in this issue  JUNE 2017

ARTICLES

2  ORCID Continues to Bloom  
   By Meghan McDevitt

3  ISMTE Member Profile: Facilitator of the Australian ISMTE Group  
   By Anke van Eekelen, PhD

4  Publication Ethics—Moral Principles and Cultural Dissonance  
   By Nick Rushby

11  Transparency in Review  
    By Meghan McDevitt

MISCELLANEOUS

10  Grammatic Fanatic Comic
12  Committee Update
13  From the Forum
18  Calendar
ORCID Continues to Bloom

By Meghan McDevitt
Managing Editor
The Journal of Pediatrics

On April 27, a diverse group of about 30 attendees representing publishers, journals, universities, academic libraries, and even software and biotech companies met in Chicago for ORCID’s Roadshow Event, ORCID for Researchers and Organizations: Why, What, and How?

Why and What

Three representatives from ORCID, Laure Haak, Liz Krznarich, and Alice Meadows, began the meeting with an overview of ORCID’s early goals and vision, ORCID’s current state five years in, and some insight into what’s next. ORCID grew out of a need for a unique personal identifier for career researchers to aid in name disambiguation—but it’s applicability is wide-reaching. You can read more about ORCID’s beginnings and recent pursuits in previous EON articles.1,2,3 With the rollout of a new version of their API and updated best practice guidelines and communications toolkit to be released soon, ORCID remains a key player for unique identifiers in the scholarly communications field.

Case Studies

Several institutions and groups presented throughout the day, providing insight into the how’s of implementing an ORCID integration. Universities are integrating ORCID into their systems, encouraging and sometimes requiring faculty and students to use their ORCID iDs for grants and publications. Increasingly, funders are requiring ORCID iDs, and if researcher’s iDs are collected and authenticated at a project’s conception, the researcher can be linked to his/her activity throughout the entire process, thus allowing for proper recognition and attribution. Journals and publishers are integrating ORCID iDs, encouraging authors to enter iDs at the time of submission or when finalizing proofs.

Presenters discussed their strategies for communicating the ORCID integration, ranging from YouTube videos to email letters from a Dean or department chair. Many resources are available on ORCID’s website, and they encourage the sharing and use of these materials.

For the Community

It was brought up frequently that ORCID is a community-focused organization. The ORCID representatives encouraged participation from attendees and truly wanted to hear feedback, ideas, and concerns. ORCID publicly posts Trello boards about their ongoing projects that anyone can view and comment on, and they frequently update their blog with the latest news and announcements.

All Together Now

Over the past five years, ORCID has seen tremendous growth—over three million researchers have registered for an ORCID iD, and ORCID’s membership has expanded to include nearly 650 organizations from 40 countries. As of this writing, around 1,500 journals are now requiring authors to submit ORCID iDs.

Interested in getting your journal involved? Start asking for ORCID iDs from all authors—corresponding and co-authors—and collect them in your editorial submission system. Promote ORCID to your authors and editors by providing information and resources and encourage them to be actively engaged with their scholarly record. Publish ORCID iDs in published articles following ORCID’s display guidelines. Keep up-to-date on ORCID’s efforts and consider attending an event.

Overall, it is clear that the value and impact of ORCID continues to expand and could eventually be considered just as necessary to the scholarly communications community as DOIs.

References

ISMTE Member Profile Facilitator of the Australian ISMTE Group

By Anke van Eekelen, PhD
Deputy Managing Editor
Respirology (Official Journal of the
Asian Pacific Society of
Respirology)

Five years ago, I stumbled on the opportunity to work in the editorial office of Respirology, and I could not have imagined then how much the world of science publishing would grow on me. Leaving a medical science research career behind to add a science communication degree to my track record, I now feel that as managing editor for Respirology I can bring all my previous experiences to good use. When overseeing the peer review of new submissions, it helps to have been in the shoes of authors and reviewers; when working with our publisher Wiley and authors on dissemination of research findings beyond the scholarly literature, I can use my more recently developed science communication skills. Yet what probably attracts me most in this position is working towards ethically responsible practices in science publishing to ensure a credible reputation for Respirology.

