

The Royal Society of Biology

Research Communications Newsletter

A collection of online information and opinion pieces.

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Royal Society of Biology news

[RSB biosecurity concerns raised in House of Lords debate](#)

The Society was pleased to hear its recommendations regarding infectious disease threats to UK biosecurity, including human, animal and plant health, raised as part of a House of Lords debate on 18th January.

Spotlight on Open Access

[Society publishers respond to Plan S “Towards Responsible Publishing” proposal](#)

In The Scholarly Kitchen, three global society publishers, Institute of Physics (IOP) Publishing, American Institute of Physics (AIP) Publishing, and the American Physical Society (APS) come together to offer a response to cOAlition S’s recent proposal.

[Open access publisher Frontiers to cut 600 jobs across operations in 23 countries](#)

Research Professional News reports that Frontiers will be reducing its 2000-person workforce by 30 per cent. Downsizing will implement a “more agile and efficient model” for open access publishing, the company says, with the aim of making Frontiers “a leaner and more agile organisation, with enhanced financial resilience amidst market shifts”.

[Open access papers draw more citations from a broader readership](#)

A new study addresses long-standing debate about whether free-to-read papers have increased reach, writes Science.

[Taylor & Francis joins DOAB’s peer review transparency initiative, PRISM](#)

Taylor & Francis has announced its support for an initiative to boost researcher confidence in open access (OA) books and promote better understanding of the role of peer review, reports STM Publishing. Peer Review Information Service for Monographs (PRISM) provides a standardized way for publishers to present information about the peer review processes for their titles on the Directory of Open Access Books (DOAB) platform.

[Understanding key concepts in the UKRI open access policy](#)

New support resources are available from Jisc, reports ALPSP. Jisc is supporting higher education with the transition to open access through the negotiation of a range of transitional (transformative) and open access agreements which enable UK research output to be published open access in accordance with UK funder policies, such as UKRI.

Publication policy and debate

[Opinion: Don't forget the social dimension of research evaluation](#)

Policy reforms aim to create cultural change: making assessment fairer, more humane, more in line with the changing nature of science and better able to serve society. Openness—broadly the idea that research should be as collaborative, accessible, shareable and reusable as possible—is central to this. But despite this cultural framing, the writers of this piece in Research Professional News argue, the social aspects and effects of how openness in research is evaluated remain under-explored.

[Opinion: Not-for-profit scholarly publishing might not be cheaper – and that's OK](#)

The rising cost of academic publishing is causing consternation across the research ecosystem and prompting calls in Europe for a transition to not-for-profit publishing models. On the LSE Impact blog, Rob Johnson argues that expecting emerging not-for-profit providers to offer a cheaper solution than commercial players is a surefire way to keep them small – or make them fail.

[Springer Nature develops new peer review platform](#)

Springer Nature has announced the rollout of Snapp (Springer Nature's Article Processing Platform). It aims to improve the publishing process and provide a more agile response to the growth in open access (OA), and marks a "key investment" from the company in the future of publishing.

International publishing

[Opinion: Horizon Europe's missions need a rethink](#)

The much-hyped programme has fallen short on all fronts, says MEP Christian Ehler, writing in Research Professional News. According to Ehler, it is time for bold political action, and to make some tough choices.

[Ten scientists receive EMBO Installation Grants](#)

EMBO has announced that ten life scientists have been awarded EMBO Installation Grants. The scientists' inspiring research spans a wide range of topics including ageing, tumour biology, gut-brain axis communication, microbiota and gene editing tools. The group leaders will establish laboratories in the Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal and Türkiye.

Publishing ethics

[Science's fake-paper problem: high-profile effort will tackle paper mills](#)

Poor-quality studies are polluting the literature, according to Nature News. A new group will study the businesses that produce them, with the aim of helping to stem the flow of bogus research.

[Study questions whether research institutions are the appropriate entity to investigate authorship disputes in all cases](#)

Current guidelines advocated by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE), the Council of Science Editors (CSE), and the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE), recommend that in cases of authorship disputes that the authors themselves cannot resolve, journals should call upon the authors' institutions to investigate. A guest post for The Scholarly Kitchen discusses a recent study published in the Rambam Maimonides Medical Journal, which concludes that this approach may be inappropriate.

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