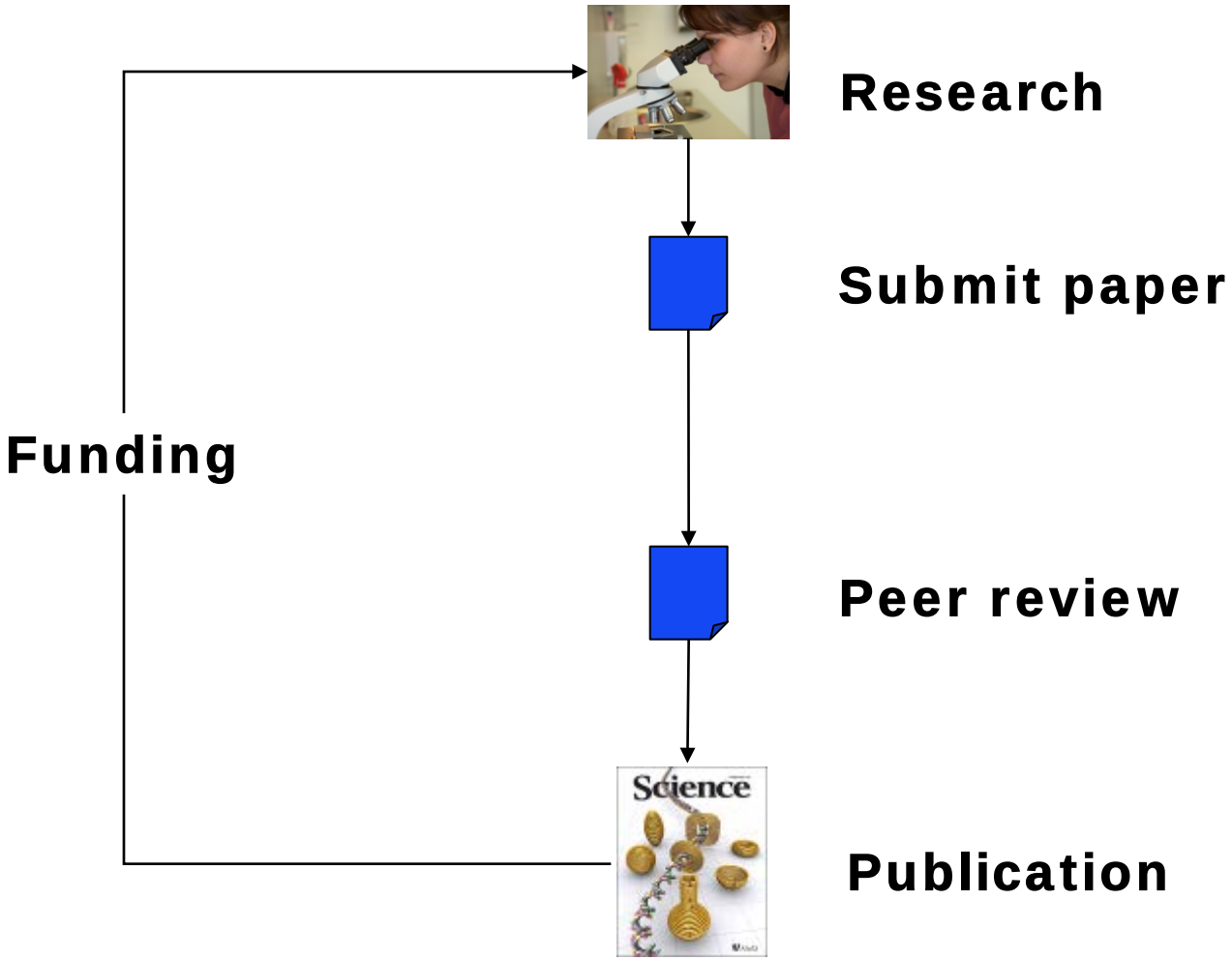
Mega Journals

And what they mean for the future of scientific publishing

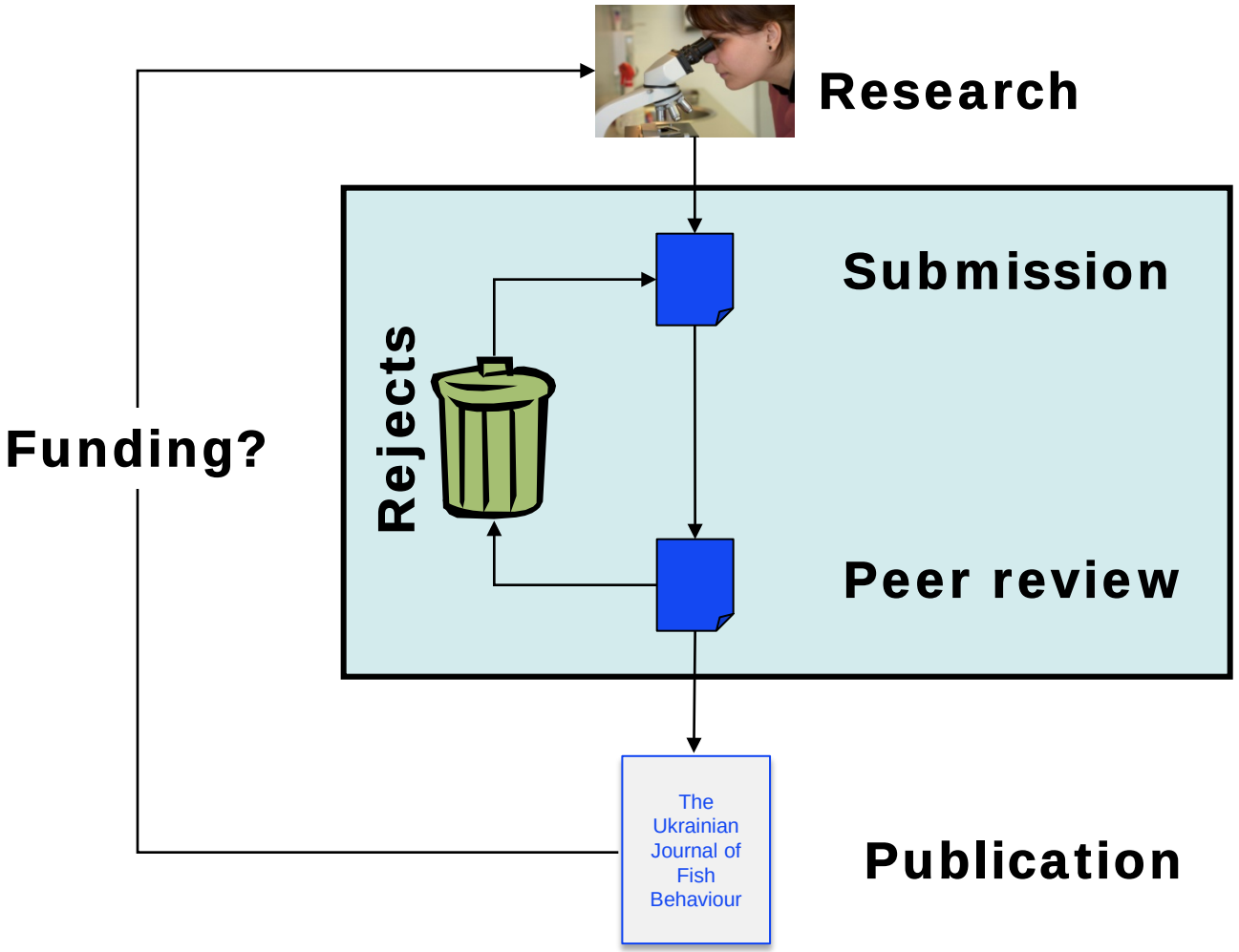
Damian Pattinson, PhD
Editorial Director, PLOS ONE

Nov 22, 2012

What's the problem with the current system?

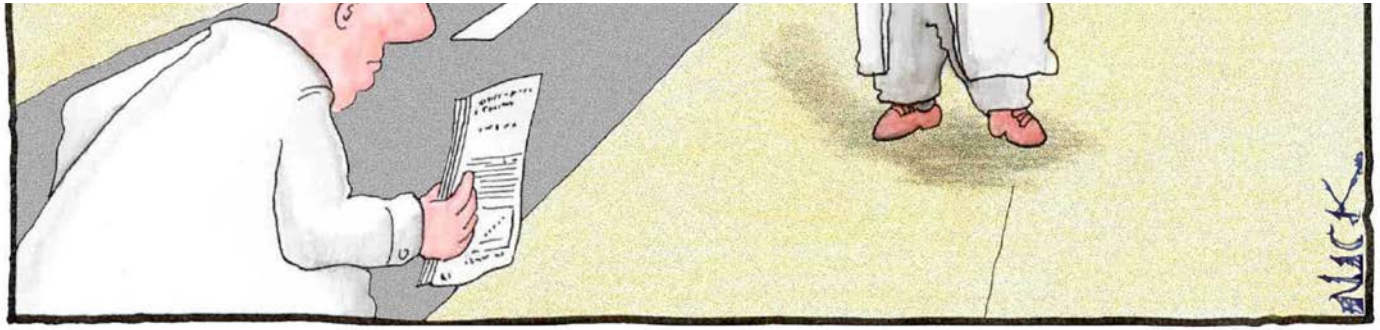


What's the problem with the current system?