The journal’s membership of the ISMTE introduced me to the international environment in which likeminded professionals in academic publishing share advice, experiences, and resources on best practices, and my interest in these matters was certainly met by the program of the 2016 ISMTE Asian-Pacific Conference in Singapore. It was reassuring to see that the geographically and culturally diverse congregation of ISMTE members was able to discuss the latest publication processes, trends, and ethics in the context of widely supported international consensus guidelines and recommendations.

The Australian attendees at the 2016 Conference in Singapore decided to stay in touch as part of a local ISMTE group. As such, we are facing some unusual challenges, not the least because of the spread of current members over the continent, time zones, and scientific disciplines. As facilitator of the Australian ISMTE Group, I managed only once so far to organize a face-to-face lunch meeting at the 2016 Wiley Executive Seminar in Melbourne. But we remain optimistic and aim for quarterly videoconference calls to chat with each other and keep each other informed. We are also in the process of setting up our own online Q&A platform, which will allow us to help one another when more immediate advice is needed. We have already discovered that despite working in a heavily internet-driven office environment, we are not as isolated as we believed to be. The same technology can be the Downunder way of staying connected.

Call for Submissions

Are you a fan of EON? Do you have an idea for an article, column, or special section? EON is currently accepting submissions for all 2017 issues. Contact our editorial office today for more information.
Publication Ethics—Moral Principles and Cultural Dissonance

By Nick Rushby
Editor-in-Chief
Education & Self Development

Introduction

I have lived with the problems of dealing with plagiarism throughout my many years as the editor of different scholarly journals. Indeed, I encountered my first case within a few weeks of becoming the acting editor of Programmed Learning & Educational Technology in 1979. It was a baptism of fire because the two protagonists (each claimed that the other had plagiarised their work) both worked in California, and, for a while, it seemed likely that I would have to spend time on the West Coast of America as a material witness in their court case. Fortunately, the matter was resolved without the need for a legal process. I learned a great deal from the experience and developed an interest in publishing ethics.

The activities of Dissernet have raised the awareness of academic misconduct in Russian journals to a level which seems—to someone from Western Europe—to be a public outrage. For readers who are not in Russia, we need to explain that Dissernet is a network of volunteers, both from Russia and other countries, whose mission is to expose plagiarism within academia (theses and articles in scholarly journals) and government. Dissernet claims to be “independent from any government agencies, governmental or administrative entities, political movements or associations, commercial corporations or companies. Participants are working in the community, regardless of their political, corporate, or any other affiliation, do not pursue any commercial purposes, their efforts are not aimed at advertisement or promotion of a product or brand, they do not set themselves any purpose other than... [counteracting] illegal fraud and forgery in the field of scientific and educational activities, particularly in the defense of dissertations and awarding academic degrees in Russia.” It was launched in 2013 and by 2016 had identified around 5,600 individuals that it suspected of plagiarism and had named a large number of academic journals that had published suspect articles.

Clearly, any investigation that will help to identify academic misconduct and educate authors about ethics in research and publication is to be welcomed. However, we also need to look at the reasons why plagiarism and other breaches of ethics are considered to be academic misconduct, and what, in addition to naming and shaming the culprits, can be done to eliminate—or at least reduce—it.

I described our anger about publication ethics as a moral outrage because it reflects our anger at the mistreatment of others (for example, those whose work has been plagiarised and those who are misled about the academic standing of the plagiarist) rather than the mistreatment of ourselves. We selflessly denounce the plagiarists because we value fairness and justice. However, in a recent letter to Nature, Jordan et al suggest that the roots of moral outrage can also be self-serving because people who support the condemnation of those who behave badly (such as plagiarists) are more likely to be trusted by others. Moral outrages can quickly generate their own momentum and need to be treated carefully.

So, while Dissernet is providing a valuable service, the issue of publication ethics needs to be kept in proportion and set into context. We need more light on the matter and less heat!

