

# Scholarly Publishing, Research Assessment, Open Access and Questionable Publishers

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- Basis statements about Scholarly Publishing
- Open Access
- Research Assessment
- Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ)
- Questionable Publishers/Journals

# Basic statements

- The traditional model of scholarly communication is **not sustainable and does not serve research and society**
- The subscription model is essentially based on the print age!
- Technology has opened up new opportunities.
- Today it should be possible to make public funded research accessible for all!
- But still – this is not the case!

- In scholarly publishing there is **no market mechanisms, no competition!**
- It allows publishers to steadily increase prices way above inflation.
- It **blocks** researchers for access to knowledge
- It leaves major parts of the world out of the loop
- It **harms science, higher education, industry, innovation, our societies and the people.**

But...

- I think we should **stop blaming the publishers**
- They do what there are supposed to do:
  - Exploiting the conditions offered to them and (some of them) make extraordinary good business.
- **Those who have the power to change the conditions are responsible for the current mess!**  
... and we have to help them change the system!

# Obstacles to Open Access

- Research Assessment and Reward systems
- "Academic Freedom"
- Culture in the Academy

# Research Assessment

- **The single most important obstacle to a transition to Open Access!**
- Assessment is often based on the Journal Impact Factor (JIF) and other journal level metrics are
  - not telling much about the quality of the actual research
  - subject to manipulation, gaming and fraud
- Researchers are NOT primarily rewarded for WHAT they publish, but WHERE they publish
- **Research assessment systems have to change**
- **And they are changing – away from focussing on “prestige” journals and using the Journal Impact Factor as a proxy for quality!**

# What pays off in the current system??

- As a **Researcher**:
- Publish in ~~quality~~ **prestige journals** – go for the High Impact Factor journals and you will be rewarded (promotion, tenure and grants)
- **Don't bother** too much about whether or not
  - your results **are actually accessible** for the widest possible audience
  - your **data** are archived and **open**
  - your **software** is documented and **available**
  - your research is actually **reproducible**
- **For your career it doesn't really matter that much!**
- As an **Institution**:
  - Attract the researchers with the above behavior and the institution will get higher rankings and **receive more grants**



# Research Assessment

- All over the world (and especially in Africa, Asia and Latin America)
  - Strong push to publish in “high quality” (often subscription)-journals
  - Strong push to publish in “international” journals
- Supports the system, that we want to change!
- **Discriminates** journals published in Non-English language journals
- Supports questionable publishing practices

# Open up Research!

- Lots of challenges! But they can be overcome
- What is needed is:
  - More self-confidence in the research results produced in your country
  - Support and develop local publishing channels
  - Collaborate across countries
  - Aggregate on open source platforms
  - Governments and research councils should stop discriminating journals published within the country
- Research results should be visible and discoverable on a global scale!

# The Culture of the Academy

- The Culture of the Academy needs to change too!
- The concept of **Academic Freedom** is often used as an excuse for publishing in the “prestige” journals.
- It is the underlying logic of Green Access and Hybrid Open Access.
- But Academic Freedom applies to what you are researching, what you are investigating, the methods you apply etc.
- Based on your agreement with your institution and the grants you get, you will do your research.

# The Culture of the Academy

- It is often argued that your decisions as to **where** you publish, **how** you publish, the rights and permissions you give to readers/users etc belongs to my **Academic Freedom**.
- “It is my Academic Freedom to decide **where** to publish”!

# The Culture of the Academy

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- “It is my Academic Freedom to decide **where** to publish”!
- I disagree!

# Academic Responsibility

- Applies to how you **share** your research, your findings, your data, your software!!
- We need **stronger mandates** from research funders and research institutions
- Research funders and research institutions should be very specific as to how they **expect researchers to disseminate their findings!**
- **Responsible** researcher conduct is to **share** results, data and software in the open

It should have been  
open in the first place!

If your papers, your data and your  
software are not in the open, it  
should not count!

# Who can change the system then?

- **Not** the Publishers – they are businesses, exploiting the conditions offered to them.
- **The research funders, university managements, governments can change the system**
  - Changing the reward and incentive systems
  - Require publishing in the open
  - Setting the conditions for the publishers
  - Changing the culture in the academy



## What is needed is ...

- More and much **stronger** funder and institutional **mandates**
- **Radical changes** in the research **evaluation system** and incentives for researchers to publish in the open!
  - Today researchers are rewarded based on **Where** they publish, i.e. in **which journals** they publish
  - **Not** based on **What** they publish, the actual content
  - and **not** based on **How** they publish, whether it is **open** and reuseable or **not**
- **A cultural change in academia is what needs to happen!**

# The scholarly system I want to see

- Research results are immediately **accessible** to everyone.
- Research is **verifiable** and **reproducible**.
- Research is evaluated based on its **actual** impact - not based on the wrapper (the journal title)
- Research findings are **evaluated in the open** after dissemination.

# This means That:

- Research will be disseminated in the open with **generous reuse permissions**.
- Research **Data** will be archived and made accessible.
- **Software** associated with research will be documented and available as well.
- Research **Evaluation is transparent**.

# And this means that:

- Researchers are **rewarded**
  - not only based on citations, but as well for
- the **societal impact of their research,**
- **documenting their data and software and make it open,**
- **contributing to peer review etc.**
- In short:
- **Researchers will be rewarded for all what they do**

- Now, some of the important stakeholders issue stronger Open Access mandates – they give preference to real OA!
  - EU research funds
  - EU Commission
  - Several European Research funders
  - Some from North America

- Research funders are now requiring immediate Open Access!

- Universities, Research Funders & Governments:
  - increasingly **demand real OA** – from **day one**, with **extensive re-use rights**
  - OA to publications seen as part of the Open Science/Open Scholarship agenda
  - Are **questioning current research assessment practices (Impact Factor etc)** and developing new models

# Breaking news!

cOAlition S



cOAlition S  
**Making  
Open Access  
a reality  
by 2020**

A DECLARATION OF COMMITMENT  
BY PUBLIC RESEARCH FUNDERS

<https://www.scienceeurope.org/coalition-s/>



# What is cOALition S?

On 4 September 2018, 11 national research funding organisation, with the support of the European Commission and the European Research Council (ERC), announced the launch of cOALition S, an initiative to make full and immediate Open Access to research publications a reality. It is built around Plan S, which consists of one target and 10 principles.

cOALition S signals the commitment to implement, by 1 January 2020, the necessary measures to fulfil its main principle: **“By 2020 scientific publications that result from research funded by public grants provided by participating national and European research councils and funding bodies, must be published in compliant Open Access Journals or on compliant Open Access Platforms.”**

# Breaking news!

## Further Information

- [Preamble by Marc Schiltz, President of Science Europe](#)
- [10 principles of Plan S](#)
- [List of participating national funders](#)
- [Press release by Science Europe](#)
- [Statement by Commissioner Carlos Moedas](#)
- [Statement by the European Research Council](#)