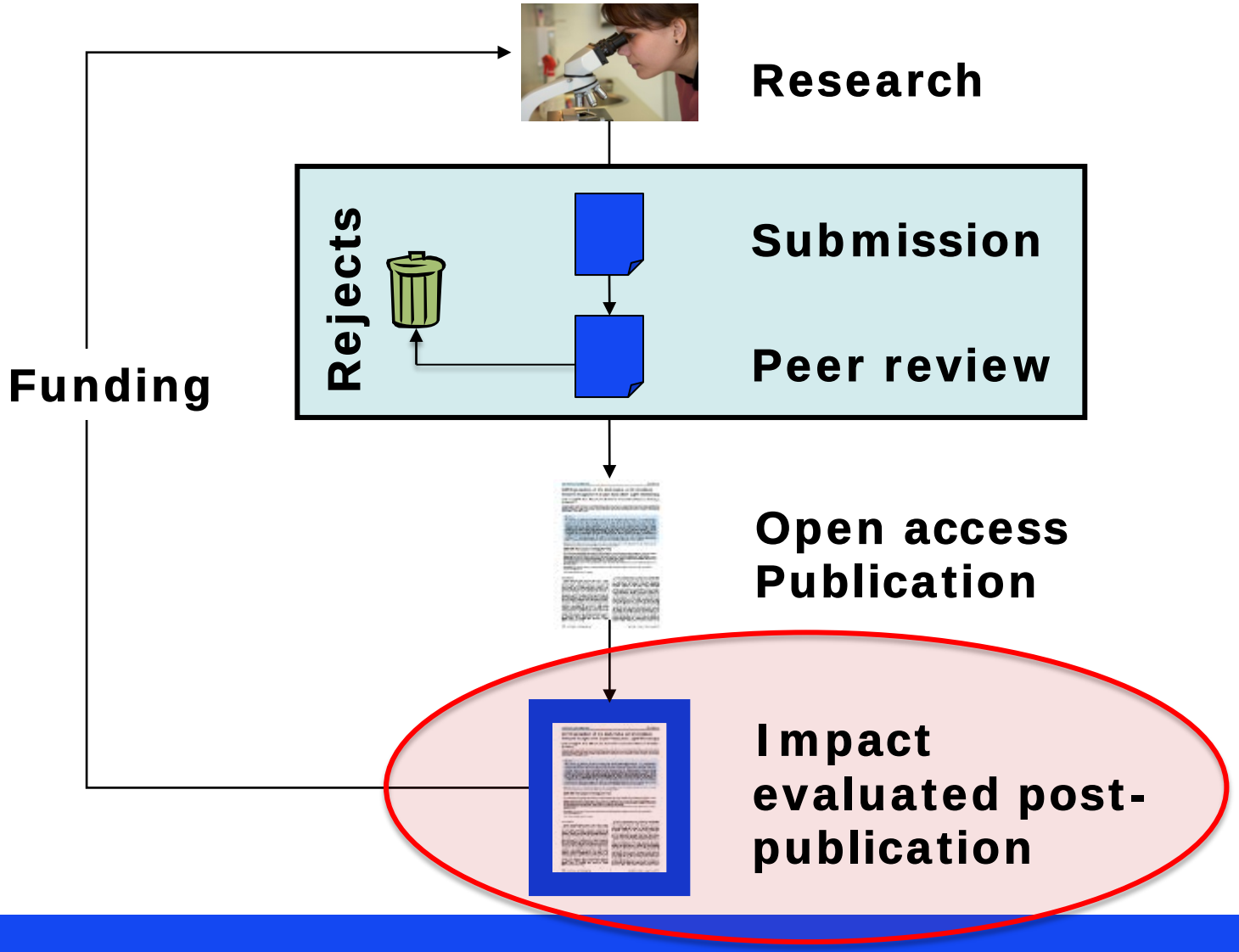
Is the communication trail fit for purpose?

- When should ‘scrutiny’ happen?
- What does ‘scrutiny’ involve?



Most scientists regarded the new streamlined peer-review process as “quite an improvement.”

A new way…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PLOS ONE's Key Innovation: the editorial process

- Editorial criteria
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  - Ethical
  - Properly reported
  - Conclusions supported by the data
- Editors and reviewers **do not** ask
  - How important is the work?
  - Which is the relevant audience?
- Everything that deserves to be published, will be published
  - Therefore the journal is not artificially limited in size
- Use online tools to sort and filter scholarly content after publication, not before

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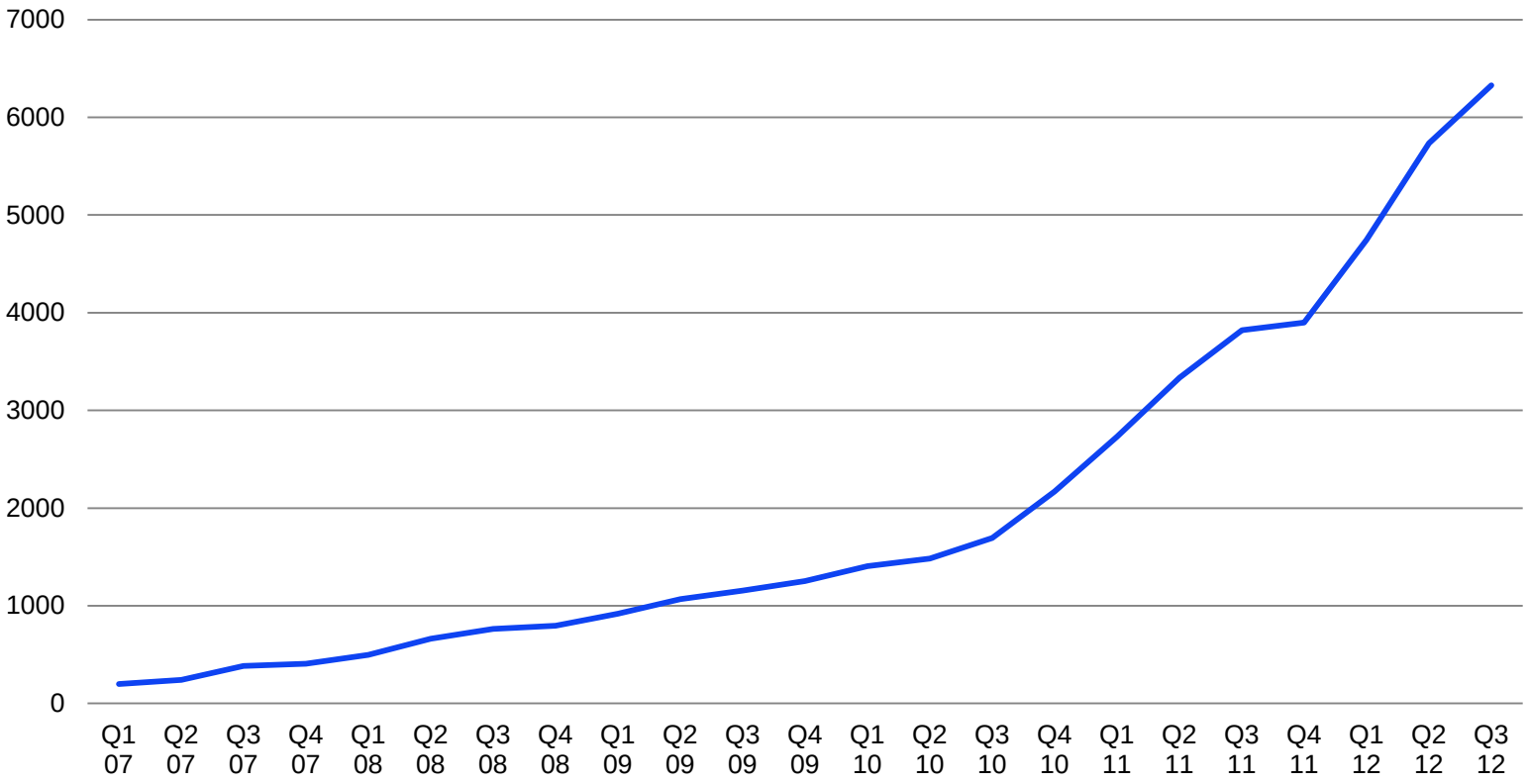

The rise of the megajournals…

Collectively, these will represent…

“a very large compendium of papers that have been vetted for scientific quality, but which will not be confined in terms of their likely importance."

Harold Varmus, Oct 2005

Collectively, these will represent…

*“a very large compendium of papers that have been vetted for scientific quality, but which **will not be confined in terms of their likely importance**."*

Harold Varmus, Oct 2005

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RESEARCH ARTICLE OPEN ACCESS

Rivaling the World's Smallest Reptiles: Discovery of Miniaturized and Microendemic New Species of Leaf Chameleons (*Brookesia*) from Northern Madagascar

Frank Glaw[1], Jörn Köhler[2], Ted M. Townsend[3], Miguel Vences[4*]

1 Zoologische Staatssammlung München, München, Germany, **2** Hessisches Landesmuseum Darmstadt, Darmstadt, Germany, **3** Department of Biology, San Diego State University, San Diego, California, United States of America, **4** Division of Evolutionary Biology, Zoological Institute, Technical University of Braunschweig, Braunschweig, Germany

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Supporting Information
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Abstract Top

Background

One clade of Malagasy leaf chameleons, the *Brookesia minima* group, is known to contain species that rank among the smallest amniotes in the world. We report on a previously unrecognized radiation of these miniaturized lizards comprising four new species described herein.