There are many aspects to publication ethics, and there is insufficient time within a single article to explore all of them. So, in this article, we will focus on plagiarism (and the related topics of text recycling and simultaneous submission) and on the issues surrounding authorship. There is a brief mention of predatory publishing, and those who wish to explore this aspect further should read Roberts for a useful commentary.
**Ethics as a Cultural Construct**

Before we go further, it is helpful to look at what we mean by 'ethics' in the context of the publication process. Most dictionaries define the noun as the moral principles that govern a person’s behaviour, or conducting of an activity, or the moral correctness of specified conduct. In this case, the activity is the process of writing and submitting a scholarly paper or, from the editorial perspective, the process of reviewing and assessing scholarly papers. (Other actors in the publication process, for example, reviewers, academic board members, and publishers, will have different perspectives.) This definition asks us to understand what we mean by 'morals.' The same dictionaries define morals as concerned with or derived from the code of behaviour that is considered right or acceptable in a particular society. And it is this definition that, I believe, is one of the reasons for our present difficulties. It reminds us that what is considered right or acceptable may vary from society to society. What is acceptable—and is therefore ethical—in one society may not be acceptable or ethical in another.

Consider for example, the Confucian tradition of education that prevails throughout much of Southeast Asia. Anyone who has taught there will be familiar with the culture in which the professor is the person who knows everything about the subject and who is imparting that knowledge to the learners who know little or nothing. So incorporating significant passages of the professor’s writing is an acknowledgement of his or her superior knowledge and position. Furthermore, the students are often given lecture notes and handouts to memorise and copy which results in ‘learned plagiarism.’4 Chinese culture does not emphasize attribution of cited text, and Jiang5 claims that plagiarism has only recently emerged as a matter of concern in Asian institutions. So, not surprisingly, Asian students can be unfamiliar with the concept.

In Russia, the word ‘plagiarism’ has the single meaning of copying someone else’s work. It does not include the notion of copying or recycling the author’s own work, so this is regarded as an acceptable practice. It comes then as a shock to be told that self-plagiarism is unethical and banned by reputable international journals.

In his 1840 book, *What is Property? Or, an Inquiry into the Principle of Right and of Government*, French anarchist Pierre-Joseph Proudhon declared “Property is theft.”6 We might well say that Intellectual property is theft. Intellectual property (IP) is a person’s proprietary knowledge, a productive new idea that they have created which enables them to earn recognition or financial benefit from what they have created. A number of websites engage in IP theft, claiming that they are doing nothing wrong in collecting academic papers from other websites and making them available free of charge. Such unacknowledged replication means that others realize value or gain competitive advantage from others’ intellectual assets that have the same protective rights as physical property.

Use of the Internet has made us lazy. It is so easy to find a wealth of information using a search engine that we forget the text was written by someone, that it may be copyrighted, and that it should always be acknowledged if we reuse it.

Academic publishing is becoming increasingly international, so if the system is to work then authors and journals have to come to a common understanding of what is acceptable in academic publishing.

**Why Is Plagiarism Academic Misconduct?**

There are two main forms of plagiarism. The first and most serious involves taking the work of another researcher or author and claiming it as your own. Put simply, this is theft. Scientific research is built on the foundations of work carried out by others: Very few of us ever have an idea that is so original, so novel, that it does not owe something to the work of others. Because our research is built on the ideas and results obtained by others, we need to acknowledge those contributions. We need to quote from their published work to show how we have extended their findings or perhaps contradicted them. This notion was recognised nearly 900 years ago. A quote, which is often attributed to the 17th century English philosopher, astronomer, and mathematician, Isaac Newton, but comes in fact from the 12th century English educationalist, diplomat, and Bishop of Chartres, John of Salisbury, runs: “We are like dwarfs on the shoulders of giants, so that we can see more than they, and things at a greater distance, not by virtue of any sharpness of sight on our part, or any physical distinction, but because we are carried high and raised up by their giant size.”7

