## **News notes**

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Some of these items are taken from the EASE journal blog (http://ese-bookshelf.blogspot. co.uk) where full URLs may be found

## European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity

ALLEA, the European Federation of Academies of Sciences and Humanities, has issued a new edition of its European Code of Conduct for *Research Integrity*, which provides a "framework for self-regulation across all scientific and scholarly disciplines and for all research settings". The Code (available at allea. org), endorsed by the EU, is built around four principles: reliability, honesty, respect, and accountability. The new edition has been expanded to consider broad changes in research funding, regulation, responsibilities, and publishing within Europe.

## **Pushing preprints**

The US National Institutes of Health (NIH) has announced a policy of encouraging researchers to submit NIH-funded work to preprint servers before publishing in traditional journals. The policy (released on 24 March 2017) also enables researchers to cite preprints in grant applications. The funder-supported journal *eLife* has for some time encouraged authors to first submit their manuscripts to a preprint server, such as *bioRxiv* (biorxiv.org), before submitting to the journal or during the peer-review process. But now authors can choose to submit directly to the journal and then have the manuscript posted directly to bioRxiv. You can read more about this process on the eLife website (elifesciences.org/elife-news; 24 March 2017).

#### **Vienna Principles**

The Vienna Principles came about due a lack of a shared vision about

how open science could be achieved. The work of a group of Vienna-based researchers, the first version of the principles was published in June 2016, and the group has received feedback from researchers working to incorporate the principles in their work. A working group is now reviewing feedback and writing recommendations on turning each principle into reality, with the aim of publishing updated principles in 2018. You can read the 12 principles, and get involved at viennaprinciples.org.

## Unpaywall

A new browser extension checks whether an article is available in a free version, and links you to that source. Unpaywall (unpaywall.org) was developed by the Impactstory team (impactstory.org), and is powered by data from oadoi.org. The extension recognises the article on a webpage, and searches a wide array of repositories and services to find a legally free version of the article if one exists. It will also tell you if the accessible version is gold (publisher-provided), green (on a repository or preprint server).

#### **Gender bias reports**

Elsevier has undertaken a major study of trends from a gender perspective, based on data from Scopus (scopus.com). Gender in the Global Research Landscape, available from Elsevier Connect (elsevier. com/connect), found that women published fewer articles than men, but their articles had similar citation rates. Other observations were that women were less likely to collaborate internationally, and that physical sciences were dominated by men. Another study looking at large amounts of data from the Frontiers series of journals (frontiersin.org) showed that women are underrepresented in the peer review process and that editors of both genders exhibit same-gender preference (eLife 2017;6:e2718).

## **Gates Open**

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation is to launch its own publishing platform, following the example set by Wellcome last year. Gates Open Research (gatesopenresearch.org) has been developed in conjunction with F1000 and, like Wellcome Open Research, is based on the F1000 Research model (f1000research. com), with immediate open access publishing followed by open, invited peer review. The aim is to make Gates Foundation-funded research "available quickly and in a format supporting research integrity, reproducibility and transparency", and supports the Foundation's open-access policy, which came into full effect on 1 January 2017. Gates Open Research is set to launch in the third quarter of 2017. The Gates Foundation has also awarded \$100,000 to the American Academy for the Advancement of Science, publishers of Science (sciencemag.com) to enable open access for research funded by the Gates Foundation that is published in the Science family of journals.

## Readability declining?

A massive study of a corpus of over 700,000 abstracts published between 1881 and 2015 in 122 'influential' biomedical journals found a gradual decline in readability (as measured by two scales) over time (*bioRxiv* 119370). The study, carried out by a team at Karolinska Institutet in Sweden, also showed that the trend was indicative of a growing usage of scientific jargon.

# German negotiations with Elsevier

A consortium set up to represent about 60 German universities and research institutions was unable to agree terms with the publisher Elsevier, resulting in the publisher withdrawing access to its journals for those institutions in January 2017. The disagreement centred on costs and open-access provision. With negotiations ongoing, the publisher restored access temporarily on 13 February.

#### **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 peerreviewers 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 Intiative, 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 in 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 openaccess. 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).