

# Prestige and quality – DOAJ:New selection criteria and ongoing developments

8th Munin Conference, Tromsø

November 25th-26th

Lars Bjørnshauge

# Quality & Prestige

Quality is often understood to mean prestige

But

**Quality is something separate from prestige**

A journal can be of high quality without being prestigious (as it is traditionally measured)

Good news for new or small journals because while prestige takes a long time to achieve, quality can be achieved immediately.

**We need to redefine what we mean by quality**

(credits to Caroline Sutton)

Publishers provide a service to authors

Part of that service is to do what they can, so their work can achieve its fullest impact.

What is impact then? How can it be measured?

The digital environment has changed what can be measured and this ought to have implications for our understanding of impact

(credits to Caroline Sutton)

# Quality & Prestige

Reach and impact are related to the quality of the journal. But maybe not in the way that we traditionally have thought about this

**Achieving prestige, impact and reach begins  
with assuring quality**

(credits to Caroline Sutton)

# Assuring Quality

- Editorial quality
- Services to the author
- Technical quality

- Elements of editorial quality:
  - Quality of peer review processes
  - “Quality” of the Editorial Board and Reviewes
  - Check for Plagiarism
  - Time from submission to publication
  - Indexing in I&A services and databases
  - ....

- Easy to use submission system
- Language and copy editing
- Layout
- Author retains copyright
- Author posting rights
- Posting on behalf of the author
- Usage statistics
- ALM – article level metrics(?)

- Provision of DOIs
- Machine readable formats
- Multiple formats
- Links to supplementary materials and data
- Archiving

Publishers should make downstream usage visible, thus demonstrating the services they provide and help understand impact!



# Brief Background

- Founded 2003 at Lund University – launched May 2003 with 300 journals.
- Initially funded by minor project grants from SPARC and Open Society Institute.
- Additional grants from among others SPARC Europe, INASP and OpenAccess.se.
- Membership and Sponsor funding model introduced 2006.



- Constant growth during the years
- End of 2012 - +8.000 journals
- Increasing importance for the OA-movement
- Difficult for a single university to manage and give priority
- Discussions as to how to find a new “home” for DOAJ
- December 2012 an agreement was in place between Lund Univ. and IS4OA

## INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES FOR OPEN ACCESS

[www.is4oa.org](http://www.is4oa.org)



Founded by  
Caroline Sutton,  
Alma Swan &  
Lars Bjørnshauge



[Home](#)

[News](#)

[About IS4OA](#)

[Who we are](#)

[Contact us](#)

## INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES FOR OPEN ACCESS

**A not-for-profit Community Interest Company  
(C.I.C.), registered in the United Kingdom.**

# What we said we would do!

- IS4OA took over January 1<sup>st</sup> 2013:
- We said we would:
  - Involve the community in the development and operations
  - Respond to demands and expectations by
    - Developing new tighter criteria
  - Reengineer the editorial back office work
    - Monitor for compliance and weed accordingly

we also said we  
would ....

- Develop the DOAJ into a significantly improved service by
  - introducing more functionality
  - extending the coverage of journals around the world and...
  - working more closely with publishers to improve the quality of the information about the journals listed.
  - integrate with other infrastructure services
  - develop sustainable funding

- A list of open access journals – global in scope both in terms of disciplines, languages and geography
- A hub for dissemination of article level metadata
  - 9993** journals
  - 5683** journals searchable at article level
  - 124** Countries
  - 1539777** articles
- Our ambition: to help OA-journals to improve their quality, visibility and discoverability

# Involving the community

- What we have done:
  - Set up an Advisory Board
  - Done a survey (to learn more)
  - New criteria out for public comment
  - Reach out to organizations and initiatives to address general issues for open access journals



# Improvements

- New platform launched
- Facets search:
  - language
  - publication year
  - license
  - business model (APCs or not)
- Very good feedback!