There are well-established international conventions governing the amount of someone else’s work that you can quote without obtaining their written permission, and these usually cover any of the quotes that you might want to use in a scholarly article. This is called ‘fair usage’ or ‘fair dealing.’8 However, authors need to be aware that the interpretation of fair dealing differs from country to country. For example, the rules that apply in the United Kingdom and North America are far more generous than those in Germany.
The use of your own work, published in another paper, book, or conference proceedings, is called ‘self-plagiarism,’ or—less pejoratively—‘text recycling.’ In this case, you are not stealing someone else’s work, but, by making extensive reuse of things that you have already written, you are making your research output seem larger than it actually is. In so doing, you may be breaking the agreement you have made with the publishers of the original work as well as this later work, which you gave the publisher the exclusive right to publish. The *Chicago Manual of Style* cautions that “[i]n signing a contract with a publisher an author guarantees that the work is original, that the author owns it, that no part of it has been previously published, and that no other agreement to publish it or part of it is outstanding.”*

The extent to which text recycling is acceptable has to be judged on a case by case basis: The line between ethical and unethical behaviour is a matter of judgement. A comprehensive discussion of the ethical issues can be found in a guide prepared by iParadigms.10

The notes for authors issued by many journals will include the warning that authors must confirm that their contribution is original and that is has neither been published previously nor is currently being considered for publication elsewhere. Submitting an article to two or more journals simultaneously causes endless problems because it is often difficult to determine which version was published first! The second is considered to be a redundant publication and should be retracted. However, some journals are very slow to decide whether they want to publish a submitted manuscript and some authors are, understandably, impatient. Nevertheless, to avoid confusion, authors should always formally withdraw their submission before sending it to another journal. In some cases, simultaneous submission is a deliberate act to try and get two publications for the price of one, and this is quite unacceptable.

If we go back 15 years to the time before plagiarism checkers were generally available, it was assumed that the reviewers reading the manuscript would be able to detect cases of plagiarism because of their comprehensive knowledge of the field and its literature. This was probably not the case then—and is certainly not the case now.

Only once in my 37 years of experience as an editor has a reviewer correctly identified a plagiarism issue. Fortunately, the now widespread use of software to detect plagiarism has made the process more certain. We may assume that plagiarism has always been common in academic publishing, but now we can detect it with greater certainty.

Plagiarism is not restricted to Russian authors and Russian journals. Over a three-year period at the highly respected *British Journal of Educational Technology* (BJET), iThenticate detected plagiarism in 1,237 submissions. Of these, 132 (10.6%) registered a similarity index over 40%, the threshold at which the software was set to issue a plagiarism warning. Although, on further investigation, a small number of these were found to be false positives (review papers, for example, typically have a high degree of overlap). Most of these papers had to be rejected. A further analysis of the data confirmed that plagiarism is more common in certain countries than others.

Editors tend to be reticent about talking publicly about the levels of plagiarism in their own journals. Some would even prefer not to check for fear of what they might find! However, conversations with editors of other journals in the field of learning technology who do check for plagiarism corroborate that these BJET figures are not unusual.

**Ethical Issues in Authorship**

Having their names in the list of authors of a published paper evidences that they have made significant input to an article that the reviewers believe makes a valuable contribution to the field; thus, conferring kudos and status. It also signifies that these scholars take collective responsibility for everything in the article—not just the sections they have contributed. If the results are subsequently found to be inaccurate, and a correction has to be published, their reputation will suffer. Even more seriously, if the paper is subsequently found to be plagiarised and has to be retracted, their reputation will be seriously damaged. One of the most notorious recent cases of retraction had to be rejected. A further analysis of the data confirmed that plagiarism is more common in certain countries than others.

Albert and Wager note that “people generally lie about authorship in two ways: by putting down names of people who took little or no part in the research (gift authorship), or by leaving out names of people who did take part (ghost authorship).”12

Why would authors include the names of other people who did not make a significant contribution to the research? In some institutions, is it customary to include the name of the research supervisor, whether or not they made a contribution. Indeed, some supervisors insist on this. It is an acknowledgement of their position, and, of course, it adds another publication to their curriculum vitae! They should remember that by having their name on the article, they are taking collective responsibility for its contents; if it is a poor paper then it will reflect adversely on their professionalism.
Some authors will add a well-known researcher to the list of authors in the hope that their submission will be considered more favourably by the journal editor.

