How can we individually and collectively champion open and ethical scholarly publishing systems?

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What makes a publishing model open and ethical? Which features to consider?
Ethical dimensions of publishing

Openness: for readers/for authors

Economic model: who bears the costs - who gets the benefits?

Ownership/control

Racimo et al (2022) Ethical publishing, how do we get there? in PTbio
https://zenodo.org/record/6224306#.Y0Z13HZBw2w
Ethical dimensions of publishing

Category 3: Trade-off on openness
Trade-off in which resources invested for publishing research remain within the research domain but the openness of research is compromised.

Category 4: Most desirable
Diamond open access as ideal model, but non-commercial journals and society journals can help by keeping APCs as low as possible so that research resources remain within the academic domain.

Category 1: Least desirable
Resources invested for publishing research exit the research domain and openness is compromised. Generally commercial, for-profit business models.

Category 2: Trade-off on resource investment
Trade-off in which published research is open, but resources invested for publishing research exit the research domain.

cc-by N.Aubert-Bonn, in Racimo et al (2022) Ethical publishing, how do we get there? in PTbio
https://zenodo.org/record/6224306#.Y0Z13HZBw2w
Why not publish ethically?

- career movement
- not aware
- fast dissemination
- not being aware
- prestige
- time investment
- systemic problem
- no reason
- lack of time or resource
- perceived as easier
- for profit
- no particular incentive
What can we do?
What can we do?

ORGANIZE
What roles do you hold in the academic system?

- PhD Candidate: 0
- Postdoc: 2
- Supervisor: 0
- Senior researcher/academic: 1
- Co-author: 4
- Librarian: 2
- ECR representative: 2
- SR representative: 0
- Grant review board member: 0
- Member of a funding agency: 3
- Member of a scientific society: 5
- Member of an academic union: 1
Within those roles, which concrete actions can we undertake?

- Encourage transparency
- Support Diamond OA
- Subscriptions for OA
- Support Online First
- Refuse peer review
- Refuse editorial work
- Support preprints
- Incentivise ethical OA
- Share knowledge
- Support APCs
- Reward data
- Select peer review
- Stand up to publishers
- Provide example
- Raise awareness
- Redirect investment
- Rewarding OS practices
- Authors' right retention
- Education in OS
- Publish more pre-prints
- Mandate RRS use
- Alternative publ platform
- Support Diamond
- Advise researchers on OA
- Support preprint review
- Support whole lifecycle
- Create OS policy
- Admin support in OS
Which type of institutions still need to be convinced about transitioning to ethical publishing?

- Funding agencies: 2.7
- Libraries: 2.6
- Learned societies: 3.6
- Research institutes: 3.3
- Universities: 4
Which declarations did I openly support?

- The Leiden Manifesto: 3
- DORA: 5
- The Jussieu Call: 1
- the PCI manifesto: 0
- Other: 1
Which declarations did my institution openly support?

- The Leiden Manifesto: 2
- DORA: 7
- The Jussieu Call: 1
- The Agreement on reforming research assessment: 5
- Other: 2
I cannot, however, review for *Nature Neuroscience* any longer due to the enormous open-access APC fee that was recently announced (https://group.springernature.com/cn/group/media/press-releases/springer-nature-announces-gold-oa-options-for-nature-journals/18614608). The $11,528 (by today’s exchange rate) is significantly above the average APC of the biggest for-profit publishers, which has been estimated at being around $2,660 (https://undark.org/2021/01/14/big-science-publisher-is-going-open-access/). ‘$11,528’ is not just a large number. It is one semester of a graduate student stipend, most of an fMRI study, funds for 4 graduate students to attend the Society for Neuroscience Annual Meeting. These charges take away money (often from government grants) that would otherwise be spent in those ways.

The ‘Editorial Assessment Charge’ piloted in 6 other Nature journals is also a worrying development. Charging more than $2,000 upon submission is not only excessive, but adds barriers where none should exist.
Today, I received 2 review requests from for-profit journals (I guess from editors who must not follow me on twitter). After declining, I sent this to the respective first and last authors of the 2 papers. #UndergroundPeerReview

Thu 9/23/2021 10:33 PM
To:

Dear [Name],

I just received a review request for one of your manuscripts by a for-profit journal. As a rule I don’t provide unpaid labor to for-profit journals, so I had to decline the request. However, I found the preprint of your manuscript very much worth a read, so I’d be happy to write a review for it on the comments section of your bioRxiv preprint, or alternatively, be a suggested reviewer of your manuscript in PCI Evol Bio or PCI Genomics:
https://evolbiol.peercommunityin.org/
https://genomics.peercommunityin.org/

Let me know if you’re interested! I can probably have something written within 30 days. And sorry for having to decline: it’s my general belief that publicly withdrawing our free labor from this type of journals is one of the most effective ways forward for making them lose their value over time among the scientific community, and encourage stronger support for society or non-profit journals and preprint review systems that invest the money back into science instead of the pockets of shareholders.

Best,

[Name]
Do you agree with these practices?

Withdraw peer review from for-profit journals

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree
Learned societies - how to transition? Which obstacles - which added value?

- Lack of resources and collective support structures
- When financed with subscriptions (for printed issues) - how to stimulate subscriptions for open access?

- Added value: best value for their members (what are learned societies for if not to serve the needs of their community?)

- Obstacles: current publishing profits

- Added value: use their members to review and curate the literature

- Transactional costs can be high, disproportionate to scale eg. they could work collectively with things like OA switchboard
Choices of publishing venue: where do you stand?

- I chose to support an ethical publishing model over a commercial one: Strongly agree (4.3)
- My team already discussed the choice of publication under this light: Agree (4)
- I already withdrew from peer-reviewing or editing in commercial venues: Strongly agree (3.5)
A complex shift by individual and collective practices’ alignment

Thank you for your attention!