Methodology/Principal Findings

The newly discovered species appear to be restricted to single, mostly karstic, localities in extreme northern Madagascar: *Brookesia confidens* sp. n. from Ankarana, *B. desperata* sp. n. from Forêt d'Ambre, *B. micra* sp. n. from the islet Nosy Hara, and *B. tristis* sp. n. from Montagne des Français. Molecular phylogenetic analyses based on one mitochondrial and two nuclear genes of all nominal species in the *B. minima* group congruently support that the four new species, together with *B. tuberculata* from Montagne d'Ambre in northern Madagascar, form a strongly supported clade. This suggests that these species have diversified in geographical proximity in this small area. All species of the *B. minima* group, including the four newly described ones, are characterized by very deep genetic divergences of 18–32% in the *ND2* gene and >6% in the 16S rRNA gene. Despite superficial similarities among all species of this group, their status as separate evolutionary lineages is also

RESEARCH ARTICLE OPEN ACCESS

Broad-Spectrum Antiviral Therapeutics

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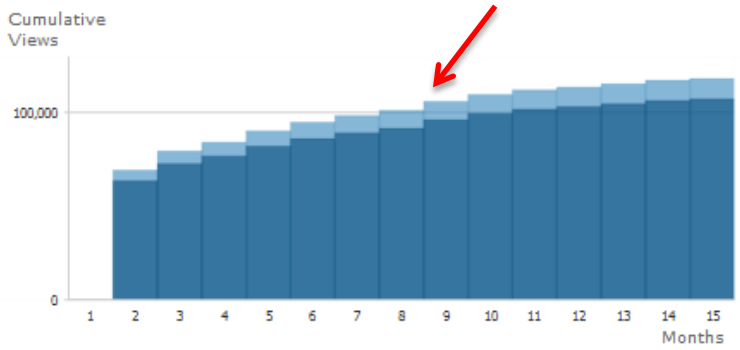

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2. motus Motus_Sweden Botemedel mot all typ av virus? En dröm? Blir kul att följa utvecklingen #PLoS: Broad-Spectrum Antiviral Therapeutics http://t.co/As7XJHwY
   Jun 5, 2012

3.  Kenzibit #PLoS: Broad-Spectrum Antiviral Therapeutics http://t.co/9gNySO2D
   Jul 19, 2012

4.  Froggyfinder Draco antiviral 10 years away exiting none the less #PLOS: Broad-Spectrum Antiviral Therapeutics http://t.co/Vkz4d7jX
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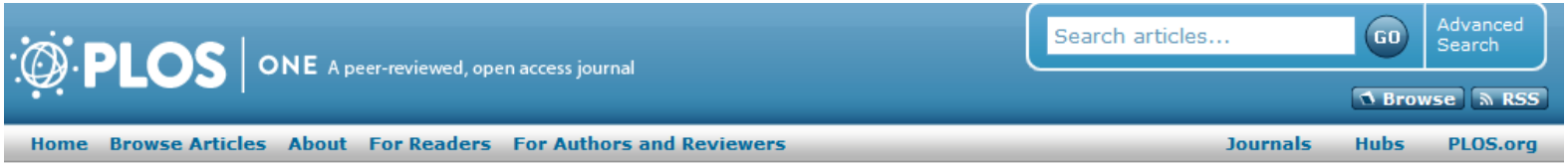

Media Coverage of This Article

Original Article

Broad-Spectrum Antiviral Therapeutics

Media Coverage of This Article

Posted by PLoS_ONE_Group on **12 Aug 2011** at **14:34 GMT**

The following article represents some of the media coverage that has occurred for this paper:

Publication: Huffington Post
Title: "New "Wonder Drug" Could Cure Viruses From Common Cold To HIV"
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If you see any additional coverage of this paper in the press or blogosphere, please reply to this thread and add the link to the article.

Competing interests declared: PLoS ONE Staff

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Advantages of mega journals

For scientists…

- Provide a venue for:
  - Negative results

Science News

... from universities, journals, and other research organizations

Pressure for Positive Results Puts Science Under Threat, Study Shows

ScienceDaily (Sep. 13, 2011) — Scientific research may be in decline across the globe because of growing pressures to report only positive results, new analysis suggests. A study by the University of Edinburgh examined more than 4,600 scientific research papers published between 1990 and 2007 and found a steady decline in studies in which the

"Negative results are disappearing from most disciplines and countries"

Daniele Fanelli

positive ones, but they attract fewer readers and citations, so scientific journals tend to reject them.

It is acknowledged among scientists that this problem might be worsening, because competition in science is growing and jobs and grants are given to scientists who publish frequently in high-ranking journals. Many researchers, therefore, have speculated that scientists will increasingly pursue predictable outcomes and produce positive results through re-interpretation, selection or even manipulation of data.

The study examined research papers in which a hypothesis had been tested, in various scientific disciplines. Over the period studied, positive results grew from around 70

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RESEARCH ARTICLE OPEN ACCESS

Failing the Future: Three Unsuccessful Attempts to Replicate Bem's 'Retroactive Facilitation of Recall' Effect

Article | Metrics | Related Content | Comments: 6

Stuart J. Ritchie[1*], Richard Wiseman[2], Christopher C. French[3]

1 Psychology Department, The University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh, United Kingdom, **2** School of Psychology, University of Hertfordshire, Hatfield, United Kingdom, **3** Anomalistic Psychology Research Unit, Goldsmiths, University of London, London, United Kingdom

Abstract Top

Nine recently reported parapsychological experiments appear to support the existence of precognition. We describe three pre-registered independent attempts to exactly replicate one of these experiments, 'retroactive facilitation of recall', which examines whether performance on a memory test can be influenced by a post-test exercise. All three replication attempts failed to produce significant effects (combined n = 150; combined p = .83, one-tailed) and thus do not support the existence of psychic ability.

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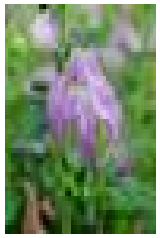
For scientists…

- Provide a venue for:
  - Negative results
  - “Unfashionable” results



ShirasuLab Shirasu Lab@RIKEN

Our first paper in **PLoS** One accepted! Previously rejected by P Methods just because we use non-popular plant. Congrats, Juliane!

35 minutes ago

For scientists…

- Provide a venue for:
  - Negative results
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  - Reproduction studies

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Why Most Published Research Findings Are False

John P. A. Ioannidis

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Abstract Top

Summary

There is increasing concern that most current published research findings are false. The probability that a research claim is true may depend on study power and bias, the number of other studies on the same question, and, importantly, the ratio of true to no relationships among the relationships probed in each scientific field. In this framework, a research finding is less likely to be true when the studies conducted in a field are smaller; when effect sizes are smaller; when there is a greater number and lesser preselection of tested relationships; where there is greater flexibility in designs, definitions, outcomes, and analytical modes; when there is greater financial and other interest and prejudice; and when more teams are involved in a scientific field in chase of statistical significance. Simulations show that for most study designs and settings, it is more likely for a research claim to be false than true. Moreover, for many current scientific fields, claimed research findings may often be simply accurate measures of the prevailing bias. In this essay, I discuss the implications of these problems for the conduct and interpretation of research.

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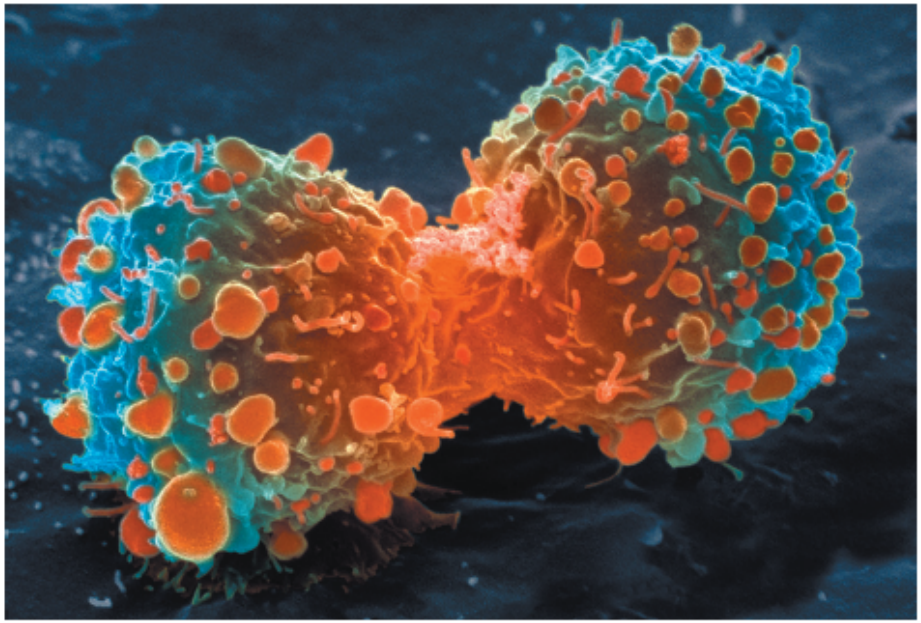