## Who is involved?

+ National Funders

— European Funders

### Organisation

European Commission, including the European Research Council

Country	Organisation	Acronym
Austria	Austrian Science Fund	FWF
France	French National Research Agency	ANR
Ireland	Science Foundation Ireland	SFI
Italy	National Institute for Nuclear Physics	INFN
Luxembourg	National Research Fund	FNR
Netherlands	Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research	NWO
Norway	Research Council of Norway	RCN
Poland	National Science Centre Poland	NCN
Slovenia	Slovenian Research Agency	ARRS
Sweden	Swedish Research Council for Sustainable Development	FORMAS
UK	UK Research and Innovation	UKRI

# The 10 Principles of Plan S

The key principle is as follows:

**“After 1 January 2020 scientific publications on the results from research funded by public grants provided by national and European research councils and funding bodies, must be published in compliant Open Access Journals or on compliant Open Access Platforms.”**

In addition:

- Authors retain copyright of their publication with no restrictions. All publications must be published under an open license, preferably the Creative Commons Attribution Licence CC BY. In all cases, the license applied should fulfil the requirements defined by the Berlin Declaration;
- The Funders will ensure jointly the establishment of robust criteria and requirements for the services that compliant high quality Open Access journals and Open Access platforms must provide;
- In case such high quality Open Access journals or platforms do not yet exist, the Funders will, in a coordinated way, provide incentives to establish and support them when appropriate; support will also be provided for Open Access infrastructures where necessary;
- Where applicable, Open Access publication fees are covered by the Funders or universities, not by individual researchers; it is acknowledged that all scientists should be able to publish their work Open Access even if their institutions have limited means;
- When Open Access publication fees are applied, their funding is standardised and capped (across Europe);
- The Funders will ask universities, research organisations, and libraries to align their policies and strategies, notably to ensure transparency;
- The above principles shall apply to all types of scholarly publications, but it is understood that the timeline to achieve Open Access for monographs and books may be longer than 1 January 2020;
- The importance of open archives and repositories for hosting research outputs is acknowledged because of their long-term archiving function and their potential for editorial innovation;
- The ‘hybrid’ model of publishing is not compliant with the above principles;
- The Funders will monitor compliance and sanction non-compliance.

1. Authors will retain copyright.
2. Content will be published under an open license which fulfils the requirements defined by the Berlin Declaration.
3. All scientists should be able to publish Open Access even if they have limited means.
4. Publications fees should be standardised or capped.
5. The hybrid model of publishing is not compliant with the principles.

Science Without Publication Paywalls  
a Preamble to:

## **cOAlition S for the Realisation of Full and Immediate Open Access**

Open Access is Foundational to  
the Scientific Enterprise

A Decisive Step Towards the  
Realisation of Full Open Access  
Needs to be Taken Now

We are aware that there may be attempts to misuse the Open Access model of publishing by publishers that provide poor or non-existent editorial services (e.g. the so-called 'predatory' publishers). We will therefore support initiatives that establish robust quality criteria for Open Access publishing, such as the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) and the Directory of Open Access Books (DOAB).

DOAJ:  
What are we doing??  
Our mission

## It is all about...

Making Open Access journals more  
attractive as publishing channels!

The mission of DOAJ is to help publishers do a  
better job in making their journals **attractive,**  
**transparent** publishing channels on a global  
scale

Who benefits from the work we  
are doing?



# Who benefits from the work we are doing?

- DOAJ enables **researchers, students** and the **public** to search for good open access journals, and by that prevents the use of unethical or questionable journals.
- DOAJ allow **researchers, and those who advise them**, to find proper publishing channels, and even such that complies with their **funder policies and mandates**.

# Who benefits from the work we are doing?

- Research managers:
  - are using DOAJ and DOAJ data to determine whether researchers are publishing in good open access journals.
  - use DOAJ to monitor compliance with open access policies and mandates.

# Who benefits from the work we are doing?

- Authors/researchers:
  - DOAJ is a reference point for researchers looking for good publishing channels within their field of research, they can check whether a journal complies with funder or university open access mandates. By using DOAJ for identifying good open access journals they can be reassured that they do not submit their papers to questionable journals.

# Who benefits from the work we are doing?

- Research funders
  - look to DOAJ to check for good open access journals, to check whether they comply with their policies and mandates,
  - several funders have open access publication funds and often listing in DOAJ is an eligibility criterion for getting support
  - operate list of Approved Publication Channels and want good OA-journals included

# Who benefits from the work we are doing?

- Libraries:
  - Libraries are providing advice to researchers as to where to publish, and DOAJ is an important tool in that regard.
  - Libraries are often the managers of open access publication funds at universities, more often than not listing in DOAJ is mandatory for journals to be eligible for support from such open access publication funds.

# Who benefits from the work we are doing?

- Publishers/Learned Societies:
  - Publishers are an important stakeholder group in relation to the DOAJ. Listing in the DOAJ, this provides a **stamp of quality**.
  - The DOAJ criteria offer a checklist describing **best practice** that is useful for new enterprises, scholar publishers and publishers moving from a subscription-based portfolio to including open access titles.
  - The value of the DOAJ to publishers is demonstrated in the number of sponsorships the service receives.
  - Learned Societies are also important stakeholders. DOAJ helps societies understand the basic requirements of open access and help them to find a best way of switching from a society journal to an open access journal by redefining their source of income.

# How do we work?

- Journals apply via the application form
- The application form is available in 13 languages

# The application form

- The new application form:
- <http://doaj.org/application/new>

## DOAJ Journal Application Form

All the information provided will help our Editorial Team with their assessment, to help them make an informed decision based on the information that you provide.

If you know a journal that should be in DOAJ, please contact the publisher and ask them to complete this form.

BEFORE YOU START, please remember that **all** the content of the journal you are applying about **must** be available **immediately** upon publication.

### Basic Journal Information

1) Journal Title \*

2) URL \*

3) Alternative Title

4) Journal ISSN (print version) \*

Only provide the print ISSN if your journal has one, otherwise leave this field blank. Write the ISSN with the hyphen "-" e.g. 1234-4321.

5) Journal ISSN (online version) \*

Write the EISSN with the hyphen "-" e.g. 1234-4321.

6) Publisher \*

### Quality and Transparency of the Editorial Process

34) What is the URL for the Editorial Board page? \*

The journal must have either an editor or an editorial board with at least 5 clearly identifiable members and affiliation information. We may ask for affiliation information and email addresses as part of our checks.

35) Please select the review process for papers \*

36) Enter the URL where this information can be found \*

This field is optional if you have selected "None" above.

37) What is the URL for the journal's Aims & Scope \*

Capture a Rectangul



# Best Practice

# The principles of Transparency and Best Practice in Scholarly Communication

- The Principles are very much inspired by the initial draft of the new DOAJ criteria, apply not only for Open Access publishing and has developed into de-facto standards.

