

SciPost.org: A new two-way open access and peer-reviewed refereeing publication portal

As a researcher you have your work cut out writing your own articles as well as reviewing the work of others. And subsequently you must also pay to read that work or to allow others to read it either via subscriptions or by 'redeeming' your own work. That simply does not add up was the thought of FOM workgroup leader Jean-Sébastien Caux (University of Amsterdam) and several colleagues. This observation is hardly new but Caux set out to do something about it. At the end of March his self-constructed publication portal went live: SciPost.org. Under the management of scientists who do the work themselves, just like they do now. But then free of charge to both readers and authors: two-way open access. And with a strict selection through an open review process.

"The scientists do the most important part of the work, so why do we have to pay to let somebody else benefit from that?" That is a feeling shared by many colleagues with respect to current publication practices. Caux and several colleagues have tackled the challenge and launched a new portal for publishing that meets the current call for the open access of peer-reviewed scientific articles. Physics is not a pioneer in this field: in other disciplines similar 'innovative' journals already exist. Time to catch up: after all the best innovations are from the bottom-up.

Peer-witnessed publishing via SciPost

From June 2016 onwards scientists can submit their articles to the new journal of SciPost: SciPost Physics. The submission process works as follows: scientists place their manuscript on arXiv, an online database for scientific articles which have not yet undergone peer review, and in this case the articles are mainly for mathematics and natural sciences. They subsequently submit the article to SciPost, with the link to ArXiv. The subsequent review process is, in part, similar to the well-known process at other journals: several referees comment on the article at the invitation of an editor from the Editorial Board. In addition, registered fellow scientists can also independently place their reaction. The invited referees can provide anonymous comments, but unlike the majority of 'traditional' journals, all of the comments are public. Therefore the entire review discussion is open. Caux: "That provides a stricter review process than is currently the case and that is also apparent from examples from journals in other disciplines that use this system. I refer to it as peer-witnessed reviewing. With this approach every active scientist can make comments before an article is accepted, can see the comments of others and can respond to the referee's comments. That has added value and increases the quality. "As it is publicly visible, everyone can see who makes a regular contribution as a referee and so researchers also receive more credit for this voluntary work. After the period of review and discussion, the Editorial Board decides whether a manuscript is accepted for publication in a SciPost Journal.

SciPost: more than journals

SciPost is more than just a portal for 'standard' peer-reviewed journals. "Amongst our first journals, we are publishing 'Lecture Notes' (including elaborations of lectures) bearing in mind that there is currently less of a podium for this. Our starting list also includes a properly searchable 'Theses' database for all theses that have been or are being published worldwide. In addition SciPost offers a section 'Commentaries'. Here all registered persons can place reactions to existing articles in all possible journals", explains Caux enthusiastically. (GZ/DK)

➔ scipost.org

➔ www.fom.nl/openaccess

[Kader]

NWO has tightened the granting conditions with respect to open access

With effect from 1 December 2015 NWO has tightened its granting conditions in the area of open access. This means that all publications that emerge from a 'call for proposals' published by NWO after this date must be publicly accessible straightaway at the moment of publication. This tightening of the policy also applies to FOM – for projects and programmes that FOM awards funding to within calls that FOM published after 1 December 2015. For calls that had already been published and current research projects, the previous conditions remain effective: publications should be freely accessible as soon as possible after publication.

Source:

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