Some manuscripts list more than 50 authors, and it is difficult to imagine how so many people could possibly contribute to an article of—say—4,000 words in length. Even if each did make a small contribution, there can be little credit in sharing an article with so many others!

Failing to include the name of someone who did make a significant contribution in the list of authors is another form of plagiarism. It means that the listed authors are making use of the work of someone else and denying them due credit. In an extreme case, this could be that the author commissioned someone else to write the paper for them in order to further their career.

It is difficult for an editor to detect errors (and probable misconduct) in the list of authors unless the effects are very obvious. For example, the editor may believe that it is exceedingly unlikely that a particular author did, in fact, contribute to the work and then make personal enquiries. Usually, the misconduct only comes to light after the article is published.

The Pressure to Publish

The second strand that I would like to explore is the impact on publication ethics of the inexorable pressure to publish. In universities across the world faculty are required to publish in order to keep their jobs and gain promotions, and students are required to publish to obtain their doctorates. With so many manuscripts looking for space in disproportionately few quality journals, it is little wonder that the predatory journals flourish.

This pressure to publish also encourages (although it does not excuse) misconduct such as plagiarism and gift authorship. Early-career researchers mistakenly believe that more submissions increase their chances of being published. Their reasoning is that if 10% of submissions to journals in their field are accepted for publication then 10 submissions should ensure that at least one of theirs will be published. And if they believe that they need to write more and more papers, then there is a strong temptation to take short cuts—such as ‘borrowing’ material from other authors, recycling earlier work, and adding the names of prominent researchers to the author list in the hope that this will attract the editor’s attention. Unfortunately, editors look for quality, for well-written articles that take the readers beyond what is already known in the field. So 10 poor manuscripts are no realistic alternative to one good manuscript.

The pressure to publish is based on the assumption that the number of published articles is a good measure of a researcher’s worth and contribution to scholarship. It has always seemed unreasonable to me for university administrations to devolve academic appraisal to journals and their editors. Yet we continue to play that game. We chase journal metrics (such as Impact Factors) to show the benefit of publishing in our journals and take the consequences of dealing with academic misconduct, perhaps because most editors are themselves part of the same appraisal system.

The assumption that the number of an individual’s publications is the only or the best measure of their worth as a researcher needs to be challenged. There are other better measures, particularly for doctoral students and early-career researchers. One of these is their contribution to scholarship as a critical reviewer for one or more journals. This contribution is more difficult to assess: Instead of simply recording the number of publications, there has to be evidence of the quality of the reviews conducted. In time, some of these metrics will be automated by organisations like ORCID and ResearchGate. Arguably, reviewing is a better way for the early-career researcher to develop their skills than writing articles that seldom take the reader beyond what is already known.

Are Journals or Authors to Blame?

Both authors and journals are victims of different forms of academic misconduct. It is unjust to condemn journals that unwittingly publish work that has been plagiarised or where authors have lied about their co-authors—unless the journals have been negligent in checking for misconduct. Experience has shown that even experienced reviewers fail to detect similarities—probably because of the sheer volume of material from which the plagiarist can choose. It is only relatively recently that effective software checking systems (such as iThenticate and Turnitin) have become available and, even then, the cost of checking every submission may be unaffordable. The responsibility for avoiding plagiarism must lie with the authors and, where appropriate, their research supervisors.

It is equally unjust to condemn authors who have unwittingly submitted their work for publication in a predatory journal or one that is subsequently de-listed by Scopus. We used to be able to refer to ‘Beall’s List,’ which chronicled “potential, possible, or probable” predatory publishers. Now that this is no longer published, it is difficult to identify predatory journals. However, as Roberts3 notes, forthcoming research will show that “rather than Beall’s List journals being a repository of the corrupt, inept, and rejected, they also published a lot of perfectly good studies.” It is not yet clear how the issue of predatory journals will be resolved.
Robert’s closing remarks are that, “So, for now, Beall’s List is gone. Something may follow soon. If it does, it better meet some high standards or otherwise expect withering criticism from an increasingly alert research community. Let’s all use this pause to think about what each of us can do to contribute to the conversation and uphold the qualities of good peer review and the proper publication of expertly validated research.”