## Principles of Transparency and Best Practice in Scholarly Publishing

### Introduction

The [Committee on Publication Ethics](#), the Directory of Open Access Journals, the [Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association](#) and the [World Association of Medical Editors](#) are scholarly organizations that have seen an increase in the number, and broad range in the quality of, membership applications. Our organizations have collaborated in an effort to identify principles of transparency and best practice for scholarly publications and to clarify that these principles form part of the criteria on which membership applications will be evaluated.

These criteria are largely derived from those developed by the Directory of Open Access Journals. Note that additional membership criteria may also be used by each of the scholarly organizations. The organizations will not share information about applications received. We do not intend to develop or publish a list of publishers or journals that failed to demonstrate they met the criteria for transparency and best practice.

UPDATE: This is the second version of a work in progress (published June 2015); the first version was posted in January 2014. We encourage its wide dissemination and continue to welcome feedback on the general principles and the specific criteria. Background on the organizations is below.

### Principles of Transparency

#### 1. Peer review process

Journal content must be clearly marked as whether peer reviewed or not. Peer review is defined as obtaining advice on individual manuscripts from reviewers expert in the field who are not part of the journal's editorial staff. This process, as well as any policies related to the journal's peer

- <https://doaj.org/bestpractice>

# The Principles

1. **Peer review process**
2. **Governing Body**
3. **Editorial team/contact**
4. **Author fees**
5. **Copyright**
6. **Identification of and dealing with allegations of research misconduct**
7. **Ownership and management**
8. **Web site.**
9. **Name of journal**
10. **Conflicts of interest**
11. **Access**
12. **Revenue sources**
13. **Advertising**
14. **Publishing schedule**
15. **Archiving**
16. **Direct marketing**

# How do we work?

- Journals apply via the application form
- So far DOAJ is not actively going out to solicit applications
- Lots of information is provided to enable journals to produce a good and detailed application
- Applications are initially triaged
- We receive around 400/month

# Information for Publishers

- 1) How to become a Publisher Member
- 2) Publishing best practice and basic standards for inclusion
- 2a) Copyright, Licensing and Publishing Rights
- 3) Applying for your journal to be in DOAJ
- 4) If your application is accepted
- 5) If your application is rejected
- 6) Publishing disclaimer
- 7) How to get your journal content / article metadata indexed in DOAJ. Uploading content.
- 8) What to do if your XML upload fails
- 9) Troubleshooting your XML upload
- 10) My journal has changed title and ISSN(s)
- 11) How to correct an error in article metadata on DOAJ
- 12) How to make a complaint or appeal
- 13) Does "no Seal" mean we are not indexed in DOAJ?
- 14) FAQs

<https://doaj.org/publishers#licensing>

# three-tier evaluation proces



**Associate Editors:** reviewing applications, communicate with publishers, recommend inclusion/rejection

**Editors:** allocating applications to Associate Editors, recommend inclusion/rejection

**Managing Editors:** allocate applications to Editors & decide on inclusion/rejection

# We are asking about...

- The editorial board
- The peer review process
- Archiving/preservation
- Plagiarism
- Openness
  - Licensing and copyright
  - Re-use rights
- Charges
- ... and much, much more

# Editorial “quality”

- **QUALITY AND TRANSPARENCY OF THE EDITORIAL PROCESS**
- The journal must have an editor or an editorial board, all members must be easily identified
- Specification of the review process
  - Editorial review, Peer review., Blind peer review, Double blind peer review, Open Peer Review, Other
- Statements about aims & scope clearly visible
- Instructions to authors shall be available and easily located
- Screening for plagiarism?
- Time from submission to publication



## Quality and Transparency of the Editorial Process

34) What is the URL for the Editorial Board page? \*

The journal must have either an editor or an editorial board with at least 5 clearly identifiable members including affiliation information and email addresses.

35) Please select the review process for papers \*

36) Enter the URL where this information can be found \*

This field is optional if you have selected "None" above.

Specify what kind of review process is applied: Editorial review, Peer Review, Blind Peer Review, Double Blind Peer Review, Open Peer Review

- Openness, Reuse& Remixing rights, Licensing, Copyrights and Permissions!

## How Open is the Journal?

Please remember that **all** the content of the journal you are applying about **must** be available **immediately** upon publication.

42) What is the URL for the journal's Open Access statement? \*

# Reuse/remix

45) Does the journal allow reuse and remixing of its content, in accordance with a CC license? \*

- ☐ CC-BY
- ☐ CC-BY-NC
- ☐ CC-BY-NC-ND
- ☐ CC-BY-ND
- ☐ CC-BY-SA
- ☐ No
- ☒ Other

For more information go to  
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/>

46) Which of the following does the content require? (Tick all that apply.)

- ☐ Attribution
- ☐ No Commercial Usage
- ☐ No Derivatives
- ☐ Share Alike

47) Enter the URL on your site where your license terms are stated

47) Enter the URL on your site  
where your license terms are  
stated

48) Does the journal allow readers  
to 'read, download, copy,  
distribute, print, search, or link to  
the full texts' of its articles? \*

☐ Yes

☐ No

From the [Budapest Open Access Initiative's definition  
of Open Access](#)

## Copyright and Permissions

50) Does the journal allow the author(s) to hold the copyright without restrictions? \*

☐ Yes

☐ No

☒ Other

51) Enter the URL where this information can be found \*

52) Will the journal allow the author(s) to retain publishing rights without restrictions? \*

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Other

- Archiving is important – too many OA-journals do not have an archiving arrangement

23) What digital archiving policy does the journal use? \*

- ☐ No policy in place
- ☐ LOCKSS
- ☐ CLOCKSS
- ☐ Portico
- ☐ PMC/Europe PMC/PMC Canada
- ☐ A national library
- ☐ Other

Select all that apply. Institutional archives and publishers' own online archives are not valid

24) Enter the URL where this information can be found \*

This field is optional if you have only selected "No policy in place" above

25) Does the journal allow anyone to crawl the full-text of the journal? \*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

# Plagiarism etc

39) Does the journal have a policy  
of screening for plagiarism? \*

☒ Yes

☐ No

If "No" proceed to question below

40) Enter the URL where this  
information can be found \*

41) What is the average number of  
weeks between submission and  
publication? \*

# Charges

13) Does the journal have article processing charges (APCs)? \*

- ☒ Yes  
☐ No

If "No" proceed to question below

14) Amount \*

15) Currency \*

16) Does the journal have article submission charges? \*

- ☐ Yes  
☒ No

If "No" proceed to question below

21) Does the journal have a waiver policy (for developing country authors etc)? \*

- ☒ Yes  
☐ No

22) Enter the URL where this information can be found \*



## **Must haves for journals to be listed:**

- An Open Access statement
- Comply with the BOAI definition
- A peer-review process, and describe the kind of process
- An editor/editorial board with clearly identifiable members
- Licensing and copyright information
- Aims and scope
- Published a least 5 articles per year to qualify

## **Recommendations to journals wanting to be listed**

- Unrestricted copyright for the author
- No exclusive publishing rights
- No transfer of commercial rights
- Clear licensing conditions
- Preferably use of Creative Commons licensing
- Embedded licensing information with articles
- No mention of impact factors

How much do we work??











