase helps correcting the biases of the international indexes when indexing quality journals in this region." (<http://espacio.bvsalud.org/>, <http://tinyurl.com/5xah45>)

Editing magazine indexed

A complete index to *Editing Matters*, the magazine of the Society for Editors and Proofreaders, and its

predecessors *CopyRight* and *SFEP Newsletter* has been compiled by Christopher Phipps of the Society of Indexers. The index is online at <http://www.sfep.org.uk/pub/mag/index/indexhome.asp>

Nature looks at big data

Marking the 10th anniversary of Google, the 4 September issue of *Nature* focused on big datasets: "As an increasing number of research disciplines are discovering, the vast amounts of data are presenting fresh challenges that urgently need to be addressed." Articles in the issue look at managing petabytes of data, analysis of complex datasets, online community collaborations, and sophisticated techniques for visualization. "The future of science depends [on] cleverness again being applied to data for their own sake, complementing scientific hypotheses as a basis for exploring today's information cornucopia," an editorial concluded. (*Nature* 2008;455:1)

Where are the negative results?

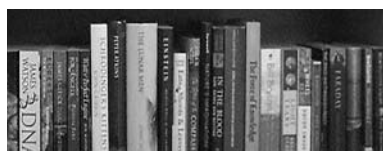
"In their own way, academic journals are exactly as selective as the tabloid health pages," claims doctor and journalist Ben Goldacre in the *Guardian* newspaper on 20 September (<http://tinyurl.com/4lyrq2>). He writes that only 5.9% of industry-sponsored trials on cancer treatment get published and that 75% had positive results. Doctors and academics need all data, positive and negative, to make fully informed decisions about treatment and the direction in which research should go. A comparison of all cancer trials registered in clinicaltrials.gov and published and indexed in PubMed found that only 17.6% of 2028 trials were published, 64.5% with positive results.

Richard Hurley
rhurley@bmj.com

Thanks to Elise Langdon-Neuner, Joan Marsh, and Margaret Cooter, and to the Union of Concerned Scientists for permission to reproduce the cartoon by Justin Bilicki.

The Editor's Bookshelf

We are using the Editor's Bookshelf blog at <http://ese-bookshelf.blogspot.com> to collect entries. You can join the blog by contacting paola.decastro@iss.it. We look forward to your contributions.



EDITORIAL PROCESS

Calow D, Egan R. **Is the answer still in the machine: do publishers need digital rights management?** *Learned Publishing* 2008;21:167–175.

(doi:10.1087/095315108X323857)

The implementation of digital rights management technology in other media sectors provides valuable lessons to publishers. In electronic publishing, digital rights management must form part of a flexible solution to the problem of unauthorized digital reproduction and distribution of copyright works – rather than relying on an academic culture of trust.

Creaser C, Whate S. **Trends in journal prices: an analysis of selected journals, 2000–2006.**

Learned Publishing 2008;21:214–224. (<http://www.lboro.ac.uk/departments/dis/lisu/downloads/op37.pdf>)

Examines overall price, price per page, and price per point of impact factor for institutional subscriptions for biomedical and social science journals for 11 publishers. Prices, and rates of increase, vary considerably. There is some evidence that not-for-profit publishers may, on average, offer better value for money in terms of price per page and price per point of impact factor.

Dray T. **Pat on back is premature.** *APS News* 2008;17(8):4.

(<http://tinyurl.com/3uwymd>)

Comments on letter by WG Unruh and the response of APS to it (*APS News* 17(6):8), in which the editors rebut criticisms that do not appear to have been levelled at the APS, while

completely ignoring the one that was; and calls for public discussion of the conditions that APS still imposes through its copyright practice.

Freese MH. **Copyright decision a matter of principle.** *APS News* 2008;17(8):4. (<http://tinyurl.com/3uwymd>)

Letter commenting on that of WG Unruh (*APS News* 17(6):8), saying some changes in APS copyright language are clearly appropriate; the best principle should be based on the contribution of the author and the journal: the ideas and data should clearly belong to the authors, and the reviewed, edited, laid out, and delivered copy should belong to the community through the journal.

Glasziou P, Meats E, Heneghan C, Shepperd S. **What is missing from descriptions of treatment in trials and reviews?** *BMJ*

2008;336:1472–1474.

(doi:10.1136/bmj.39590.732037.47)

Replicating non-pharmacological treatments depends on how well they have been described in research studies. Current trials and reviews often omit crucial details of treatments, and clinicians need details of how to use treatments tested in trials. Providing some additional details could improve the uptake of trial results in clinical practice.

Landis GA. **Copyright causes conflict of interest.** *APS News* 2008;17(8):4.