**Conclusion**

Having identified at least two of the drivers for academic misconduct (different cultural ethics and the pressure to publish), what should we do to address the causes of our moral outrage? How should we defeat or at least reduce the incidence of unethical behaviour?

Detection and punishment clearly have a role. If those committing misconduct believe that there is a high probability that they will be caught and that the consequence (a public notice of retraction or of redundant publication) will publicly damage their academic reputation, then they will be less likely to offend. If all journals use plagiarism checkers and desk-reject those in which there is credible evidence of unacceptable plagiarism, then we should reduce the number of such articles that are published. If journals go back to check the articles they have published in past years and deal firmly with those that are plagiarised, then offending authors will be discouraged from re-offending.

But the criminal justice system has not succeeded in eliminating property theft, and sanctions will not entirely eliminate IP theft. So we also need to educate authors and work to reduce the underlying causes of ethical misconduct. Journals and their editors need to publish clear ethical statements defining their expectations of authors (as well as the reviewers, editorial board members, and the editors, themselves) and develop other educational resources on plagiarism, including videos (see, for example, Bergen University Library, Texas A&M University, D’Annunzio). And research supervisors also have a key role here. They are responsible for helping their mentees through their early research work and instilling, not only the techniques that they will need, but the research ethics they should observe. We need more discussion and collaboration on these issues.

**Acknowledgements**

My thanks go to my long-time friend and colleague Colin Latchem for his helpful comments on a draft of this article.

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**References**


ISMTE Upcoming Conferences

2017 North American Conference
10-11 August 2017
Denver, Colorado

2017 European Conference
9-10 November 2017
London, England
**Joe's Books**

Where can I find books on editing?

That would be the mystery section.
Transparency in Review

By Meghan McDevitt  
Managing Editor  
The Journal of Pediatrics

For its third year, Peer Review Week aims to bring focus to the timely topic of transparency in peer review in 2017. Promoting engagement and interaction with all members of the scholarly communications community, this year’s Peer Review Week will offer resources, events, and activities taking place on social media and across the globe.

Get Involved

The Peer Review Week organizing committee is interested to hear what the scholarly community is doing in the realm of peer review. Read the call for contributions to submit ideas and resources to make sure your journal, organization, or institution is represented during Peer Review Week.

Join the conversation on social media; follow and engage with @PeerRevWeek on Twitter, and use the hashtags #PeerRevWk17 and #TransparencyinReview. Highlight ways your journal promotes transparency in peer review or share resources with your followers.

Most importantly, help us promote Peer Review Week! Use the Peer Review logo and other collateral materials to spread the word. Share our press release, available in multiple languages, and make use of the social media toolkit that includes suggested content to post leading up to, during, and after Peer Review Week.

For more information about Peer Review Week, please visit www.peerreviewweek.org.

Meghan McDevitt is the ISMTE representative on the Peer Review Week 2017 organizing committee.

Reference

Committee Update:

Preview of the 2017 North American ISMTE Conference in Denver, Colorado

The 2017 North American Conference Planning Committee is excited to welcome everyone to the first ever West Coast ISMTE conference, to be held this year on August 10-11 in Denver, Colorado. This year also marks the 10th anniversary of ISMTE, which is a huge milestone for our growing society. Our theme this year—shared across the North American, European, and Asian-Pacific conferences—is “Empowering Editorial Offices Around the World.” This year we’ve focused on enriching the conference with as much practical information and relevant takeaways as possible for Editorial Office staff. Attendees can expect to go home with lots of food-for-thought and tangible action plans for implementing positive changes and best practices to their publications. We hope you enjoy the sessions we have planned and invite you to register to attend. Use the hashtag #ISMTE2017 on social media to connect with members from around the globe to discuss sessions you’re looking forward to attending, and catch up on the lively discussions from the April 2017 Asian-Pacific conference. Download the conference app to submit questions ahead of time, view the attendee list, and download materials. More information to come about the app in the weeks ahead.