# How much do we work?

- Applications handled since March 2014:

Application Status		
10	count ↓	OR
Rejected (14953)		
Accepted (12944)		
Pending (718)		
In Progress (221)		
On Hold (103)		
Completed (61)		
Update Request (52)		
Ready (39)		
Revisions Required (13)		

# Dissemination!

- More than 14.6 million sessions
- Almost 9 million users
- 34 million page views / average of 2.3 pages per session
- Average session duration 3 minutes
- New visitors 62%
- API usage (2018 until July19th): 130,804,030
- API usage (2017): 187,212,674

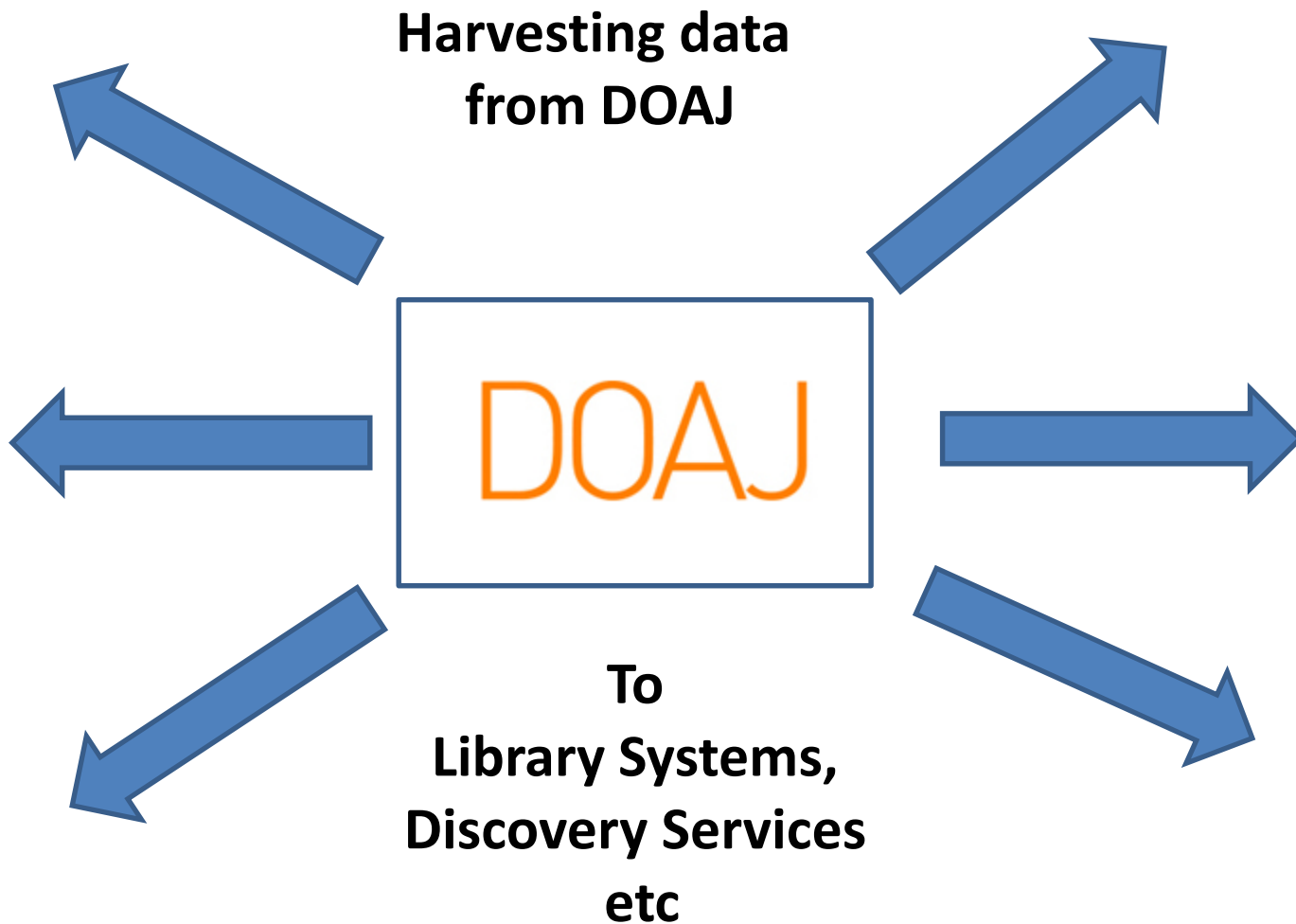
Country ?	Acquisition	
	Sessions ? ↓	% New Sessions ?
	<b>14,667,328</b> % of Total: 100.00% (14,667,328)	<b>61.77%</b> Avg for View: 61.77% (0.00%)
1.  United States	<b>3,736,948</b> (25.48%)	64.33%
2.  United Kingdom	<b>1,515,406</b> (10.33%)	56.17%
3.  Indonesia	<b>1,250,930</b> (8.53%)	54.44%
4.  Brazil	<b>941,027</b> (6.42%)	60.01%
5.  Australia	<b>754,996</b> (5.15%)	58.44%
6.  Canada	<b>706,133</b> (4.81%)	61.72%
7.  India	<b>424,000</b> (2.89%)	68.87%
8.  China	<b>379,459</b> (2.59%)	69.12%
9.  Spain	<b>278,681</b> (1.90%)	64.07%
10.  Germany	<b>268,581</b> (1.83%)	65.65%

# DOAJ is aggregating article level metadata



3.350.000 article metadata records





Who we are

# The DOAJ core team

- Managing Director
  - Operations Manager
  - Project and Communications Manager
  - Editor-in-Chief
  - Senior Managing Editor
  - 6 Managing Editors
  - We are based in Sweden, United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Italy, Spain, India & Denmark
- And...

# Volunteers and Ambassadors

- 50+ **Voluntary** Editors/Associate Editors working unpaid a few hours/week – distributed in editorial groups managing 20+ languages
- 20 **Ambassadors** recruited to
  - Promote DOAJ
  - Handle applications of journals to be listed in DOAJ
  - Promote best publishing practice and
  - Help identifying and spotting questionable and unethical publishers
- Ambassadors are based in
  - China, India, Russia, Egypt, Ethiopia, Burkina Faso, Algeria, South Africa and Mexico, Indonesia & Korea – covering Asia, Middle East, Africa and Latin America

How are we funded??

# Funding

- DOAJ is independent and entirely dependent on funding from the community
  - Universities, university libraries and library consortia can support DOAJ with a yearly membership fee - <https://doaj.org/membership>
  - Smaller publishers can as well support DOAJ via a yearly membership fee – minimum £ (GBP) 200/year - <https://doaj.org/support>
  - Larger publishers can sponsor DOAJ - <https://doaj.org/sponsors>.