(http://www.phy.syr.edu/WhatsNew_files/APS%20Aug08%20Matt%20We st.pdf)

Letter commenting on that of WG Unruh (*APS News* 17(6):8), pointing out that the APS, the organization that usually would be defending the rights of physicists, ought to be outspoken in organizing physicists to keep their rights. But in this case, the

organization is the very organization that is taking the copyright – even though there is no legal requirement for them to do so.

Matarese V. **Relationship between quality and editorial leadership of biomedical research journals: a comparative study of Italian and UK journals.** *PLoS ONE* 2008;3(7):e2512.

(doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0002512)

Several organizations draw up statements guiding the quality of biomedical reporting, but not all journals adhere to these guidelines. Those that follow them demonstrate “editorial leadership” in their author community. In this study, research journals from two European countries were studied and compared to identify a relationship between editorial leadership and journal quality. The data underlying this paper were first presented at the METM07 in Madrid in 2007.

Morris S. **The tiger in the corner.**

Learned Publishing 2008;21:163–165. (doi:10.1087/095315108X323901)

The continuum from research through discussion and preprints to publication is changing: the informal stages are becoming more important and the final, formal stage is being eroded – and the formal role of the journal may become less important. A few publishers have developed new features and tools to fit into researchers’ new working patterns, but most journals may not have the resources for radical development and experimentation, and they may be held back by the innate conservatism of their organizations.

Myers RA. **Fair use protects authors’ rights.** *APS News* 2008;17(8):4.

(<http://tinyurl.com/3uwymd>)

Letter commenting on that of W G Unruh (*APS News* 17(6):8), saying that US copyright law explicitly defines the

fair use limitations on the exclusive rights conferred by the law. Unruh responds that “fair use” is so limited that it would not cover many things authors might expect to be able to do with their own data – indeed it gives the author no more right than any person off the street to use the work.



ETHICAL ISSUES

Achten WMJ. **Science journals have been slow to make themselves audible.** *Nature* 2008;455:590.

(<http://tinyurl.com/4c9nj2>)

Podcasting holds huge potential for visually impaired people and others; listening to scientific articles read aloud could increase readers' concentration and absorption of information. Several newspapers and magazines are offered in podcast form, but the scientific press is lagging behind.

Frank DN. **Don't release other people's data without their consent.** *Nature* 2008;455:589.

(<http://tinyurl.com/4o4t62>)

Letter commenting on *Nature's* report that data photographed during a conference publication were later published without the presenter's consent. The issue is whether the data are released in a fair and representative manner. Biology operates under the implicit, or often explicit, ethic that data presented at meetings are personal communications - publication of which requires formal approval by the originating researchers. Anyway, what is the purpose of reporting incompletely vetted and possibly erroneous experimental results?

Gorman GE. **The plague of plagiarism in an online world.** *Online Information Review* 2008;32(3):297–301.

(<http://tinyurl.com/48w9pn>)

Plagiarism is a long standing, but increasingly problematic, occurrence

in academic writing and publishing and is now easier thanks to the internet technologies. The paper suggests the creation of clearly and fully articulated protocols regarding the nature, context, and penalty for plagiarism.

Gwynne P. **Scientist to appeal misconduct charge.** *Physics World* 2008;21(8):11.

(<http://physicsworld.com/cws/article/news/35112>)

Reports that lawyers for Rusi Taleyarkhan are preparing to appeal the findings of a panel set up by Purdue University that found him guilty of two charges of scientific misconduct: citing a paper by researchers in his own lab as if it were an independent confirmation of his alleged discovery of bubble fusion in 2002, and adding a student who had not contributed to that paper as an author.

Modi P, Hassan A, Teng CJ, Chitwood WRJ. **How many cardiac surgeons does it take to write a research article? Seventy years of authorship proliferation and internationalization in the cardiothoracic surgical literature.** *Journal of Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery* 2008;136:4–6.

(doi:10.1016/j.jtcvs.2007.12.057)

In a sample of 3669 articles published between 1936 and 2006, the mean number of authors per article increased in the three journals surveyed and overall is now about six. Less than 5% of articles have one or two authors; 74% have six or more. Multinational articles made up 12%, having been 0% as recently as 1976. These trends are similar to those in plastic surgery and neurosurgery. In four prestigious American medical journals, mean number of authors increased from 4.5 in 1980 to 6.9 in 2000; in radiology it increased from 2.2 in 1966 to 4.4 in 1991. “Various support personnel, might now be awarded authorship, whereas once they might have been simply acknowledged [and] ‘guest’ or ‘gift’ authorship might be an important contributory factor. Authorship criteria must be respected to maintain ethical standards.”

Noonan BM, Parrish D. **Expressions of concern and their uses.** *Learned Publishing* 2008;21:209–213.

(doi:10.1087/095315108X 288857)

How should editors communicate with their readers after an allegation of research misconduct has been made about a published article? Some use an “expression of concern” to inform readers of a potential problem. This is a tool for ensuring the integrity of the research record during what may be a long misconduct investigation; policies regarding its use are needed.