S. GSELL-MEDES/MEDICAL PICTURES/SPL

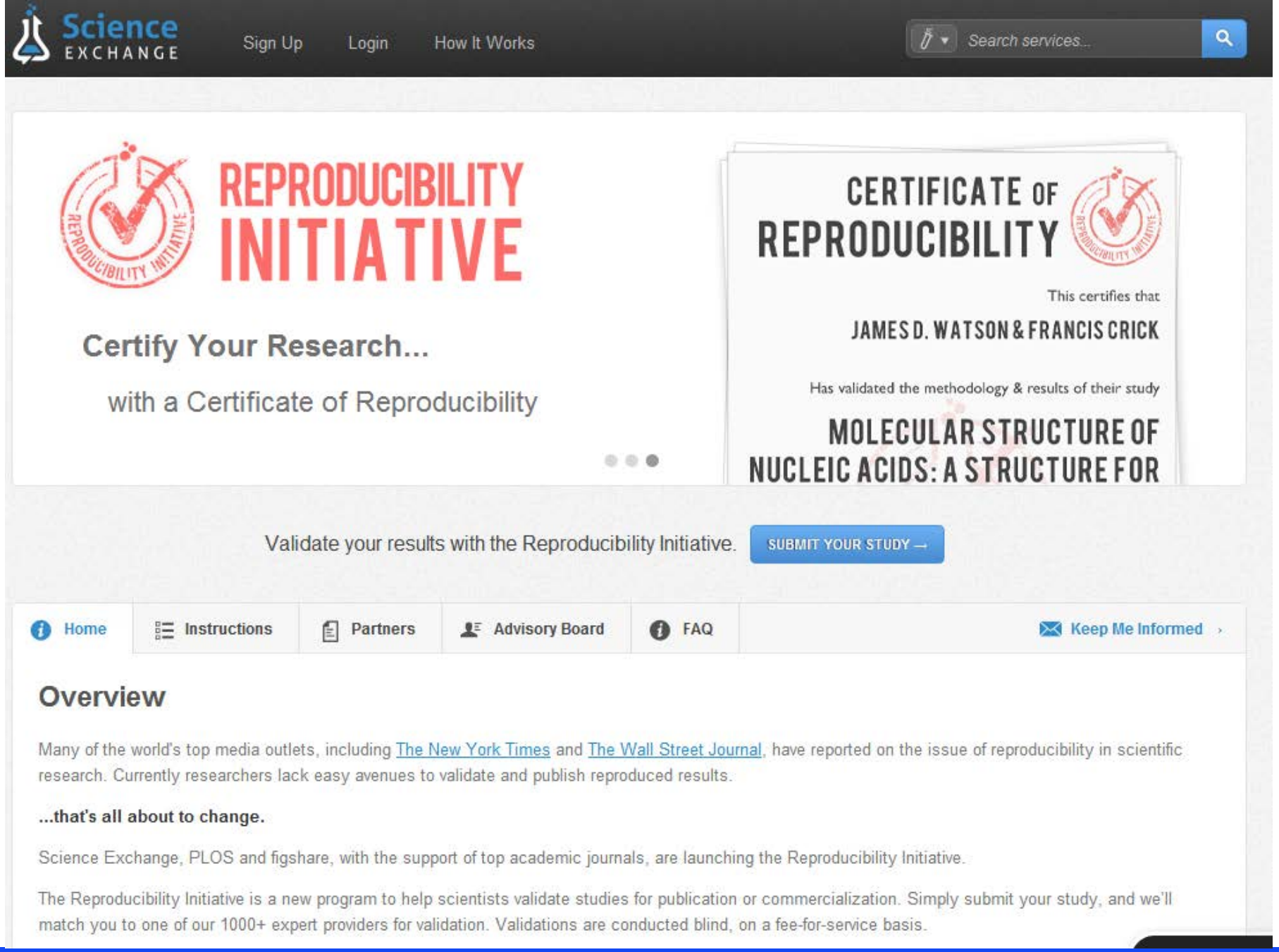
Many landmark findings in preclinical oncology research are not reproducible, in part because of inadequate cell lines and animal models.

Raise standards for preclinical cancer research

C. Glenn Begley and **Lee M. Ellis** propose how methods, publications and incentives must change if patients are to benefit.

Efforts over the past decade to characterize the genetic alterations in human cancers have led to a better understanding of molecular drivers of this trials in oncology have the highest failure rate compared with other therapeutic areas. Given the high unmet need in oncology, it is understandable that barriers to clinical investigators must reassess their approach to translating discovery research into greater clinical success and impact.

Many factors are responsible for the high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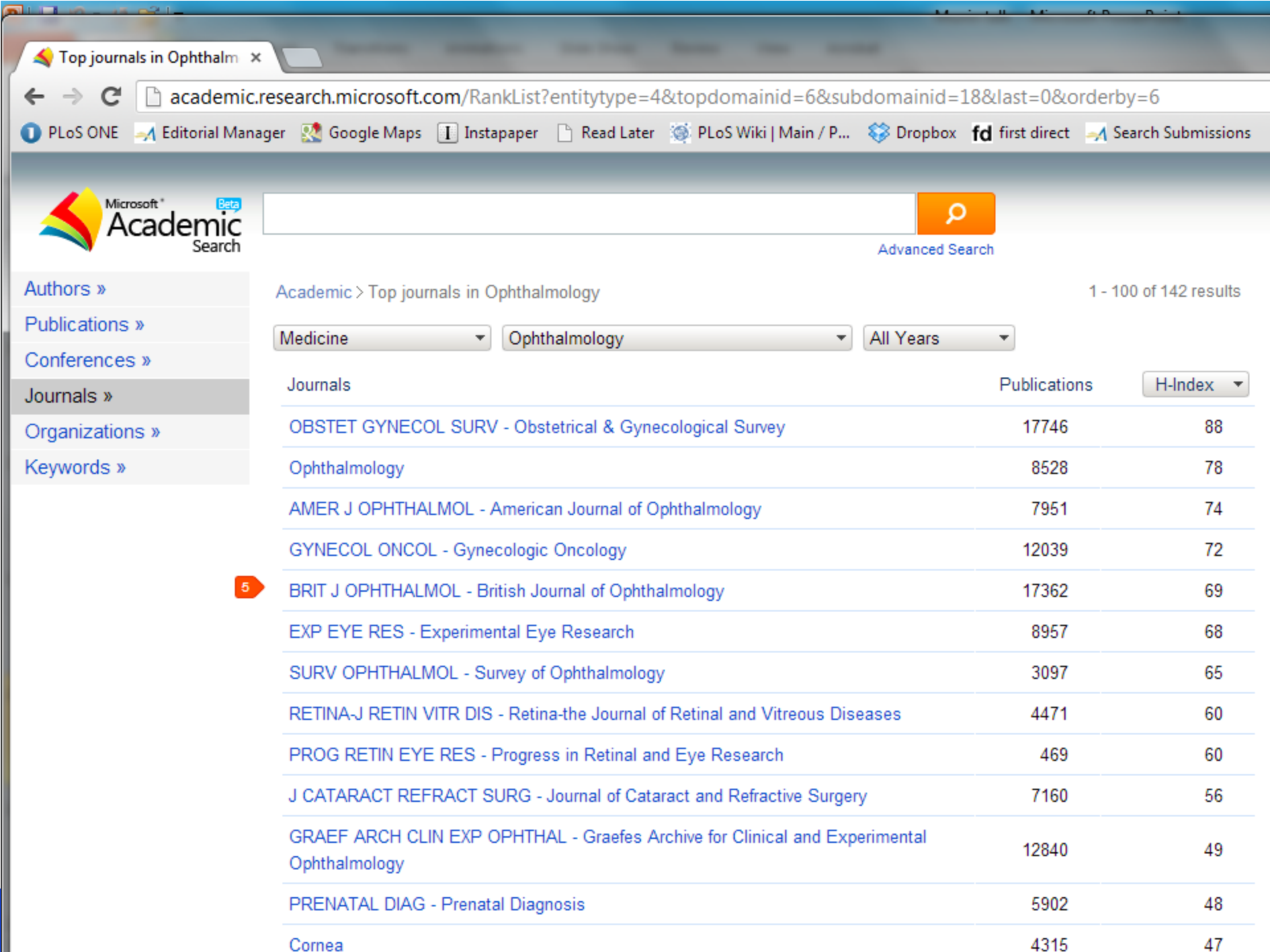
Overview
Many of the world's top media outlets, including The New York Times and The Wall Street Journal, have reported on the issue of reproducibility in scientific research. Currently researchers lack easy avenues to validate and publish reproduced results.
...that's all about to change.
Science Exchange, PLOS and figshare, with the support of top academic journals, are launching the Reproducibility Initiative.
The Reproducibility Initiative is a new program to help scientists validate studies for publication or commercialization. Simply submit your study, and we'll match you to one of our 1000+ expert providers for validation. Validations are conducted blind, on a fee-for-service basis.

For scientists…

- Provide a venue for:
  - Negative results
  - Unfashionable results
  - Reproduction studies

- Manuscripts only need to be prepared and reviewed once
  - No more reformatting of references!