# Funding

- 400+ University **libraries** from 28 countries
- 16 **Library** Consortia from 13 Countries
- 10 Research Funders/Academies of Science
- 35+ smaller publishers
- 20+ Sponsors - publishers and aggregators

Questionable or unethical  
publishers



Questionable publishing is **not** a  
phenomenon that is specific to  
Open Access publishing!

## October 2013

### NEWS

#### Who's Afraid of Peer Review?

John Bohannon

Dozens of open-access journals targeted in an elaborate *Science* sting accepted a spoof research article, raising questions about peer-review practices in much of the open-access world.

## February 2014

### NATURE | NEWS



#### Publishers withdraw more than 120 gibberish papers

Conference proceedings removed from subscription databases after scientist reveals that they were computer-generated.

## Questionable publishers

- Predatory publishers – (Beall)

- Definition of predatory:
  - inclined or intended to **injure or exploit** others for personal gain or **profit** (Merriam-Webster)
- A predatory publisher can then be described as
  - a publisher who **intends to injure or exploit** others for personal gain or **profit**.
-

- Consider this:
- “Does **exploiting the divide between libraries** (that typically pay for subscriptions) **and scholars** (who typically use the subscriptions) in order to make **extraordinary high profits** constitute predatory conduct?”
- or this:
- “Does **continuing to raise prices at several times the rate of inflation**, even as those increases cause direct injury to libraries by robbing them of budget flexibility or even make it impossible for them to continue to provide resources – does that constitute **predatory publishing**?”

Questionable publishers – many names:

- ~~Predatory publishers – (Beall)~~
- Illegitimate publishers – no law regulating academic publishing
- Deceptive publishers
- Unethical publishers
- In DOAJ we call them:
- **Questionable publishers**

Our definition:

Questionable publishers is  
publishers, who are **not living up** to  
reasonable standards in terms of  
**content, services, transparency** and  
**business behavior.**

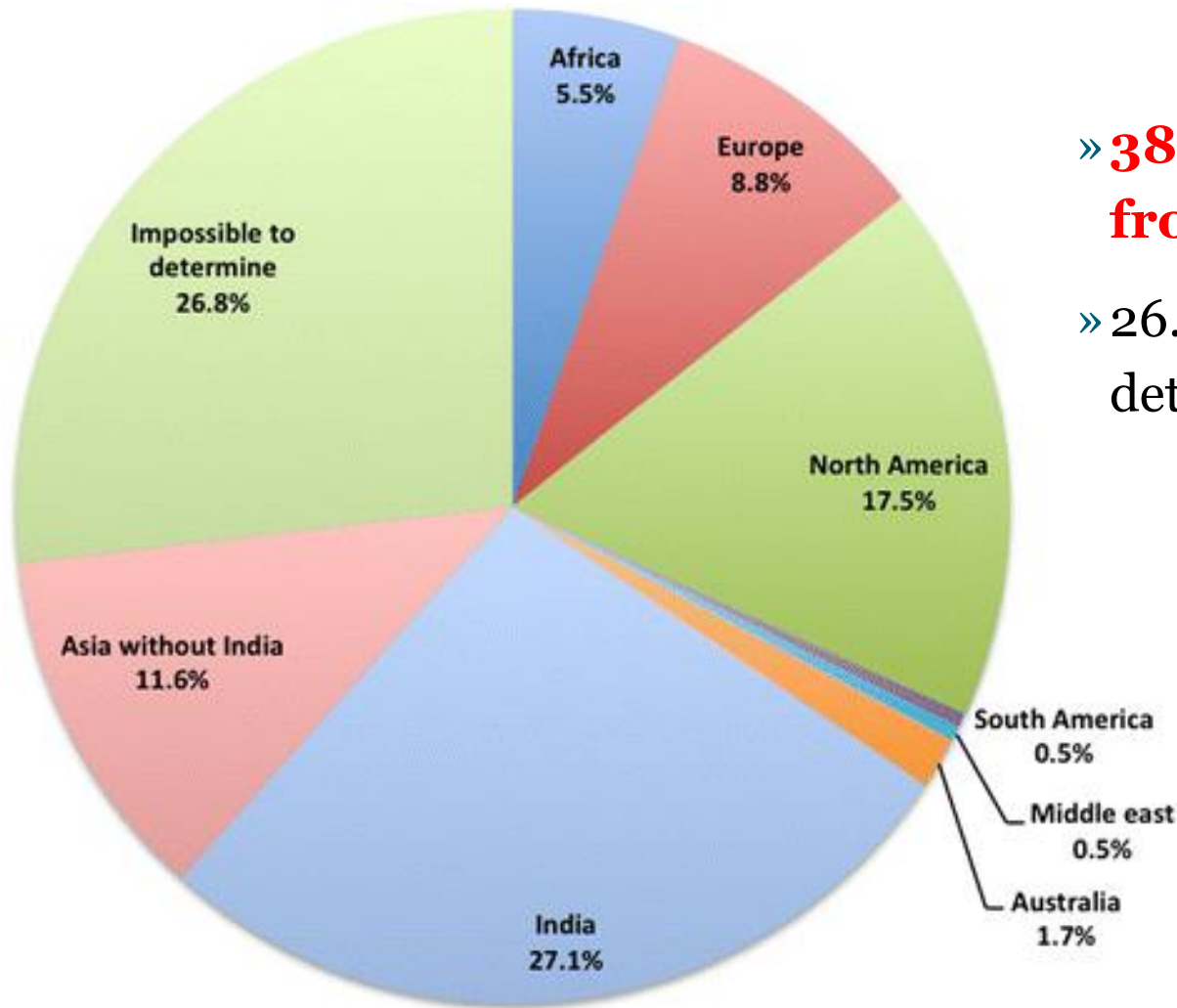
# The numbers

- Questionable publishers is a problem!!
  - But how big a problem is it??
  - Shen & Björk (2014): 8.000 journals/420.000 papers
  - Crawford (2014): 3275 (active) journals/121.000
  - But it is still a problem!!
- 
- Shen & Björk: <https://bmcmecine.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12916-015-0469-2>
  - Crawford: <https://walt.lishost.org/2017/04/the-problems-with-shenbjorks-420000/>