Schwitzer G. **How do US journalists cover treatments, tests, products, and procedures? An evaluation of 500 stories.** *PLoS Medicine* 2008;5(5):e95.

(doi:10.1371/journal.pmed.0050095)

Starting from the premise that the daily delivery of news stories about new treatments, tests, products, and procedures may have a profound, and perhaps harmful, impact on health care consumers, a new US project, HealthNewsReview.org (<http://HealthNewsReview.org>), modeled after similar efforts in Australia and Canada, has been created to evaluate and grade health news coverage, notifying journalists of their grades. After its first 22 months and 500 health news stories, the project hopes that the evaluation of health news will lead news organizations and all who engage in the dissemination of health news and information to reevaluate their practices to better serve a more informed health care consumer population.

Unruh WG. **Physicists and copyright: how to give away your birthright for what?** *APS News* 2008;17(6):8.

Some journals' copyright transfer agreements mean that “derivative works” which “depend on” the original need the permission of the copyright holders. This article urges authors to scrutinize such agreements before signing and not to sign those that do not specifically allow the authors to make derivative works, in any context, commercial or non-commercial. Representatives of the American Physical Society reply, setting out the society's position and saying why the current policy is defensible. They also

refer to a list of “frequently answered questions” on their website: <http://forms.aps.org/author/copyfaq.html>.



INFORMATION RETRIEVAL

To share or not to share: Publication and quality assurance of research data outputs report commissioned by the Research Information Network (RIN), June 2008. *Research Information Network* 2008 June.

(<http://www.rin.ac.uk/files/Data%20publication%20report,%20main%20-%20final.pdf>)

The digital age has offered the research community new ways to use research findings. Research data are a valuable long-term resource and making data publicly available is essential to realize their full potential value. But until now we have lacked a clear picture of how researchers are responding to these challenges. Based on the results of more than 100 detailed interviews with researchers across eight subject and cross-disciplinary areas, the RIN report points out that realizing the full potential of data requires further progress in data management policies and practice.

Couzin J. Survey finds citations growing narrower as journals move online. *Science* 2008;321(5887):329.

(doi:10.1126/science.321.5887.329a)

The migration online of millions of scholarly articles in recent years has affected research: a smaller number of articles than in the past are pulling ahead of the pack in citations, even though more articles than ever before are available. The average age of citations has dropped. The shifting of researchers to a central set of publications may lead to easier

consensus and less active debate in academia, notes the author.

Evans JA. Electronic publication and the narrowing of science and scholarship. *Science*

2008;321(5887):395-399.

(doi:10.1126/science.1150473)

Using a database of 34 million articles, their citations (1945-2005), and online availability (1998-2005), the author shows that as more journal issues came online, the articles referenced tended to be more recent; fewer journals and articles were cited; and more of those citations were to fewer journals and articles. Searching online is more efficient, and following hyperlinks quickly puts researchers in touch with prevailing opinion, but this may accelerate consensus and narrow the range of findings and ideas built upon.

Hopewell S, Eisinga A, Clarke M. Better reporting of randomized trials in biomedical journal and conference abstracts. *Journal of Information Science* 2008;34(2):1-12.

(doi: 10.1177/0165551507080415)

Well reported research published in conference and journal abstracts is important: individuals often base their initial assessment of a study on the information reported in abstracts. This article refers specifically to abstracts reporting randomized trials and seeks to identify current initiatives aimed at improving their reporting, like CONSORT for Abstracts, an extension of the CONSORT statement.

Macdonald A. Institute plans a group for physics communicators.

Interactions 2008 July 4.

(not available online)

The Institute of Physics is setting up a new Physics Communicators Group to enable experienced and novice communicators to come together to share good ideas and offer mutual support and advice. Possibilities include a database of ideas that members have found to work, and training in communication techniques for different age groups or in how to target different sections of the public with activities they will be

keen to participate in. An inaugural meeting took place on 11 July.

Rowlands I, Nicholas D, Williams P, Huntington P, Fieldhouse M, Gunter B, Withey R, Jamali HR, Dobrowolski T, Tenopir C. The Google generation: the information behaviour of the researcher of the future. *Aslib Proceedings*

2008;60(4):290-310.

(doi:10.1108/00012530810887953)

How will the specialist researchers of the future (those born after 1993) access and interact with digital resources in five to ten years' time? The impact of digital transition on the information behaviour of the Google Generation is investigated and results show that the effect of ICTs on the young are generally overestimated. The study claims that although young people demonstrate an apparent ease and familiarity with computers, they rely heavily on search engines, view rather than read, and do not possess the critical and analytical skills to assess the information that they find on the web.

Simera I, Altman DG, Moher D, Schulz KF, Hoey J. Guidelines for reporting health research: The EQUATOR network's survey of guideline authors. *PLoS Medicine* 2008 June 24.