- Levels the playing field
  - Peer review is less likely to fall victim to the pot luck and bias associated with ‘tiered’ journals
  - Smaller fields are given the same visibility as large ones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For publishers

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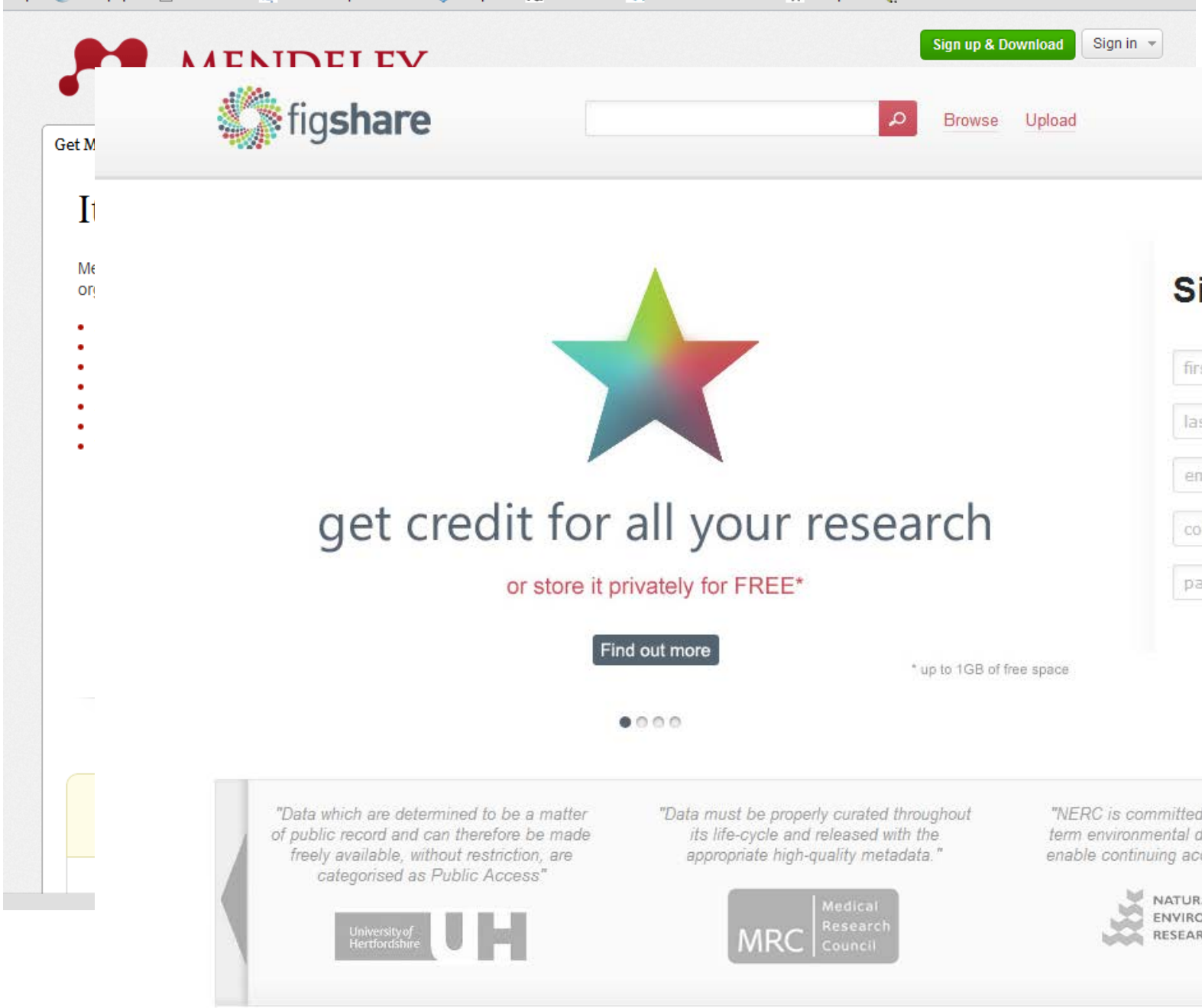
- Many aspects of the journal can be consolidated (marketing, Twitter stream etc)
- Economies of scale naturally develop, making the journal more efficient
- Innovations from third parties add value to your content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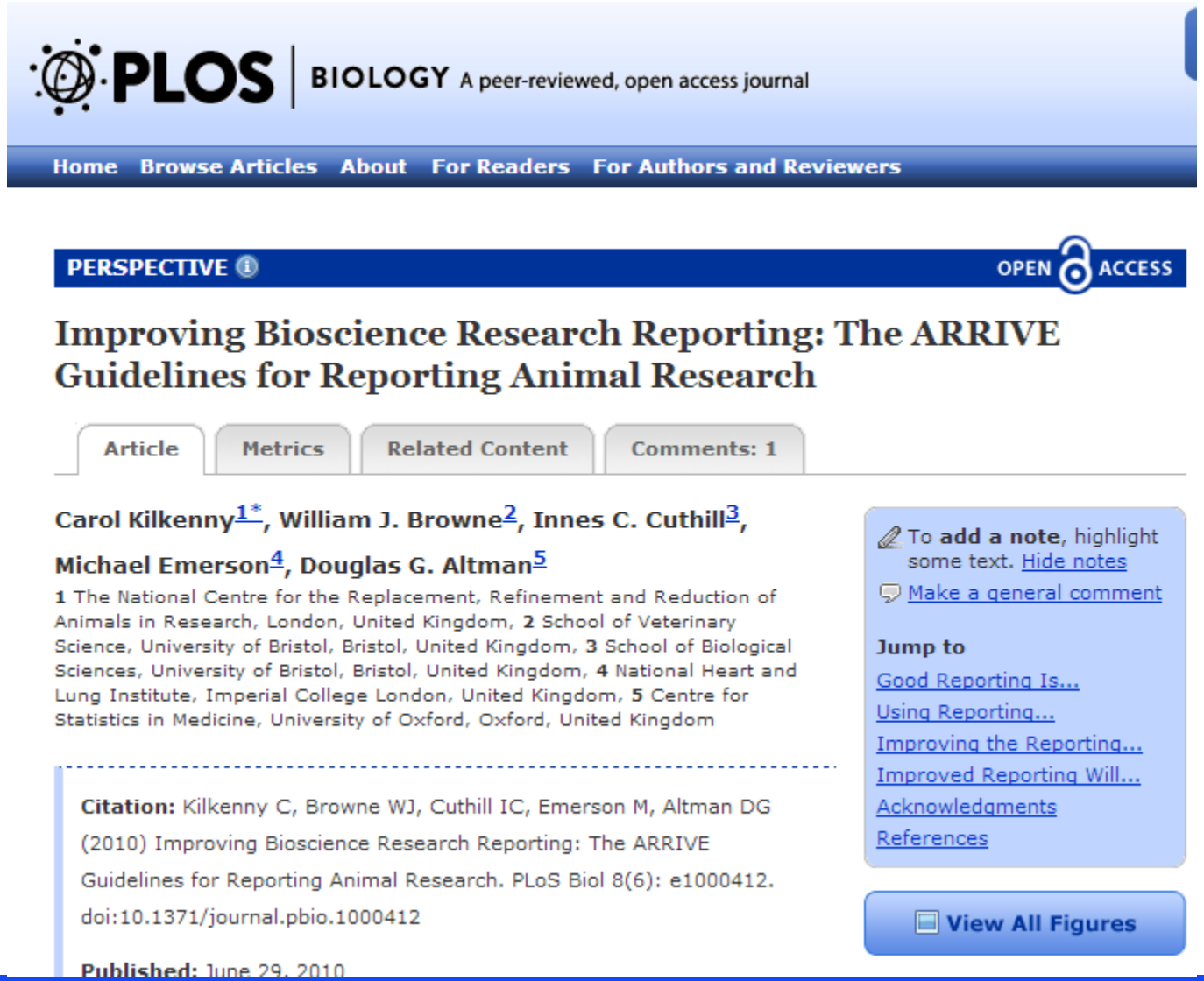
For publishers

- Only need to index things once (Web of Science, PMC etc)
- Many aspects of the journal can be consolidated (marketing, Twitter stream etc)
- Economies of scale naturally develop, making the journal more efficient
- Innovations from third parties add value to your content
- Journal has the opportunity to set standards, which may become de facto standards in the field

Higher standards

- We aim for the highest standards in everything we do. Not selecting for impact does not mean we operate a substandard or ‘lite’ publishing process.
- Publication ethics
  - Financial disclosures are enforced
  - Competing interests disclosures are enforced
  - Open data sharing is enforced
  - Academic Editors are named on every paper
  - Ability to pay does NOT influence ability to publish
  - Editorial staff are blinded from any financial information
- Research ethics
  - Ethics statements published on all papers
  - Clinical trials must be prospectively registered
  - Clinical reporting guidelines enforced (PRISMA, CONSORT etc)
  - We do not accept papers funded by the tobacco industry

And higher…



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Improving Bioscience Research Reporting: The ARRIVE Guidelines for Reporting Animal Research

Article Metrics Related Content Comments: 1

Carol Kilkenny[1*], William J. Browne[2], Innes C. Cuthill[3], Michael Emerson[4], Douglas G. Altman[5]

1 The National Centre for the Replacement, Refinement and Reduction of Animals in Research, London, United Kingdom, **2** School of Veterinary Science, University of Bristol, Bristol, United Kingdom, **3** School of Biological Sciences, University of Bristol, Bristol, United Kingdom, **4** National Heart and Lung Institute, Imperial College London, United Kingdom, **5** Centre for Statistics in Medicine, University of Oxford, Oxford, United Kingdom

Citation: Kilkenny C, Browne WJ, Cuthill IC, Emerson M, Altman DG (2010) Improving Bioscience Research Reporting: The ARRIVE Guidelines for Reporting Animal Research. PLoS Biol 8(6): e1000412. doi:10.1371/journal.pbio.1000412

Published: June 29, 2010

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For publishers

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- Economies of scale naturally develop, making the journal more efficient
- Innovations from third parties add value to your content
- Journal has the opportunity to set standards, which may become de facto standards in the field
- Sound research is not handed over to other publishers!