# Main Results

## country of publishers

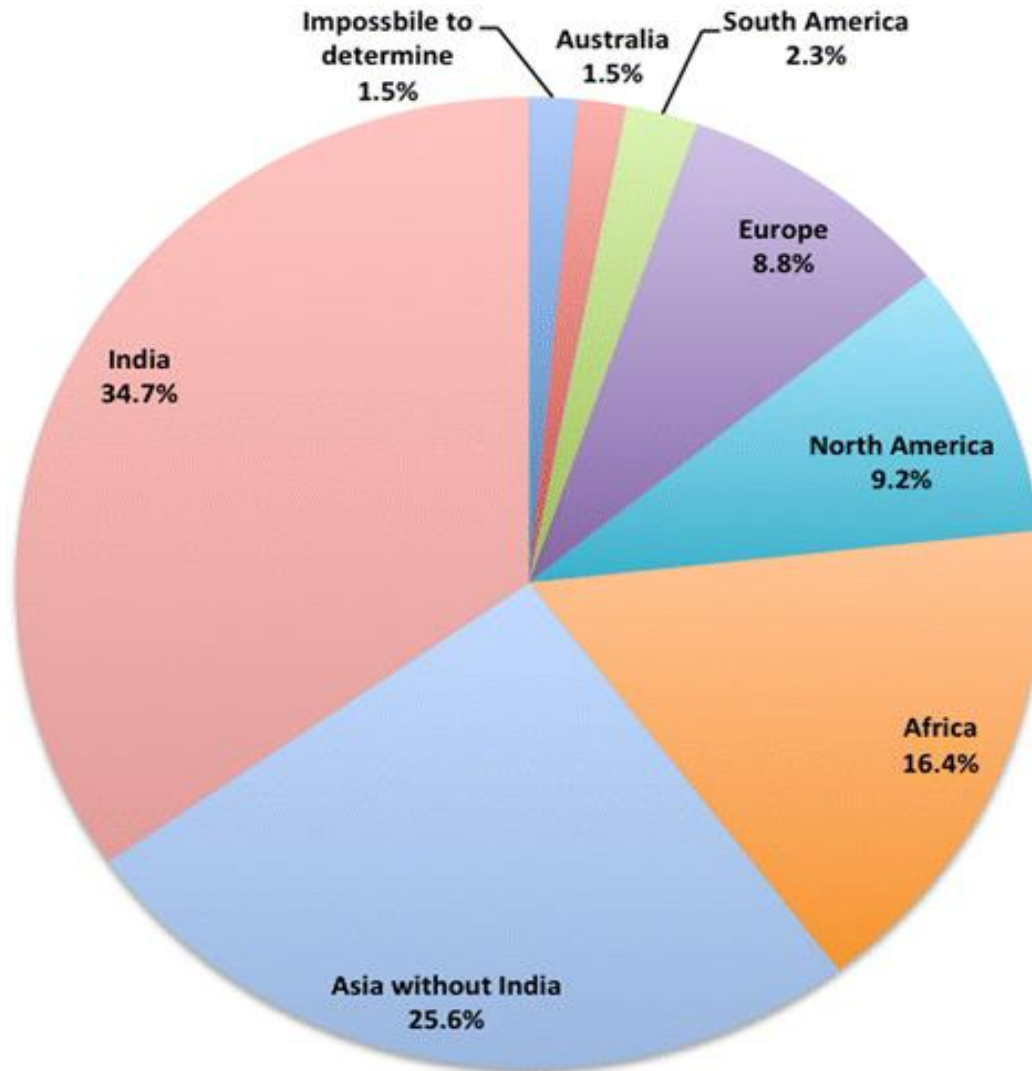


» **38.7% -Asia (27.1% from India)**

» 26.8% -Impossible to determine

from Shen & Björk)

# Main Results country of authors



» **60.3% - Asia (34.7% from India)**

» 16.4% - Africa

from Shen & Björk)

- Why are researchers publishing in questionable journals?
  - Ignorance – lack of attention to the faith of the paper
  - Aggressive marketing cheats researchers
  - Publish or Perish – get something on my C.V. – subito! – pays off!
  - Research Assessment – decision makers counting beans!
  - Exclusion

# Reducing the attraction

- Research managers/funders/decision makers:
  - Research assessment based on actual assessment of the research!!
  - OA-publishing mandates
  - Lists of accredited publishing channels!?
- Professors/PI/research managers:
  - Make **Publishing Literacy** an integral part of (training in) Research Integrity

# How to spot Questionable Publishers/Journals

# The 5 minute check

- Competent web-site?
- Mass e-mails asking for editors and submissions?
- In the DOAJ? – if not: worrying
- Usage statistics?
- Stable in the discipline?
- Misspelled journal titles?
- Journal launch dates – many at the same time?
- Empty shells- no/few articles?
- Check list from Gavia Library (the library loon) -<http://gavialib.com/2012/04/assessing-the-scaminess-of-a-purported-open-access-publisher/> – april 2012

# The 5 minute check

- Regularly publishing?
- Many “Edited volumes”?
- Quality of writing, copyediting and typesetting?
- Archiving arrangement?
- Editorial Board – identifiable?
- Other financial support – only relying on APCs?
- Relevant Advertising?
- Running many/expensive conferences?

# How we spot them!

- . How does DOAJ detect questionable journals?
- . Our approach is based on:
  - . the Principles of Transparency and Best Practice in Scholarly Publishing



- COPE, OASPA, WAME & DOAJ:

## **Principles of Transparency and Best Practice in Scholarly Publishing**

### **Introduction**

The Committee on Publication Ethics, the Directory of Open Access Journals, the Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association, and the World Association of Medical Editors are scholarly organizations that have seen an increase in the number of membership applications from both legitimate and non-legitimate publishers and journals. Our organizations have collaborated in an effort to identify principles of transparency and best practice that set apart legitimate journals and publishers from non-legitimate ones and to clarify that these principles form part of the criteria on which membership applications will be evaluated.

These criteria are largely derived from those developed by the Directory of Open Access Journals. Note that additional membership criteria may also be used by each of the scholarly organizations. The organizations intend to share information in order to develop lists of legitimate journals and publishers. We do not intend to develop or publish a list of publishers or journals that failed to demonstrate they met the criteria for transparency and best practice.

This is a work in progress and we welcome feedback on the general principles and the specific criteria. Background on the organizations is below.

- <https://doaj.org/bestpractice>

## How does DOAJ detect questionable journals?

- Low publishing quality
  - Journal name, website, fees, peer review, publisher, ownership, volume of articles, advertisements, prominent soliciting for editors, ambiguous company address, many journals and few articles
- Low scientific quality
  - focus, format, self-citations, plagiarism
- Malpractice
  - false claims, hidden costs, spamming authors, wrong information,

- Inappropriate marketing practices
  - Spam emails
- Journal titles with “International”, “American” or “European”
- Very broad scope, multidisciplinary
- Fake impact factors
- Advertise very quick publishing
- Advertise a relative low publication fee
- No or little quality control of articles
- Low-standard peer review process or even don't have peer review at all

- It is the **complete** assessment of the journal/publisher that forms the final picture.
- A minor set of shortcomings isn't enough "evidence" to label someone a Questionable Publisher.
- Shortcomings often based on lack of knowledge!
- We are in it to help honest publishers do a better job!!

- The Blacklist approach:
  - Stigmatize publishers/journals
- The DOAJ approach:
  - assist publishers to improve and become more transparent, and keep Questionable Publishers out!