Below are some highlights from the program:

- Interactive workshops covering topics such as:
  - Excel Tips and Tricks
  - Understanding Statistics for Journal Metrics
  - Technology Tools and Apps for the Editorial Office
  - Improving Presentation Skills
  - Copyright Bootcamp

- Plenary Panel: Publishing Industry News and Notes
- Breakout sessions on diverse topics such as
  - Emerging Production Workflows
  - Social Media Success
  - Career Development
  - Journal Whitelists/Blacklists and the Author Perspective
  - Ithenticate Best Practices
  - Evaluating Your Journal’s Internal Performance
  - Demystifying Copyediting
  - Promoting Your Journal’s Content

- Peer Review System Vendor Sessions—Representatives from Aries, eJournalPress, Elsevier, and ScholarOne will be on-site to talk latest system updates, innovations, and answer your questions.
- Exchange Forum—Continuing the tradition of our free-form session where attendees can pose questions and offer advice to their peers.
- Dine Around Dinners—sign up at the conference to eat dinner with a group of your peers. Denver’s foodie scene has options for every palate.

Please visit the ISMTE website to view the full conference program, and to register today. We look forward to seeing you in Denver!

2017 Program Committee Members:
Michelle English, J&J Editorial (Chair)
Lindsey Brounstein, American Gastroenterological Association
Sarah Forgeng, Society for Investigative Dermatology
Steve Musser, The Sheridan Group (IAB Liaison)
Julie Nash, J&J Editorial (Board of Directors Liaison)
Kurt Spurlock, Research Square
Kimberly Retzlaff, American Water Works Association
Laura Brashear, Veterinary Clinical Pathology
From the Forum

The ISMTE Discussion Forum is available to all registered ISMTE members and is a great resource to get and stay connected to a network of peers, publishers, vendors, and potential clients and employers. Here we highlight a question about peer review followed by further discussion.
Hi, The 45-50 mins was an average over 2015 for three of our journals. We use an automated time capture piece of software which means that every move on the peer review system is tracked, whether a task is completed or not. This time included all checking, assigning editors/reviewers and chasing for these three journals. Obviously some journals can take longer depending on editorial structure and additional tasks required. The true time spent on peer review management is still rather elusive.

Thanks for the additional information, Alice.

Was that for each version of the submission or for the entire process from submission to final decision?

Also, papers which are eventually accepted are going to need more admin work than papers eventually rejected. It would be interesting to know the median and range for those papers, and also whether papers in non-biomedicine journals require less time than those in biomedicine journals.

The 50 mins/paper was the average time per each new submission - so there will be a very wide range of time from only several minutes on papers rejected prior to review and up to over 60 mins on papers that went through several revisions. Given time, I could break these timings down further - I'll put it on my list.
FORUM

3/17/2015 AT 1:05:45 PM GMT

M. Willis
Posts: 18

I see the same journalist has quoted Alice's figures again in a report published yesterday again in the Times Higher Education Supplement.

https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/should-academics-be-paid-for-peer-review

This is a slightly different issue, that of reviewers getting paid, particularly in the context of start-ups (Collabra and Veruscript) which are exploring 'payment in kind'.

One comment on Twitter suggested that a peer reviewed study of peer review payment be conducted, though was moot on whether the peer reviewers of such a study should be paid for it...

3/22/2015 AT 6:15:14 PM GMT

I. Hames
Posts: 2

Time spent organising/managing peer review depends very much on what is required, and can vary from just very basic checking and shepherding manuscripts through the process to high-level editorial input and problem solving layered on top. All these roles and management of the editorial board can fall under the responsibility of the 'managing editor'. In the former case it's mostly a relatively straightforward admin role, in the latter it can involve tasks undertaken by Editors in other journals. Members of ISMTE will be well aware of this, but many outside, or those with little on-the-ground scholarly publishing experience, won't be. My worry is that the 45-50 minute figure will start to be taken as the standard (the new article Michael's mentioned doesn't note that the time is based on just three journals), and used negatively in APC and profit-margin debates to show how little time is needed to 'organise' peer review. Alice, does your 45-50 minute figure include running CrossCheck and analysing the reports?

