Transparent Peer Review
STM Week, 2018
Publons

- Founded 2013
  - Recognition for peer review
  - Transparent review
  - Service for both researchers and publishers
Publons

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  - Recognition for peer review
  - Transparent review
  - Service for both researchers and publishers

- Acquired by Clarivate Analytics in 2017
  - Reviewer Connect search
  - Global State of Peer Review
  - 360 degree view of the researcher
  - Transparent review
The Global State of Peer Review Report
The GSPR asks four key questions

1. How efficient is the peer review process?
2. What do we know about the quality of peer review?
3. Who is doing peer review?
4. What does the future hold?

Combination of:

• Survey of >11k researchers
• Publons peer review data
• ScholarOne manuscript and review data
• Web of Science publication data

Key themes

• Efficiency
• Quality
• Transparency
Efficiency

How long does it take to complete a review?

FIG. 28 — TIME TO COMPLETE A REVIEW IN DAYS
Data source: ScholarOne
Time in days to return a completed review (after acceptance of the invitation) from 2013–17.
Efficiency

It’s getting harder to get review done

FIG. 24 — TOTAL REVIEWERS INVITED, AND PROPORTION OF INVITATIONS AGREED TO AND REVIEWS COMPLETED, FROM 2013–17
Data source: ScholarOne

On the left y-axis are absolute numbers of invitations to review over the last five years. On the right y-axis are reviewer invitation agreement and completion rates.

FIG. 39 — ACTUAL AND PROJECTED AVERAGE NUMBER OF REVIEW INVITATIONS REQUIRED TO GENERATE ONE COMPLETED REVIEW ASSIGNMENT
Data source: ScholarOne

2013 — 1.9 invitations
2017 — 2.4 invitations
2025 — 3.6 invitations
**Quality**

Does size matter? How long is a review?

**DOES SIZE MATTER?**

According to Publons data, the average length of a review report is 477 words.

There is a clear difference in average review length between established (528 words) and emerging (250 words) regions.

Why are there large differences between some regions? One hypothesis is that reviewers in emerging regions are less comfortable writing in English.

**EDITORIAL COMMENT**

If editors value long reviews, or if non-native English speakers’ reviews are harder to read, this may explain some of the bias toward reviewer selection observed from editors in Chapter 1.
Quality

What affects the length of a review?

We observe a shift to longer reviews with increasing JIF. There is a clear difference in average review length between established and emerging regions.
Does review policy make a difference to invitation acceptance rates?

Reviewers seem more likely to accept invitations from journals using blinded review models

**Fig 41 — The Effect of Journal Review Policies on Peer Review Invitation Acceptance Rates**

*Data source: Publons’ 2018 Global Reviewer Survey*

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Transparency Policy</th>
<th>Very Unlikely</th>
<th>Unlikely</th>
<th>Makes No Difference</th>
<th>Likely</th>
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<tr>
<td>Single-blind</td>
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<td>21.3%</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Transparency

Are there differences in attitude to review openness across age groups?

Could attitudes be shifting as a new generation of researchers enter the ecosystem?

Or are researchers becoming less favourable to openness as they get older?
TRANSPARENCY:
+ providing greater visibility and recognition
+ advancing research integrity and reproducibility
+ inhibiting research manipulation and fraudulent review
Operating open peer review workflows can be challenging

- There is a growing interest in transparent & open review models
- However, many publishers face practical difficulties in adopting Open Peer Review
- Complex, legacy workflows -> publishers have either avoided Open Peer Review or used manual workarounds, soaking up editorial time and limiting rollout
So what does the model look like?

1. Enable opt ins
2. Set up data transfer
3. Accepted articles

Editor comments/troubleshooting

Publisher links to review page at article level

Review content published on Publons

Article published on publisher site

Content platform

DOI feed

Publons collects data required

Publons creates review content page

Publons registers dois for peer review objects

Reviewer content published on Publons

Submission system

Publisher links to review page at article level

Accepted and opted in paper feed sent to Production
Wiley: Clinical Genetics

- Deployed September ‘18
Wiley: Clinical Genetics

- Publisher article page: https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/cge.13363
  - The peer review history for this article is available at https://publons.com/publon/10.1111/cge.13363/
- Publons article page: https://publons.com/publon/10.1111/cge.13363/
  - → Navigation pane to quickly assess key peer review content.

Abstract

Hemophagocytic lymphohistiocytosis (HLH) is a rare life-threatening hyperinflammatory disease. This study aimed to investigate the frequencies and distributions of inherited variants in PRF1, UNC13D, STX11, STXB2, SH2D1A, and XIAP genes in Chinese patients with HLH. A total of 265 patients diagnosed with HLH from January, 2010 to December, 2016...
Wiley: Clinical Genetics

- Publisher article page: https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/cge.13363
  - The peer review history for this article is available at https://publons.com/publon/10.1111/cge.13363/
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  - → Navigation pane to quickly assess key peer review content.
Wiley: Clinical Genetics

- Uptake
  - Pre-launch => 4 / 140 opt ins
  - Post-launch => 123 / 140 opt ins

- Signing reviews
  - Named => 16 (19%)
  - Anonymous => 70 (81%)

- Lots of interest from publishers for two reasons
  - Bringing new journals to transparent peer review
  - Saving money for journals that are already operating transparent peer review processes
Global State of Peer Review report

- https://publons.com/community/gspr

Questions:
- andrew@publons.com | partnerships@publons.com