

Fake Editor!

In the latest ‘sting’ designed to highlight shortcomings in ‘predatory’ journals, Polish researchers created a fake editor, called Anna O Szust (*oszust* is Polish for ‘a fraud’), with various social media and scholarly network profiles, all clearly lacking necessary detail about academic credentials. ‘Dr Szust’ then applied to become an editor at 360 journals chosen from various sources. A total of 48 journals accepted the application unquestioningly, 40 from journals previously on Beall’s list, and 8 from journals listed in the Directory of Open Access Journals (doaj.org). You can read the full story in *Nature* (2017;543:481).

Research Integrity in the UK

The *Concordat to Support Research Integrity* was published by Universities UK in 2012, with the support of funders, and set out a commitment to reinforce confidence in research. A recent progress report (available at universitiesuk.ac.uk) recommends that the concordat should continue to be supported, but more work is needed to improve openness and transparency. The report also recommends creating a Research Integrity Forum to improve coordination. The UK Parliament Science and Technology Committee is also undertaking an inquiry into research integrity, in response to a report discussing trends and developments on fraud, misconduct and mistakes in research and publication. The report observed a growth in misconduct and errors and recognised a ‘crisis in reproducibility’ in research.

New COPE guidance

The Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) has published new best practice guidelines for ensuring consent for publishing medical case reports. The guidance, which was developed from a discussion document, covers general principles, information to be collected in consent forms, and examples of consent forms, and is available from the COPE website (publicationethics.org/resources/guidelines).

WAME statement on predatory journals

The World Association of Medical Editors (WAME) has issued new guidelines to “help editors, researchers, funders, academic institutions and other stakeholders distinguish predatory journals from legitimate journals” in the wake of the closure of the widely used and debated Beall’s list. The guidance, which includes a decision algorithm and an overview of resources, is available from the WAME website (www.wame.org).

Guidelines for publishing biodiversity data

The work of the European Biodiversity Observation Network (EU-BON) has contributed to the development of policies and guidelines for publishing biodiversity-related data, in conjunction with the publisher Pensoft. The guidelines (*Research Ideas and Outcomes* 2017;3:e12431) also incorporate experiences and knowledge from FORCE11, CODATA, RDA and other international collaborations with an interest in data publishing.

Medical writers position statement

The role of professional medical writers has been clarified in a position statement from three major organisations: the American Medical Writers Association (AMWA), the European Medical Writers Association (EMWA), and the International Society for Medical Publication Professionals (ISMPP). The statement, available from the ISMPP website (www.ismpp.org/advocacy), describes best practices and provides a template for disclosing medical writing support, and builds on the *Good Publication Practice* (GPP3) guidelines and International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) recommendations.

Author-reviewer open-science agreements

Peer-reviewers who wish to ensure that articles (and associated data) they review are made openly

available are dependent on the policies or preferences of the authors or journals that they review for. But a company called Academic Karma (academickarma.org) has proposed a way that peer reviewers can set the agenda. A peer reviewer agreement form (academickarma.org/reviewagreement) enables peer-reviewers to decide which criteria they want to require of authors.

Open Citations

Launched in April 2017, the Initiative for Open Citations (i4oc.org) is a collaboration promoting the “unrestricted availability of scholarly citation data” founded by OpenCitations, the Wikimedia Foundation, PLOS, *eLife*, DataCite, and the Centre for Culture and Technology. The aim is for citation data that are structured, separable, and open. Many publishers have already enabled open citations as part of the Initiative, via options included within Crossref’s Cited-by service (crossref.org/services/cited-by), bringing the approximate proportion of publications with open references up from 1% to 40% by March 2017, and many other organisations have expressed interest in building on the work.

OpenAIRE report on OA

A major report on open-access in Europe was published in March 2017. The report, *Towards a competitive and sustainable open access publishing market in Europe*, was commissioned by OpenAIRE (openaire.eu) on behalf of the European Commission. The main finding was that the EU Council’s goal of achieving immediate open access as the default by 2020 would be “very, very difficult” to achieve, with only about 5% of journal content currently open-access. The report also notes large inter-disciplinary variation, and doesn’t look at green open access (because embargos prevent the goal of immediate access). You can read more and download the full report on the OpenAIRE Blog (blog.openaire.eu; 21 March 2017).