Would it be worthwhile ISMTE putting together something on the range of managing editor roles/responsibilities, bit like what's been done for, eg, 'copyediting'?
FORUM

3/30/2016 AT 8:42 PM GMT

Thanks for the comments, Irene. The devil is definitely in the detail! Our Professional Development committee has recently made a start in exploring what the core competencies are for our role, which will lead us to try and define our core responsibilities. More to follow in due course.

M. Wills
Posts: 26

4/11/2016 AT 1:05 PM GMT

Hi Michael,

We manage amongst others two non medical journals and one of the journals is double blinded. This results in additional work. The social science authors tend to write lots of emails and at times we can spend hours just responding to emails even though we have automated emails all set up in St.

I tend to think that data based on just 3 journals from the 1 editorial office is OK for a small presentation though insufficient data for a general use. It does give a good ball park figure and number for that specific editorial office. Perhaps we could get some editorial offices in addition to Alice's to pool some data together. We would need to ensure that we are not comparing apples with pears - it would need to be transparent if this deals with single blinded or double blinded journals and if the journals are medical or non-medical.

It would certainly be interesting to see the results.

Dana Epstein
DrEp Biomedical Editorial Services Ltd

KEEPING UP TO DATE???

We are.
It's the best way we know to serve you.

It's our privilege to play an active role in the journal publishing community, working directly with publishers on solutions to printing, editorial and workflow challenges, always looking to improve our own processes to better serve you.

We are proactive developers of new technologies and quality providers of opti-paging, composition, print and online journals, a variety of mobile content solutions, and so much more.

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ISMTE Local Groups have formed through the efforts of members who would like to meet with peers and colleagues in their local area for networking and discussion. Participation is not limited to ISMTE members, and the only cost associated with participation will be your meal, if the group meets at a restaurant.

Active Groups:
- Boston, Massachusetts
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- Heidelberg, Germany
- New York, New York
- North Carolina - Research Triangle Park Area
- Australia
- Russia
- Kathmandu, Nepal
- Oxford, United Kingdom
- Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- Rochester, New York
- Washington, DC Area
- Tokyo, Japan
- London, United Kingdom

Visit the ISMTE Local Groups page to join a local group or to find more information.

Who Will You Nominate?

We are now accepting applications for the 2017 International Society of Managing and Technical Editors Awards. As an annual event, the Awards celebrate the success and achievements of editorial office staff. The range of award categories has been designed to be accessible to all members. The Awards provide an opportunity for businesses, organizations, and individuals to appear in the spotlight and celebrate their editorial achievements. They are a way give recognition to and motivate fellow members. Nominating is easy to do and all online. Have someone in mind that you would like to nominate? Visit the website to find out how.

The following 3 Award categories are available:
- ISMTE Award for Excellence
- ISMTE Award for Achievement or Innovation
- ISMTE Jason Roberts Founder’s Award
Calendar of Events

XXV Course on Scientific Publishing
June 21-23, 2017
São Paulo, Brazil
http://www.abecbrasil.org.br/eventos/xxv_curso/

The 4th Asian Science Editors’ Conference and Workshop 2017
July 6-7, 2017
Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
http://asianeditor.org/

INANE 36th Annual Meeting
August 3-5, 2017
Denver, Colorado, USA
https://inane2017.com/

ISMTE North American Conference
August 10-11, 2017
Denver, Colorado, USA
www.ismte.org
EASE members receive ISMTE member registration rate

8th International Congress on Peer Review and Scientific Publication
September 10-12, 2017
Chicago, Illinois, USA
www.peerreviewcongress.org

ISMTE European Conference
November 9-10, 2017
London, England
www.ismte.org
EASE members receive ISMTE member registration rate
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