IDEAS IN ECOLOGY AND EVOLUTION 5: 13–15, 2012
doi:10.4033/iee.2012.5.4.e

Received 29 May 2012; Accepted 29 May 2012

"the quality of submissions of ecological papers to *PLoS ONE* and the main ecological journals are probably comparable, that rejections by the main ecological journals to maintain a low acceptance rate are often arbitrary and independent of scientific merit, and that a large proportion of papers rejected by ecological journals are just as important for the scientific record and just as likely to be well cited as those that they do accept."

Journal	Manuscript acceptance rate (%)	Impact factor (Web of Science)	Number of citations for ecological research papers	
			Mean	Median
PLoS ONE	69	4.4	11.6	8.0
Ecology	20	5.1	11.3	9.0
Oikos	15	3.4	7.8	6.5
Functional Ecology	15	4.6	10.7	9.0
Ecology Letters	<11	15.2	20.9	16.0
Science	<7	31.3	66.9	44.0
Nature	8	36.1	64.7	58.5

actively advertise their impact factor, and highlight that their selectivity means that they publish only the very best of the work that is submitted to them. As Aarssen (2012) notes, to maintain these low acceptance rates and "addiction to impact factor elitism….many editors routinely justify rejection of even high quality papers on the absurd claim of limited space… for printed pages

appropriate for a general ecological journal; this yielded 26 and 28 papers in *Nature* and *Science*, respectively. For each paper selected from each journal, I determined how many times it had been cited by using the Web of Science database in May 2012. The acceptance rate for all but one of the journals was obtained from the journal's web page, recent editorials in the journal, or

Limitations

Limitations

- Harder to identify high impact papers at time of publication
  - ALTHOUGH new metrics are changing this
- Less choice for authors
  - Is this a problem?
- A “flood of low quality papers that wouldn’t have otherwise been published”

RESEARCH ARTICLE OPEN ACCESS

The boiling point of water

1 Zoologische Staatssammlung München, München, Germany, **2** Hessisches Landesmuseum Darmstadt, Darmstadt, Germany, **3** Department of Biology, San Diego State University, San Diego, California, United States of America, **4** Division of Evolutionary Biology, Zoological Institute, Technical University of Braunschweig, Braunschweig, Germany

Abstract Top

Background

We wanted to find out the boiling point of water.

bed herein.

Methodology/Principal Findings

We put the kettle on and stuck a thermometer in it. The water boiled at 100°C.

The future

Questions

- When a journal represents 2%, 5%, 50% of the literature, is it even a journal any more?
- How will megajournals differentiate themselves?

How do you choose?

- Added value
  - Enhanced figures
  - Embedded data
  - Semantic markup

Article | Material_Methods | Tables | Figures

OPEN ACCESS

Structural Basis For Substrate Specificity In Human Monomeric Carbonyl Reductases

Ewa S Pilka [1*], Frank H Niesen [1*], Wen Hwa Lee [1*], Yasser El-Hawari [2], James E Dunford [3], Grazyna Kochan [1], Vladimir Wsol [4], Hans-Joerg Martin [2], Edmund Maser [2], and Udo Oppermann [1,3,#]

1 Structural Genomics Consortium, University of Oxford, Old Road Campus Research Building, Headington, OX3 7DQ, UK.

2 University of Kiel, Kiel, Germany.

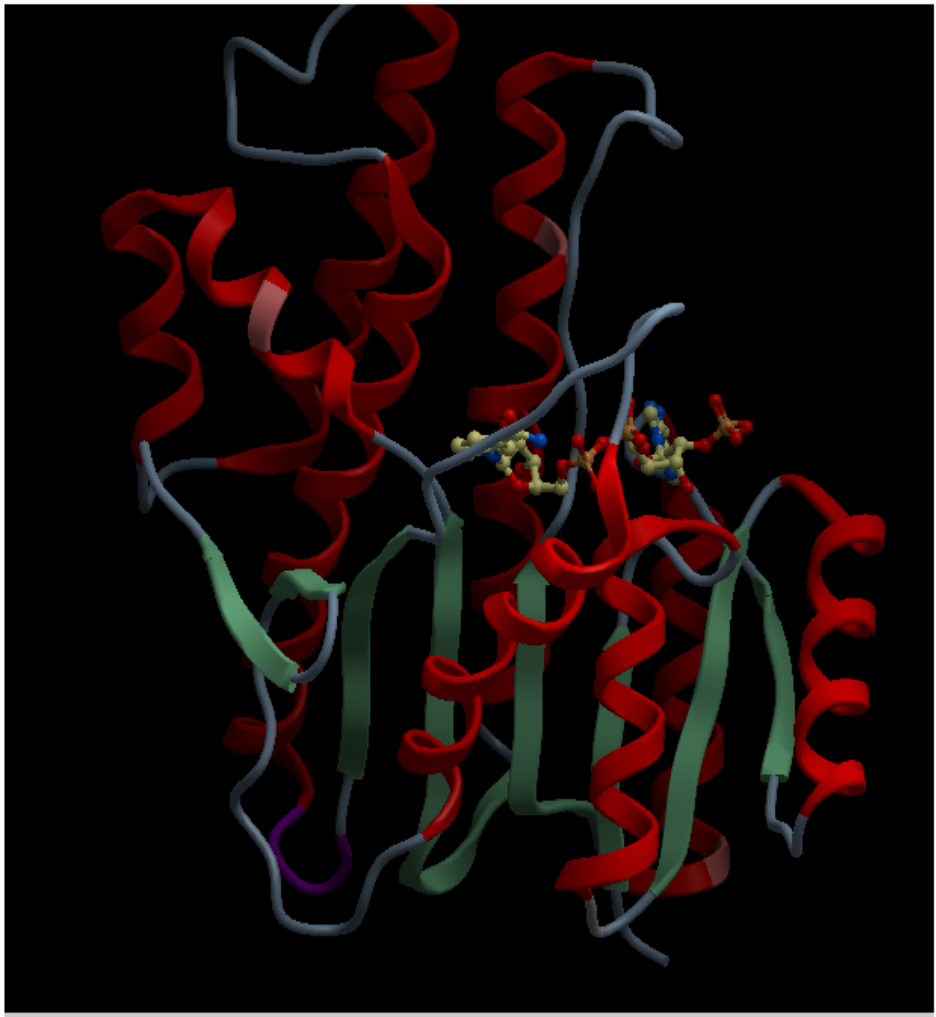
3 Nuffield Department of Orthopedic Surgery, Rheumatology and Musculoskeletal Sciences, Botnar Research Center, University of Oxford, Oxford, OX3 7LD, UK.

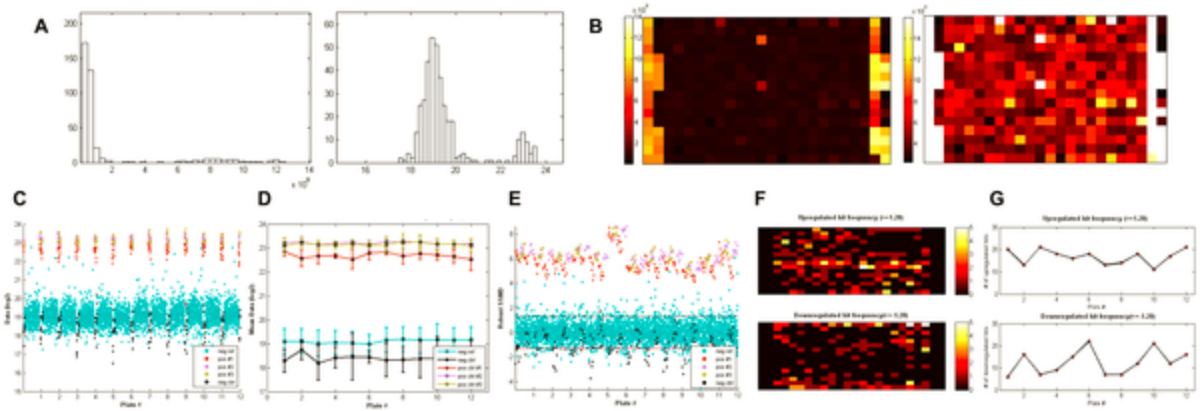
4 Faculty of Pharmacy, Charles University, Hradec Kralove, Czech Republic.

* These authors contributed equally to this work.

#Corresponding author e-mail: udo.oppermann@sgc.ox.ac.uk

Funding: The Structural Genomics Consortium is a registered charity (number 1097737) that receives funds from the Canadian Institutes for Health Research, the Canadian Foundation for Innovation, Genome Canada through the Ontario Genomics Institute, GlaxoSmithKline, Karolinska Institutet, the Knut and Alice Wallenberg Foundation, the Ontario Innovation Trust, the Ontario Ministry for Research and Innovation, Merck & Co





doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0049386.g004

Figure 4. Graphical outputs demonstrated on a 12-plate siRNA screen analyzed with the robust SSMD method with GUItars.