(doi:10.1371/journal.pmed.0050139)

The survey carried out by the EQUATOR Network, a new initiative funded by the UK National Health Service, was aimed at coordinating the efforts of those developing good reporting guidelines across many areas of medical research, and at providing resources for training and for the promotion of guidelines. The poor reporting of a medical study's methodology and findings can in fact lead to ineffective treatments, the waste of valuable health care resources, and harm to patients. The survey found that financial support is needed to help promote guidelines once they have been developed. It also showed a need to harmonize the development of these different guidelines – that is, they should all have a robust methodology to be widely accepted.

LANGUAGE AND WRITING

Aghassi WJ. **Roadblocks deter today's Einstein.** *Physics Today* 2007;60(10):12.

(<http://tinyurl.com/4or374>)

Letter supporting the letter by William Aghassi *ibid.* 60(10)12 but going further, saying "Actually credentials also mean little today, unless your research is in a trendy topic like string theory and you write from a famous university like MIT, Cambridge University, Imperial College or Caltech. Gatekeepers and editors shun originality."

Maier A, Waller S, Kerans ME. **Acquiring or enhancing a translation specialism: the monolingual corpus-guided approach.** *Journal of Specialized Translation* 2008;10:56–75.

(http://www.jostrans.org/issue10/art_maier.pdf)

An account of how to go about setting up and using a corpus of model texts to guide editing or translation decision-making. It describes tools and proposes approaches that provide practical solutions for the working translators and editors who work in specialized fields. The article complements a poster that was first presented at the ninth EASE conference in Krakow in 2006.

Vasconcelos SMR, Sorenson MM, Leta J, Sant'Ana MC, Batista PD. **Researchers' writing competence: a bottleneck in the publication of Latin American science?** *EMBO Reports* 2008;9(8):700–602.

(doi:10.1038/embor.2008.143)

Writing for publication in an English language international journal is a linguistic burden for non-English speaking countries. In Brazilian research output, poor English language knowledge and poor writing skills are often a barrier to publishing in high rank journals and to reaching high scientific productivity.

PUBLISHING

Schmoch U, Schubert T. **Are international co-publications an indicator for quality of scientific research?** *Scientometrics* 2008;74(3):361–377.

(doi:10.1007/s11192-007-1818-5)

The article deals with the role of internationally co-authored papers, or co-publications. The authors compare, within a dataset of German research units, citation and co-publication indicators as proxies for scientific research quality assessment. They also address the relationship between citations and co-publications. Their results suggest that, although there is a strong partial correlation between

citations and co-publications, co-publication indicators cannot be used as a proxy for research quality assessment.



RESEARCH EVALUATION

Regazzi JJ, Aytac S. **Author perceptions of journal quality.** *Learned Publishing* 2008;21:225–235.

(doi:10.1087/095315108X288938) Investigates author-perceived quality of science, technology, and medicine journals, using questionnaire survey, focus groups, and semi-structured face-to-face interviews. The three most important attributes were the reputation of the journal, the estimated length of time to article publication, and the readership of the journal.

Paola De Castro (compiler)
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Thanks to Eleonora Della Corte, Margaret Cooter, John Glen, Andrew Herxheimer, Joan Marsh, and Elise Langdon-Neuner

Promoting EASE

You'll have noticed that EASE membership is growing satisfactorily, thanks to sterling efforts by Sheila Evered in contacting lapsed members and by various people in encouraging new ones. We wish to build on this and 2009 is a great time to do so, as we have the attraction of our triennial conference in the beautiful city of Pisa. Members will receive a €50 discount on the registration fee, so we hope that most of those attending will join up.

We would like all our members to help promote both EASE and the conference as much as possible, particularly by distributing the second circular regarding Pisa (a pdf may be obtained from Sheila or the website) and distributing fliers and copies of *ESE* at any conferences they attend (contact Sheila at secretary@ease.org.uk).

Do you have ideas for strengthening our relationships with our sister societies? We would like to accumulate a complete list of these! If you belong to an organization that complements some of our activities, please let us

know. Examples of successful collaborations this year are the discount membership deal with the Society for Editors and Proofreaders, whereby members of both get a discount (our own Editors' Big Deal of bundled subscriptions!) and teaming up with Mediterranean Editors and Translators at EuroScience Open Forum (see p 108). Contact Joan Marsh (jmarsh@wiley.com) or Alison Clayson (alison@clayson.org) and let us know your ideas.

Publicity Officer

Following on from the above, is anyone interested in becoming the EASE Publicity Officer? It's an unpaid post, but think of the glory of putting this on your CV! You would liaise with Council and the other Committees to obtain news of EASE activities, then send press releases to relevant newsletters. Assembling a list of relevant newsletters would be a first task – all those free e-bulletins to which people subscribe so that they can fill up their inbox. Candidates should contact Joan Marsh (jmarsh@wiley.com).