# Whitelists

- An increasing number of Governments and Research Funders are developing Lists of Accredited Publishing Channels as a basis for
  - Research evaluation
  - Rewards systems and promotion
  - Resource allocation
- In case Open Access Policies or Mandates are in place many look to DOAJ for good Open Access Journals

## Promoting OA journals in National Whitelists

- Examples:
- The Science Europe Recommendations:
  - DOAJ recognized in line with Web of Science and Scopus
- The Nordic Research Councils collaborate on a whitelist and supports DOAJ
- Indonesia and other countries
- Many universities have DOAJ listing as a criteria for supporting APC payments for their researchers
- News: Plan S, by Science Europe, the European Research Council & the European Commission refers to DOAJ as the reliable resource for quality Open Access Journals - [https://www.scienceeurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/cOAlitionS\\_Preamble.pdf](https://www.scienceeurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/cOAlitionS_Preamble.pdf)

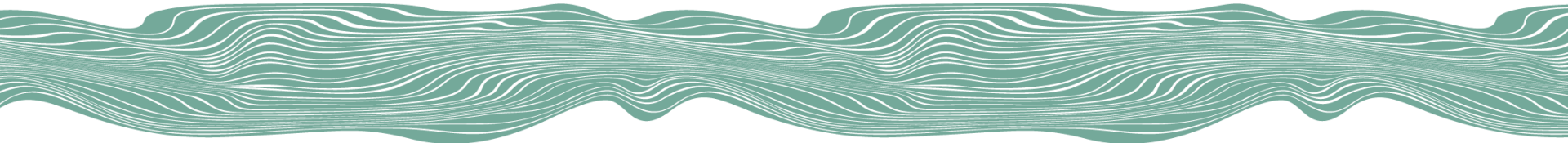




Vetenskapsrådet

# THE NORDIC LIST

**An international collaborative tool for publication  
analysis with relevance for  
open access**



# Collaboration with DOAJ

- In March 2017 a collaboration was started between DOAJ and the Nordic List consortium
- The consortium would like to use DOAJ as a partner in evaluating open access policies of publications channels
- This is an attempt to increase the effectiveness of the Nordic collaboration and also to be able to highlight good practice in publishing

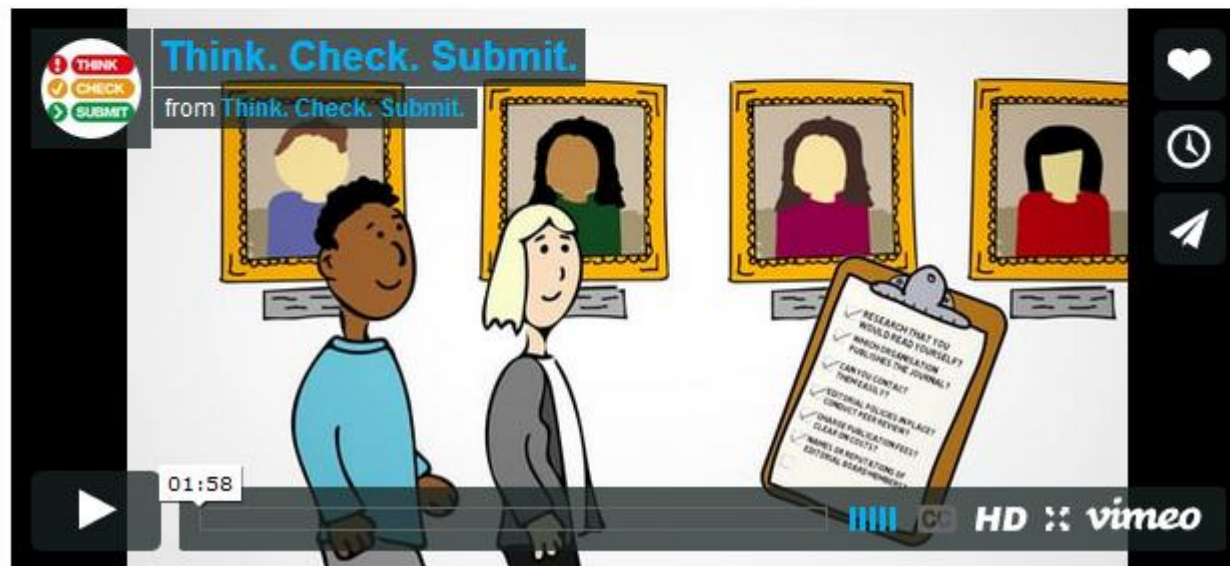


More help to researchers  
to avoid Questionable  
Publishers

It's easy: encourage them  
to **think!!!**



Choose the right journal for your research



**Think. Check. Submit.** is a campaign to help researchers identify trusted journals for their research. It is a simple checklist researchers can use to assess the credentials of a journal or publisher.



**Choose the right journal for your research**



**Are you submitting your research to a trusted journal?  
Is it the right journal for your work?**

- More research is being published worldwide.
- New journals are launched each week.
- Stories of publisher malpractice and deception are also on the rise.
- It can be challenging to find up-to-date guidance when choosing where to publish.

**How can you be sure the journal you are considering is the right journal for your research?**





**Choose the right journal for your research**



**Reference this list for your chosen journal to check if it is trusted.**

- Do you or your colleagues know the journal?
  - Have you read any articles in the journal before?
  - Is it easy to discover the latest papers in the journal?

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- Can you easily identify and contact the publisher?
  - Is the publisher name clearly displayed on the journal website?
  - Can you contact the publisher by telephone, email, and post?

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- Is the journal clear about the type of peer review it uses?

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- Are articles indexed in services that you use?

---

- Is it clear what fees will be charged?
  - Does the journal site explain what these fees are for and when they will be charged?

---



**Choose the right journal for your research**



- Do you recognise the editorial board?
    - Have you heard of the editorial board members?
    - Do the editorial board mention the journal on their own websites?
- 
- Is the publisher a member of a recognized industry initiative?
    - Do they belong to the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) ?
    - If the journal is open access, is it listed in the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) ?
    - If the journal is open access, does the publisher belong to the Open Access Scholarly Publishers' Association (OASPA) ?
    - Is the journal hosted on one of INASP's Journals Online platforms (for journals published in Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Central America and Mongolia) or on African Journals Online (AJOL, for African journals)?
    - Is the publisher a member of another trade association?
-



**If you can answer 'yes' to most or all of the questions on the list.**

Complete the check list and submit your article only if you are happy you can answer 'yes' to most or all of the questions.

- You need to be confident your chosen journal will have a suitable profile among your peers to enhance your reputation and your chance of gaining citations.
- Publishing in the right journal for your research will raise your professional profile, and help you progress in your career.
- Your paper should be indexed or archived and be easily discoverable.
- You should expect a professional publishing experience where your work is reviewed and edited.
- Only then should you submit your article.