Less

(A) Raw data (left) and $\log_2$-transformed data (right) histograms of each plate showing the original data distribution and effect of data transformation (one representative plate is shown). (B) Original scale (left) and rescaled (right) heat maps of each plate helping to capture systematic errors (one representative plate is shown). (C) Column-wise plate-series plot. (D) Screen-wise line plot for average control readings showing a clear separation between negative control and positive controls that is consistent throughout the screen. (E) Screen-wise SSMD score scatter plots with cutoff lines at 1.28 and −1.28 for signal-increasing and signal-decreasing hits, respectively. (F) Hit distribution heat maps for signal-increasing (top) and signal-decreasing (bottom) hits. (G) Screen-wise hit counts for signal-increasing (top) and signal-decreasing (bottom) hits.

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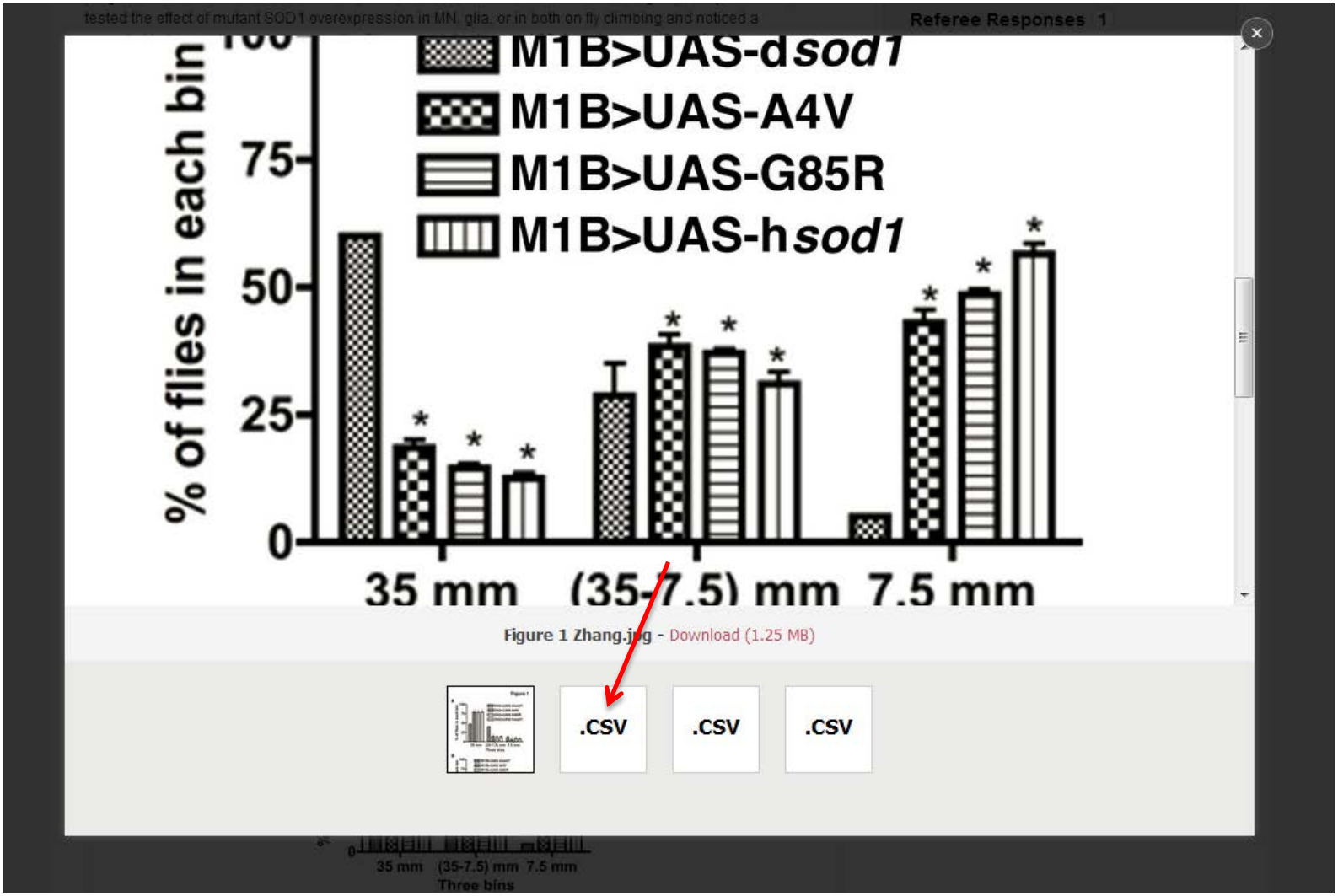

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sandstones, red and green mudrocks, and sandy calcarenites passing upward to coarse-grained and cross-laminated sandy calcarenites, bioclastic limestones, and marlstones (Fig. 2a,Fig. 2b).

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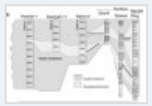
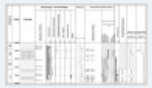
Abstract
1. Introduction
2. Geological setting









3. Evolution of the Haushi Sea
3.1. Microfacies

Fig. 2a: Location of well sections and surface sections.

surface sections well sections

Show related localities in Oman

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en

Fish community structure in three temporarily open/closed estuaries on the Natal coast

T.D. Harrison and A.K. Whitfield

Abstract

The fishes of three small Natal estuaries, the Mhlanga. Damba and Zotsha were sampled over a period of two years. A total of 68 fish taxa representing 24 families, 39 genera and 55 species were captured during this study. Forty seven fish taxa were recorded in the Mhlanga estuary of which Gilchristella aestuaria, Oreochromis mossambicus, Valamugil cunnesius, Valamugil sp. and juvenile mugilids numerically dominated. In terms of biomass, O. mossambicus, V. cunnesius, Liza alata, Myxus capensis and Mugil cephalus dominated the ichthyofauna of the Mhlanga system. In the Damba estuary, 24 fish taxa were recorded, the most abundant being Glossogobius callidus, M. capensis and O. mossambicus. M. capensis, M. cephalus, O. mossambicus and G. callidus dominated the fish biomass captured in the Damba system. A total of 56 fish taxa were recorded in the Zotsha estuary during this study, with the ichthyofauna numerically dominated by juvenile mugilids, G. aestuaria, O. mossambicus, Rhabdosargus holubi, Terapon jarbua, Ambassis productus and G. callidus. The species which dominated the fish biomass in the Zotsha system were O. mossambicus L. alata, Valamugil robustus, V. buchanani, M. capensis, M. cephalus and V. cunnesius.

Classifying the species according to whether they were resident estuarine, freshwater, estuarine-dependent marine or marine species revealed that the first three groups were all well represented in the systems. Oreochromis mossambicus was the dominant freshwater

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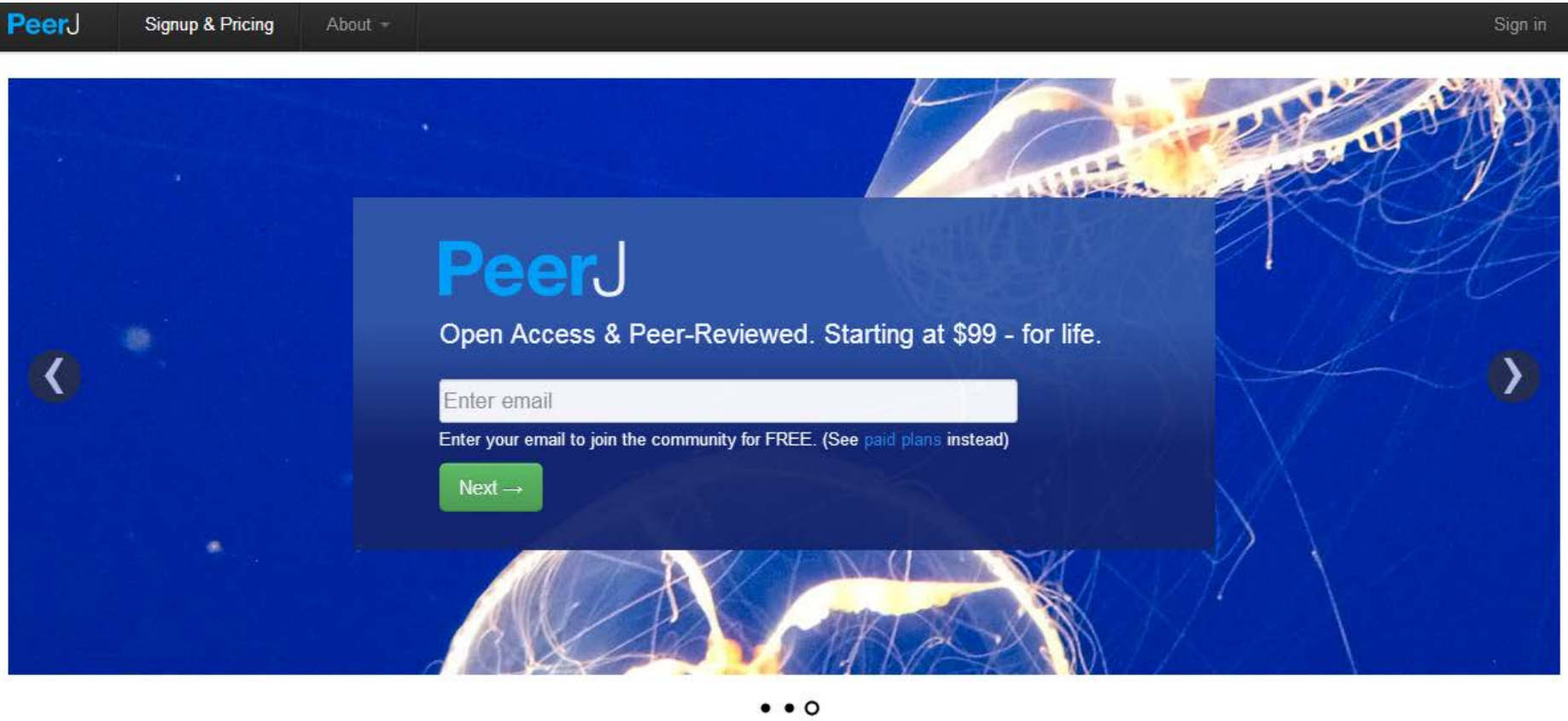
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ARTICLE DETAILS