Forthcoming Meetings, Courses, and BELS Examinations

10th EASE Conference: "Integrity in Science Communication"

16–19 September 2009; Pisa, Italy

Berlin 6 Open Access

11–13 November; Düsseldorf, Germany
<http://oa.mpg.de/openaccess-dus/index.html>

27th EMWA Conference

20–22 November; London, UK
www.emwa.org/Conferences.html

ScienceOnline'09

16–18 January 2009; Research Triangle Park, NC, USA
<http://scienceonline09.com/>

African Science Communication Conference

18–21 February 2009; Gauteng, South Africa
<http://www.saasta.ac.za/2ndascc/>

Transformations in Cultural and Scientific Communication

5–6 March 2009; Melbourne, Australia
<http://nlblog.wordpress.com/conference-2009/>

British Society for Literature and Science

27–29 March 2009; Reading, UK
<http://www.bsls.ac.uk/>

Knowledge Globalization Conference 2009

17–19 April 2009; Boston, USA
<http://www.kglobal.org>

Show Me the Data – The Science of Editing and Publishing (CSE)

1–5 May 2009; Pittsburgh, USA
<http://www.councilscienceeditors.org/events/annualmeeting09/>

28th EMWA Conference

26–30 May 2009; Ljubljana, Slovenia
www.emwa.org/

International Conference on Health and Science Communication

17–20 June 2009; St Louis, USA
<http://www.hesca.org/stlouis/>

6th World Conference of Science Journalists

30 June–3 July 2009; London, UK
<http://www.wcsj2009.org/>

International PKP Scholarly Publishing Conference

8–10 July 2009; Vancouver, Canada
<http://pkp.sfu.ca/ocs/pkp/>

International Professional Communication Conference

19–22 July 2009; Honolulu, USA
<http://ewh.ieee.org/soc/pcs>

6th International Congress on Peer Review and EBiomedical Publication

10–12 September 2009; Vancouver, Canada
<http://www.ama-assn.org/>

COURSES

ALPSP training courses, briefings and technology updates

Half-day and one-day courses and updates.
 Contact Amanda Whiting, Training Coordinator, Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers, Tel: +44 (0)1865 247776; training@alpssp.org; www.alpssp-training.org

Publishing Training Centre at Book House, London

Contact: The Publishing Training Centre at Book House, 45 East Hill, Wandsworth, London SW18 2QZ, UK. Tel: +44 (0)20 8874 2718; fax +44 (0)20 8870 8985, publishing.training@bookhouse.co.uk www.train4publishing.co.uk

Society for Editors and Proofreaders

SfEP runs one-day workshops in London and occasionally elsewhere in the UK on copy-editing, proofreading, grammar, and much else.
 Training enquiries: tel: +44 (0)20 7736 0901; trainingenquiries@ssep.org.uk
 Other enquiries: SfEP, Riverbank

House, 1 Putney Bridge Approach, London SW6 3JD, UK. Tel: +44 (0)20 7736 3278; administration@ssep.org.uk; www.ssep.org.uk

Society of Indexers workshops

The Society of Indexers runs workshops for beginners and more experienced indexers in various cities in the UK. Details and booking forms can be found at www.indexers.org.uk; admin@indexers.org.uk

University of Chicago

Medical writing, editing, and ethics are among the many courses available. Graham School of General Studies, The University of Chicago, 1427 E. 60th Street, Chicago, IL 60637, USA. Fax +1 773 702 6814.
<http://grahamschool.uchicago.edu>

University of Oxford, Department for Continuing Education

Courses on effective writing for biomedical professionals and on presenting in biomedicine, science, and technology.
 Contact Leanne Banns, CPD Centre, Department for Continuing Education, University of Oxford, Littlegate House, 16/17 St Ebbes Street, Oxford OX1 1PT, UK. Tel: +44 (0)1865 286953; fax +44 (0)1865 286934; leanne.banns@conted.ox.ac.uk www.conted.ox.ac.uk/cpd/personaldev

BELS - Board of Editors in the Life Sciences examination schedule

www.bels.org/becomeeditor/exam-schedule.htm

15 and 16 November 2008, Mumbai, India; register by 25 October 2008

2 May 2009 (CSE meeting); register by 11 April

17 September 2009, Pisa, Italy (EASE Triennial Conference); register by 27 August 2009

21 October 2009, Dallas, TX (AMWA meeting); register by 30 September 2009

EASE Business

Annual general meeting

EASE's AGM was held at the Institute of Catalan Studies in Barcelona on 19 July 2008.

The President presented his report for 2007-8, a copy of which may be obtained from the Secretariat or viewed on the website (www.ease.org.uk). He touched on the two unsuccessful applications to the EU for funding; the publishing of EASE's statement on the inappropriate use of impact factors; plans for the 10th General Assembly and Conference to be held in Pisa, Italy, in September 2009; and the new design of EASE's website.