- Journals added Jan-Nov 2013: 2115
- (Journals added 2012): 1248
  
- We are weeding as well:
  
- August 1st – Nov 24th 2013:
- Journals added: 590
- Journals removed: 538

# Why tighter criteria?

- Better opportunities for funders, universities, libraries and authors to judge whether a journal lives up to standards – transparency!
- Enable the community to monitor compliance
- Addressing the issue of fake publishers or publishers not living up to reasonable standards both in terms of content and of business behavior.
- Promote best practice – the DOAJ SEAL

## Current criteria

- BOAI: users can read, download, copy, distribute, print... at no charge to the reader/institution
- Exercise peer-review or editorial control
- Publish research
- No embargoes
- To be checked by the DOAJ editorial staff

# New criteria

- New tighter criteria will address:
- **“Quality”**
- **“Openness”**
- **“the delivery”**
- They will be more detailed
- Publishers will have to do more to be included
- Draft criteria out for public comment summer 2013

# Quality!

- This is tricky!
- Funders, libraries and researchers want to be able to judge whether a journal is a “good” journal.
- No quick fixes – no clear, accepted definition!
- Only proxy measures available

- **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, Other ...
- Statements about aims & scope clearly visible
- Instructions to authors shall be available and easily located
- Screening for plagiarism?
- Time from submission to publication

- CC-license – if Yes, which?
- Reader rights
- Reuse rights
- Copyrights
- Author posting rights
- Inspired by the OpenAccessSpectrum developed by PLOS, SPARC & OASPA -  
[www.plos.org/about/open-access/howopenisit/](http://www.plos.org/about/open-access/howopenisit/)



# “The delivery”

- Publisher
  - ISSN/eISSN
  - Journal Title
  - URL of Journal Homepage
  - Editor
  - Editor e-mail address
  - Editorial Board
  - Contact person
  - Contact person –email address
  - Country
  - Journals must publish 5 articles/year (rule of thumb & does not apply for new journals)
  - Whether the journal has an archiving arrangement
- (name)
  - (e-mail address)
  - URL to info re editorial board
  - (name)
  - (e-mail address)
- Yes/No

# “The delivery”

- **Article Processing Charges** (APC)s (in relevant currency)
- Whether the journal has article **submission charges** (in relevant currency)
- **Waiver policy** (for developing country authors, etc)
- **Persistent Identifiers**
- Link to download statistics
- Start year (since online full-text content is available)
- Please indicate which formats of full text are available (PDF, HTML, ePUB, XML, other)
- Article level: provision of metadata
- Yes/No – if Yes: then currency and amount
- Yes/No – if Yes: then currency and amount
- Yes/No – if Yes: link to information on the journal homepage
- Yes/No ,
- Yes/No
- 
- Yes/No

- **To promote best practice:**
- CC-BY (embedded machine readable in article metadata)
- Authors retain copyright without restrictions
- CrossRefs DOIs
- Deposit policy registered in Sherpa/RoMeo and equivalent
- Archiving arrangement with an archiving organisation (list to be developed and maintained)
- Article level metadata to DOAJ
- A journal will automatically get the DOAJ SEAL if it complies with all the above criteria

- The first draft of new criteria were out for public comment – we received a lot of comments – and learned a lot!
- “Our” - Western European/North American services, standards and business models are not universal!
- For instance: CC-licenses are not universal, there are similar services to DOIs and SHERPA/RoMEO,

- The process highlighted the dilemma:
- Respecting different publishing cultures and traditions
- Not primarily exclude, but rather **facilitate and assist** the smaller journals from other continents to **come into the flow**
- **While at the same time** promoting standards, transparency and best practice

- The information provided by the journals will be publicly available and searchable
- i.e. – which journals in biology published in Spanish, has a CC license, an archiving arrangement and do not charge APCs etc.
- The transparency will enable the community to alert us in case of non-compliance
- The journals will have 18 months to comply with the new criteria

- We are discussing with a number of organizations to facilitate the take up of important features of a "good" journal, for instance
  - CC-licenses
  - Persistent identifiers
  - Archiving
- Creative Commons, CrossRef, CLOCKSS, LOCKSS, The Keepers Registry, COPE, OASPA etc.
- We want to include – not stigmatize!

# Crowdsourcing the editorial work

- The implementation of new selection criteria will generate much more editorial work
- We must extend our language competence within the group of editors
- We will enable the community to contribute by introducing the “DOAJ Associate Editor”
  
- Call for associate editors – out shortly
- Selection of associate editors during January
- Training of associate editors during February



## To conclude!

- We believe that we are on track!
- Lots of work ahead.
- We will continue to contribute to the momentum of open access publishing by
  - carefully promoting standards, transparency and best practice
  - without losing the global view
  - collaborating
- This will benefit **all** open access publishers!

Our ambition: DOAJ to be **the**  
**white list!**

and make other lists superfluous –  
that is:

if a journal is in the DOAJ it complies  
with accepted standards

Thank you for your attention!  
and  
Thank you for your support!



---

[lars@doaj.org](mailto:lars@doaj.org)