TITLE (PROVISIONAL)	Geographical variation in blindness and sight impairment rates in England, 2008-09: Analysis of national certification data
AUTHORS	Malik, Aeesha; Bunce, Catey; Wormald, Richard; Suleman, Mehrunisha; Stratton, Irene; Gray, Muir

VERSION 1 - REVIEW

REVIEWER	Jennifer Evans Lecturer London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine I have worked with some of the authors of this paper, in particular Richard Wormald and Catey Bunce, over many years.
REVIEW RETURNED	06-Jul-2012

THE STUDY	Under limitations, I felt that the question of standardisation and control of confounding by age might be one limitation of the analysis. The authors have controlled for age differences between PCTs using direct standardisation. They acknowledge one of the limitations of direct standardisation is that, if the number of events in each age band is low, then it can be subject to sampling error. As a result they have used rather wide age-bands. There may be residual confounding by age, particularly in the older age-groups. This might explain some of the variation. One option would be to repeat the

Pre-publication history

Open Access

Impact of evergreening on patients and health insurance: a meta analysis and reimbursement cost analysis of citalopram/escitalopram antidepressants

Ali A Alkhafaji, **Ludovic Trinquart**, **Gabriel Baron**, **Moise Desvarieux** and **Philippe Ravaud**

BMC Medicine 2012, **10**:142 doi:10.1186/1741-7015-10-142

Pre-publication versions of this article and reviewers' reports

Original Submission - Version 1	Manuscript		11 Jul 2012
Reviewer's Report	Thomas Faunce		30 Jul 2012
Reviewer's Report	Joel Lexchin		01 Aug 2012
Reviewer's Report	Jacqueline Birks		20 Aug 2012
Resubmission - Version 2	Manuscript	Author's comment	14 Sep 2012
Resubmission - Version 3	Manuscript	Author's comment	14 Sep 2012
Reviewer's Report	Joel Lexchin		22 Sep 2012
Reviewer's Report	Jacqueline Birks		01 Oct 2012
Resubmission - Version 4	Manuscript	Author's comment	04 Oct 2012
Editorial acceptance			08 Oct 2012
Published			20 Nov 2012

In the meta-analysis of seven head-to-head trials (2,174 patients), efficacy was significantly better for escitalopram than citalopram (combined odds ratio (OR) 1.60 (95% confidence interval 1.05 to 2.46)). However, for the adjusted indirect comparison of 10 citalopram and 12 escitalopram placebo-controlled trials, 2,984 and 3,777 patients respectively, efficacy was similar for the two drug forms (combined indirect OR 1.03 (0.82 to 1.30)). Because of the discrepancy, we could not combine direct and indirect data (test of inconsistency, P = 0.07). A similar discrepancy was found for treatment acceptability. The overall reimbursement cost burden for the citalopram, escitalopram and its generic forms was 120.6 million Euros in 2010, with 96.8

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The biological impacts of the Fukushima nuclear accident on the pale grass blue butterfly

Atsuki Hiyama, Chiyo Nohara, Seira Kinjo, Wataru Taira, Shinichi Gima, Akira Tanahara & Joji M. Otaki

Scientific Reports 2, Article number: 570 (2012) | doi:10.1038/srep00570

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Der Spiegel

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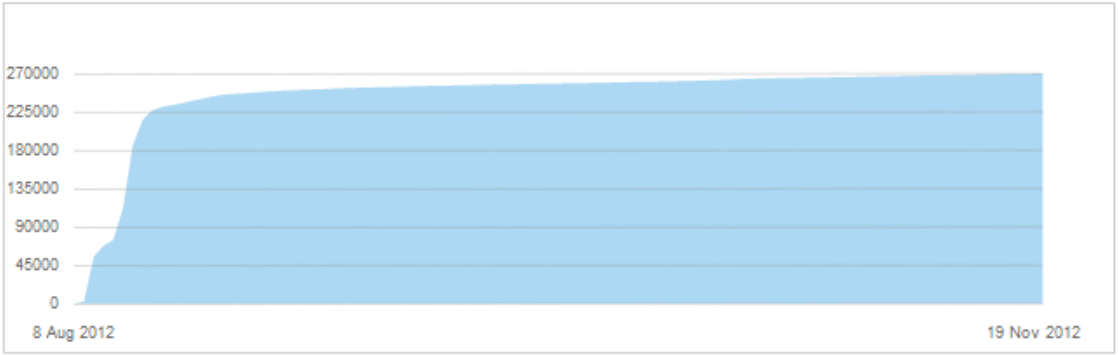

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Adaptive Sound Localization with a Silicon Cochlea Pair

Vincent Y. Chan[1], Craig T. Jin[1] and André van Schaik[1*]

[1] School of Electrical and Information Engineering, The University of Sydney, Australia

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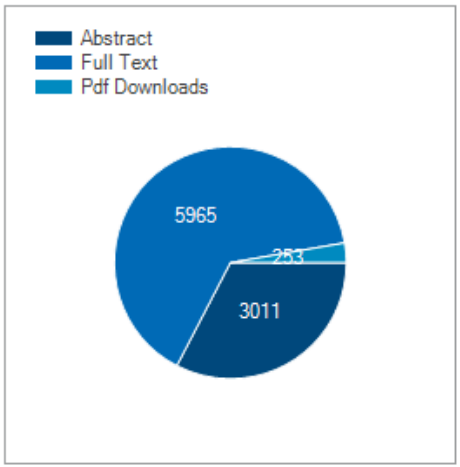

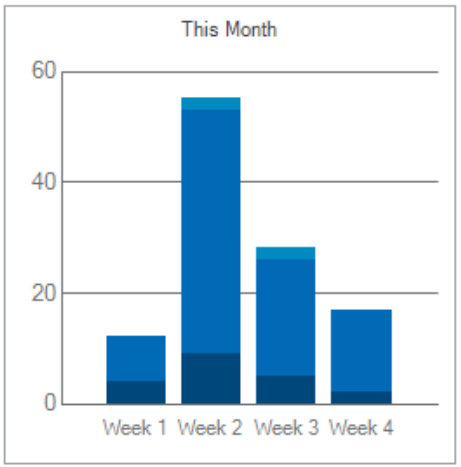

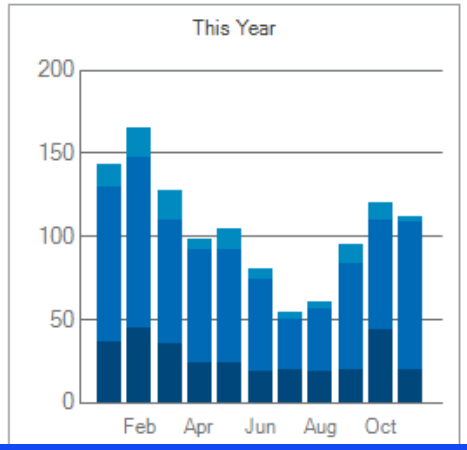

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SCIENTIFIC REPORTS | ARTICLE OPEN

Regulation of autophagy by nucleoporin Tpr

Tatsuyoshi Funasaka, Eriko Tsuka & Richard W. Wong

Affiliations | Contributions | Corresponding author

Scientific Reports 2, Article number: 878 | doi:10.1038/srep00878

Received 21 August 2012 | Accepted 10 October 2012 | Published 20 November 2012

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The nuclear pore complex (NPC) consists of a conserved set of ~30 different proteins, termed nucleoporins, and serves as a gateway for the exchange of materials between the cytoplasm and nucleus. Tpr (translocated promoter region) is a component of NPC that presumably localizes at intranuclear filaments. Here, we show that Tpr knockdown caused a severe reduction in the number of nuclear pores. Furthermore, our electron microscopy studies indicated a significant reduction in the number of inner nuclear filaments. In addition, Tpr siRNA treatment impaired cell growth and proliferation compared to control siRNA-treated cells. In Tpr-depleted cells, the levels of p53 and p21 proteins were enhanced. Surprisingly, Tpr depletion increased p53 nuclear accumulation

Questions

- When a journal represents 2%, 5%, 50% of the literature, is it even a journal any more?
- How will megajournals differentiate themselves?
- How will the publishing landscape be transformed?

The Ukrainian Journal of Fish Behaviour

Damian Pattinson

dpattinson@plos.org
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