The Treasurer's summary of the accounts for 2008 noted that the net trading position on 31 December 2007 showed a loss of £6,489 which was an improvement of the previous year and less than projected, reflecting the continuing rise in membership. Reserves at the end of 2007 stood at a healthy £51,928. The financial reviewer was reappointed.

Council meeting

Council met on 18 July 2008 in Barcelona. The President presented his report for 2007-8 and the accounts for 2007, both of which Council approved. After a successful application to take part in the outreach activities of ESOF2008 in Barcelona, it was noted that EASE's participation would be the following day when a game depicting the adventure of scientific publishing, which had been adapted by Reme Melero with the help of Paola De Castro, would be played.

Plans for the 10th General Assembly and Conference in Pisa were discussed and the appointment of Grupo Pacifico as conference organizer reported. Several speakers had been invited and accepted. The Secretary reported a steady increase in the number of individual and corporate members, sponsored members, ESE subscribers, and sales of the Handbook.

It was agreed not to raise subscription rates for 2009. The new website was up and running with a members' only area. This was still being developed, but it was planned to include the list of members.

Reports from the various committees were received and EASE representation at forthcoming conferences was discussed.

Publications committee

The Publications Committee met on 26 April 2008 in London. The February and May 2008 issues of *European Science Editing* were reviewed and the status of the next two issues discussed. The Google spreadsheet is working well, as is the Bookshelf blog. The Chairman reported that Jane Sykes and Igor Vlahovic had resigned from the committee, and she welcomed Stuart Handysides and Sharon Davies as new members, responsible for Articles and Reports of Meetings respectively. It was agreed to ask the membership for more ideas for new chapters in the Handbook.

Membership Changes

New Members: Individual

Ms Amanda Ellis

Quenda Communications
177 Elderberry Drive, South Lake
Perth WA 6164, Australia
Freelance, trainer
amanda@amandaellis.com

Dr Felix E Gbenoba

Instructional Resources Development
National Open University of Nigeria
Lagos, Nigeria
Chief Editor
felixgbenoba@yahoo.co.uk

Mr Luc Geeraert

Tibotec BVBA
Mechelen, Belgium
lgeerae1@its.jnj.com

Mr Paul J H Neate

Rome, Italy
p_neate@yahoo.co.uk

Ms Christine R Wyard

Minehead, UK

Mrs Katherine M Thomasset

Bristol, UK
kthomasset@yahoo.co.uk

New Members: Corporate

Neurologia (Journal of the Spanish Society of Neurology)

Dr M^a Rocío García-Ramos García

Madrid, Spain

Dr Eduardo Martínez Vila

Pamplona, Spain

Dr Jordi Matias-Guiu Guia

Madrid, Spain

Dr Ana Morales Ortiz

Murcia, Spain

Ms Ángela Navarrete Belmonte

Barcelona, Spain

Mr Gavin Swanson

Cambridge University Press
Cambridge, UK

EASE members' news

Honorary Member John Glen was recently telephoned by the President of the International Glaciological Society to inform him that their Council had agreed to make him an Honorary Member. He has been helping in the editing of their journal, the *Journal of Glaciology*, in various capacities since 1953.

Promoting EASE

See p119 to find out how you can help promote EASE to other interested individuals and organizations. 2009 is a great opportunity to increase membership, with the attraction of the conference in Pisa.

We also need a Publicity Officer – think of the glory of listing this on your CV!

Plans for Pisa proceed apace

Place

Pisa. The conference will be held in the Palazzo dei Congressi, which is just outside the city wall and was formerly owned by the university but is now independently operated. The opening reception will be in the nearby Santa Croce in Fossabanda, a 14th century monastery tastefully converted into a hotel. Our speakers will also be staying here.

Performers

Physical Integrity: Ed Pentz of Cross-Check will review the first year of this exciting new initiative to detect plagiarism.

Moral Integrity: Amber Budden will describe her studies regarding double-blind reviews. Are we as objective as we would like to think?

Editorial Independence and Responsibilities: Adam Wilkins has run BioEssays for many years and will review the pleasures and pitfalls of editing a review journal.

Each of these will be complemented by another plenary speaker. Several parallel sessions will feature the invited speakers and those who successfully submitted abstracts, plus posters.

Price

Members who register by 30 June 2009 should pay €390 (please check the second circular for confirmation). This will include lunch on Friday (our only full day) but not the conference dinner. We realise that many members prefer

an inclusive dinner price so that everyone is encouraged to attend but decided against this because of our chosen dinner venue.