Choose the right journal for your research



**Contributing organizations:**

- [Asian Council of Science Editors \(ACSE\)](#)

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- [Association of Learned & Professional Society Publishers \(ALPSP\)](#)

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- [Committee on Publication Ethics \(COPE\)](#)

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- [Directory of Open Access Journals \(DOAJ\)](#)

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- [INASP](#)

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- [ISSN International Centre](#)

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- [Ligue des Bibliothèques Européennes de Recherche – Association of European Research Libraries \(LIBER\)](#)

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- [Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association \(OASPA\)](#)

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- [SPARC Europe](#)

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- [International Association of STM Publishers \(STM\)](#)

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- [UKSG](#)

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**THINK**



**CHECK**



**SUBMIT**

Choose the right journal for your research

## LANGUAGE

- |                                |                     |                     |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| • <u>Arabic</u>                | • <u>Hindi</u>      | • <u>Romanian</u>   |
| • <u>Catalan</u>               | • <u>Indonesian</u> | • <u>Russian</u>    |
| • <u>Chinese (Simplified)</u>  | • <u>Italian</u>    | • <u>Slovak</u>     |
| • <u>Chinese (Traditional)</u> | • <u>Japanese</u>   | • <u>Spanish</u>    |
| • <u>Czech</u>                 | • <u>Kazakh</u>     | • <u>Ukrainian</u>  |
| • <u>Farsi</u>                 | • <u>Korean</u>     | • <u>Tamil</u>      |
| • <u>French</u>                | • <u>Lithuanian</u> | • <u>Thai</u>       |
| • <u>German</u>                | • <u>Mongolian</u>  | • <u>Vietnamese</u> |
| • <u>Greek</u>                 | • <u>Portuguese</u> |                     |



Choose the right journal for your research

Home

Think

Check

Submit

About

Languages

**SLOVAK**

## ! Premýšľať

Posielate svoj článok do dôveryhodného časopisu?

Je tento časopis relevantný pre váš výskum?

- Vo svete vychádza stále viac vedeckých publikácií.
- Každý týždeň vznikajú nové vedecké časopisy.
- Čoraz častejšie možno naraziť na podvodné praktiky a nedodržiavanie štandardov zo strany vydavateľov.
- V súčasnej neprehľadnej situácii nie je ľahké nájsť aktuálne rady, kde publikovať.
- Ako si teda môžete overiť, či je časopis, nad ktorým uvažujete, pre vás ten správny?

## ✓ Preveriť

Dôveryhodnosť vybraného časopisu si môžete preveriť pomocou nasledujúceho zoznamu otázok.

- Poznáte ten časopis vy, alebo niekto z vašich kolegov?
  - Už ste čítali články z toho časopisu?
  - Je ľahké nájsť najnovšie články toho časopisu?

- Definuje časopis jasne druh a podmienky recenzného konania?
- Sú články časopisu indexované v službách a databázach, ktoré používate?
- Uvádza časopis jednoznačne aké poplatky požaduje?
  - Vysvetľuje stránka časopisu účel týchto poplatkov a kedy ich treba zaplatiť?
- Poznáte redakčnú radu?
  - Spoznávate mená niektorých členov redakčnej rady?
  - Zmieňujú členovia redakčnej rady časopis na svojich vlastných stránkach?
- Angažuje sa vydavateľ v niektorých zo známych iniciatív?
  - Je členom Komisie pre publikačnú etiku (Committee on Publication Ethics, [COPE](#))?
  - Ak časopis patrí do kategórie open access (ponúka otvorený prístup k plnému obsahu), je uvedený v zozname Adresára časopisov s otvoreným prístupom (Directory of Open Access Journals, [DOAJ](#))?
  - Ak časopis patrí do kategórie open access, je jeho vydavateľ členom Open Access Scholarly Publishers' Association ([OASPA](#))?
  - Je časopis podporovaný na jednej z platiem Medzinárodnej siete pre dostupnosť vedeckých publikácií – International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications, [INASP](#) (pre časopisy vydávané v Bangladéši, Nepále, na Srí Lanke, v Strednej Amerike a Mongolsku) alebo African Journals Online ([AJOL](#), pre africké časopisy)?
  - Je vydavateľ členom inej odbornej asociácie?

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## > Publikovať

Odpovedali ste „áno“ na väčšinu alebo všetky otázky zo zoznamu?

Ostáva ešte niekoľko dôležitých kritérií a ak vami vybraný časopis spĺňa aj tie, môžete v ňom pokojne publikovať.

- Aby vaša práca mohla získať zaslúžený citačný ohlas, mal by mať vybraný časopis dobrú povest medzi odborníkmi vo vašej oblasti výskumu.
- Vybraný časopis by mal byť dostatočne kvalitný a zodpovedať charakteru vášho výskumu, aby publikovanie v ňom pozdvihlo váš odborný kredit a urýchlilo kariéru.
- Váš článok by mal byť indexovaný, archivovaný a ľahko vyhľadateľný.
- Časopis by mal poskytovať štandardné recenzné konanie (peer review) s profesionálnym posúdením a opravou chýb.
- Ak je to tak, môžete doň bez obáv podať svoj článok.

Many thanks to Zuzana Stozicka of the [Slovak Centre of Scientific and Technical Information](#) for this translation.

<http://thinkchecksubmit.org/>

and of course:

Check DOAJ – if the journals is not  
listed, then:

Take Care!!

## DOAJ – some numbers (September 2018)

- Number of Journals in DOAJ: 12.000
- Number of Articles linked in DOAJ: 3.350.000
- Number of Countries represented: 128
- Applications rejected: 14.920
- Rejection Rate: 54%
- Number of journals removed: 6000
- Number of Publishers (Journals) inadmissible for 1 year or more: 316 (3123)
- Number of new Applications /Month: >400

# DOAJ – much more than a list of journals!

- A global list of peer-reviewed Open Access journals – all subjects and languages
  - journals undergo evaluation based on a set of criteria
  - 12.000 titles (September 2018)
- An aggregation of article level metadata
  - Publishers upload article metadata into DOAJ
  - 75% of the journals do so
  - Currently 3.350.000 records
- All DOAJ services and data are free for all to use, download and re-use

# Collaboration!

- COPE, OASPA, WAME – the Principles of Transparency and Best Practice of Scholarly Publishing
- Keepers' Registry – certified archiving organizations
- (OJS) PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE PROJECT
- RESEARCH4LIFE – screening OA-journals
- ISSN
- OASPA, STM, ALPSP, LIBER etc:



- [www.thinkchecksubmit.org](http://www.thinkchecksubmit.org)



DOAJ depends entirely on donations



## Become a member or make a donation

DOAJ Membership is recommended for those who can support the DOAJ with an annual fixed contribution (annual automatic payment). Members are listed on the [DOAJ Membership page](#), can use their DOAJ membership status and our logo for marketing activities. You may also make a donation of any amount that you wish (invoiced annually) and be listed as a [DOAJ Supporter](#). If you publish or own an Open Access journal, you may prefer to become a [Publisher Member](#). You will be listed on our [Publisher Members page](#) and will receive our newsletter.

<https://doaj.org/membership>

- ALLEA Members supporting DOAJ:
  - Austrian Academy of Sciences
  - Several of the centres in the network of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences
  - The Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences
  - Interested in supporting the work we do?
  - Contact [lars@doaj.org](mailto:lars@doaj.org)

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