Prandials

The conference dinner will be held at the Opera Primaziale. This is a beautiful setting, in a cloister underneath the Leaning Tower – so we have to hope that it stays standing for another year at least. Places will be limited, so those wishing to come to the dinner should register early. We looked at several other venues, none of which was anywhere near as nice as this one, or as convenient. Which brings us to:

Proximity

You can walk everywhere. All of the venues are within easy walking distance of central Pisa and the hotel district on the opposite side of the river, towards the railway station. The airport is also close to the city, just a short train or bus ride.

Personnel

Finally, we are delighted that Paola De Castro has joined the Programme Committee and particularly appreciate her efforts in publicising the conference within Italy.

See you there, 16-19 September 2009.

Programme Committee

EASE Register of Training Courses in Science Writing and Editing – call for information

The EASE Council acknowledges that training should be an important part of the Association's remit. Over the years, we have received various invitations to organize writing or editing workshops in many different countries, both within Europe and further afield. These have been organized by several members of EASE on a rather ad hoc basis. We would like to make such courses available more routinely, with a structured curriculum and approved teachers. Achieving this will require considerable time and effort and thus it remains a long-term goal rather than an immediate one.

In parallel, we would like to raise the profile of teaching that is already being given by many of our members, as a benefit to those members who provide courses and also those who would like to participate in one or host one in their local institution.

We therefore invite anyone who teaches a course or workshop on science writing or editing (or anything similar that fits EASE's interests) to submit details for inclusion in a register. In due course, we will make this

register available on the EASE website. The register will not imply any endorsement by EASE. We would like to move towards a system of validation and any thoughts on this would be welcome.

Details should be submitted under the following headings (one for each course):

- Organizer
- Organizer's affiliation
- Organizer's contact details (phone and email)
- Brief (max 200 words) biography of Organizer highlighting relevant qualifications and experience
- Title of course
- Duration
- Brief description of content (max 200 words)
- Target audience
- Maximum number of delegates
- Location
- Price (if available)
- General comments

Contributing to *European Science Editing*

European Science Editing welcomes contributions related to the editing and management of publications in the sciences. Submissions in the following categories are accepted: Articles, Viewpoints, Editing around the World, Correspondence, brief Reports of Meetings (see suggestions for reports at the end of these instructions), short news items, and notes or suggestions about articles, books or websites of interest to editors of scientific journals or books.

Contributions

Contributions should be sent to the appropriate section editor, listed below. A copy may also be sent to the Chief Editor (europeanscienceediting@googlemail.com) when appropriate.

Contributions should be sent by e-mail (see File format below). Duplicate publication (publication of items that overlap substantially with any already published) is to be avoided. All material is subject to editing/copy-editing.

Authors are asked to consult the Chief Editor if the same or very similar work has been published elsewhere, mainly for work in a language other than English. Data contained in contributions are assumed not to have been falsified. Current codes of ethics in appropriate professional fields apply.

Copyright in contributions belongs to the author.

Journal sections

Editorials are usually commissioned but spontaneous submissions are also welcome. Editorials should represent the opinions of the author and not suggest that they are those of EASE. Editorials should be submitted to Moira Johnson-Vekony (europeanscienceediting@googlemail.com).

Original articles will be subject to review. Final acceptance or rejection is decided by the Publications Committee. Articles should be up to 2000 words long and should include an abstract of up to 200 words. If articles report research data, they should follow the IMRaD format (Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion) and include a structured abstract with four headings: Background, Methods, Results, and Conclusion.

Viewpoints represent the opinions or personal experiences of the author, rather than research. Send to Moira Johnson-Vekony, europeanscienceediting@googlemail.com)

The **Editing Around the World** series focuses on specific aspects of editing in a particular country. Suggestions for contributions should be sent to Dario Sambunjak (dario.sambunjak@mef.hr).

Correspondence is welcomed on items that have appeared in recent issues of the journal and matters related to the editing and management of publications (send to mcooter@bmj.com).

From the Literature is prepared by Liz Wager (liz@sideview.demon.co.uk), who will be glad to receive suggestions for suitable subjects.

Reports of Meetings are coordinated by Sharon Davies

(sdavies@bmj.com) and should be planned before the meeting. All proposals for such reports are welcome.

The **EASE-Forum Digest** is compiled by Elise Langdon-Neuner (langdoe@baxter.com). The objective is to summarize the discussions of recent months. The compiler may ask initiators of some discussions to provide a concise summary or rewrite their contributions for other sections of *European Science Editing*.

Books for Review should be sent to Moira Johnson-Vekony, who normally commissions reviews and coordinates the review process. Reviewers should e-mail their reviews to her at europeanscienceediting@googlemail.com.

Editors' WebWatch is coordinated by Colin Batchelor, and compiled by Paola de Castro, Penny Hubbard and Colin Batchelor. Please send details of sites and trends applicable to editing to the coordinator (BatchelorC@rsc.org).

The **News Notes** section is compiled by Richard Hurley (rhurley@bmj.com), who will be glad to receive short news items related to editing, publishing and managing journals, including items from non-English-speaking countries.

News from Editing Societies is under the editorship of Sharon Davies (sdavies@bmj.com).

Forthcoming Meetings and Courses: information for inclusion in this list should be sent to sdavies@bmj.com.

The Editor's Bookshelf is co-ordinated by Paola de Castro (paola.decastro@iss.it), and compiled by Paola, Penny Hubbard and Colin Batchelor. Details of suitable articles or books should be sent to one of the compilers. Details of publications in European languages other than English are welcome. The Editor's Bookshelf blog can be accessed via the EASE website. For an invitation to join the blog (which enables you to post to it direct) please contact the coordinator.

File format and text style

Longer items such as articles should be sent as e-mail attachments; other items may be sent either as attachments or in the body of an e-mail message. All files must be checked for viruses before being submitted.

Text should be sent in Microsoft Word (.doc extension), preferably in 10-point Palatino Linotype or Times New Roman. Do not use any special styles.

With Word documents, accents and any text in italics or bold lettering will be recognized by the desktop publishing software. Remove any running heads, page numbers or page divisions before saving the final version of the file.

Headings other than the main title of a contribution should be title case (initial capital, caps elsewhere only if needed, and lower case), with one blank line above each heading. Use bold type for a level 1 heading and italics for a level 2 heading. Avoid level 3 headings.

Tables should be sent in a separate file from the text. Please submit tables in Microsoft Word documents, not as spreadsheets or .tif. For guidance on the presentation of Tables please refer to chapter 2-2.3, "Editing and design of

tables”, in the *Science Editors’ Handbook*.

Figures should be professionally prepared and of high resolution (scanned at 300 dpi). Each figure should be sent in a separate file saved in .tif or .jpg format. For guidance on the presentation of Figures please refer to chapter 2-2.1, “Illustration basics”, in the *Science Editors’ Handbook*.

Style

Use the spelling of the Oxford English Dictionary (Concise or Shorter), including -ize, -ization where appropriate. Use inclusive language (non-sexist, non-racist). Avoid footnotes and abbreviations other than SI units and any others that are widely accepted and understood. Explain all other abbreviations when they are first mentioned. Write numbers one to nine in full in the text, except when they are attached to units of measure. Use double quotation marks, with single quotation marks only for quotations within quotations.

Citations in the text

For citations in the text, use consecutive numbers, given as superscripts.

Reference list style

Please use Vancouver style (see <http://www.icmje.org/>, section IV.A.9). Journal titles should be written in full, as should page ranges:

Adam A, Eve Z. Eating apples can be dangerous. *Journal of Food Information* 1997;8(1):51–59.

References to electronic sources should include the web address (URL) and the date the reference was accessed:

Adam A, Eve Z. Eating apples can be dangerous. *Journal of Food Information* 1997;8(1):51–59. [www.jfi.org.il/volume8\(1\)/Adam/apple.pdf](http://www.jfi.org.il/volume8(1)/Adam/apple.pdf). (Accessed 2005 January 1.)

Accuracy of references is the responsibility of the author(s).

Deadlines and proofs

Deadline dates for contributions other than articles, review

articles and viewpoints are December 15, March 15, June 15 and September 15, for the February, May, August and November issues, respectively. Articles, review articles and viewpoints should be submitted one month earlier than those dates.

Proofs (PDF files) will be sent to authors of articles and viewpoints. Proofs of other contributions may be sent if authors ask for them or if there are queries.

Meeting reports: suggestions for presentation

A report should be between 100 and 800 words, depending on the length of the meeting and the novelty of the material.

Describe only those presentations and other contributions that you believe will interest ESE readers.

Concentrate on new information rather than opinion. If you quote numbers, please check them. If you can supply references, so much the better, but please limit these to about five.

If discussion of a paper reaches a consensus, record it.

Give the names and brief institutional addresses of contributors whose presentations you report.

Be prepared for your report to be edited for length and style; the organizational delights and downfalls of conferences are particularly vulnerable. You may be sent an edited text, but time constraints may limit consultation about changes.

Write up your contribution as soon as the meeting ends, to capitalize on its impact.

Send your meeting report to Sharon Davies (sdavies@bmj.com).

EASE website

All material published in *ESE* will be reproduced on the EASE website. The current issue of *ESE* will be located in the members-only area; older issues will be generally available. The version of any item on the website will reflect exactly the content of the printed issue, and no changes will be permitted to the pdf after uploading; this includes changes to contact details, which should be submitted for inclusion in the Membership List Additions and Changes section of each issue.

And finally . . .

Thanks to the reviewers of articles submitted to *ESE* in 2008: John Glen, James Hartley, Hervé Maissoneuve, and Paul McCarthy . . .

and to the proofreaders: Sandra Child, John Glen, John Hudson, Maeve O'Connor . . .

as well as to the members of the Publications Committee and Council who have carried out one or both of these vital functions.