Measures for Success: Measures of Quality

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Overview

- What is the DOAJ?
- What is our aim?
- What issues do we face as a community?
- The DOAJ solution
  - New application form with extended criteria
  - How do tighter criteria help?
  - Volunteers via crowdsourcing
- Conclude
What is DOAJ?

- A database listing high quality, peer-reviewed, open access journals
- Journals from ALL disciplines & all languages
- A hub for the collection & distribution of metadata to 3rd parties

9,796 Journals
5,699 searchable at Article level
134 Countries
1,649,814 Articles
What is DOAJ?

- Started at Lund University, Sweden, led by Lars Bjørnshauge
- Today managed by Infrastructure Services for Open Access C.I.C. (www.is4oa.org)
- Developed & hosted on standards-based, open-source software by Cottage Labs (www.cottagelabs.com)
What is our aim?

- To become THE white list of open-access journals
- To be truly global, curating partnerships worldwide
- To increase visibility and awareness of quality open access journals
  - online: in social media and online learning environments
  - offline: where study & research happens, the labs and libraries
What is our aim?

- To encourage awareness of open access & its issues
- To talk more to the community by increasing the transparency of our own operations:
  - DOAJ News Service: http://doajournals.wordpress.com
  - Public consultations
  - Social media
What issues?

The power of the internet:

- New audiences, growing audiences
- Increase in the availability of and access to publishing technologies (e.g. Smashwords for books)
- Greater need to quickly pinpoint quality literature
- Less quality in the research and literature
- Less funding, increased subscription prices, Big Deals
What issues?

Scams

- Predatory publishers
  - make money from author publishing charges (APCs)
- Fake Impact Factor services
  - make money from journals wanting to boast a high impact factor
- Journal hijacking/'phishing'
  - make money by copying a journal website/branding and collecting money through it
What issues?
Scams

- October 2013

**NEWS**

*Who's Afraid of Peer Review?*

John Bohannon

Dozens of open-access journals targeted in an elaborate *Science* sting accepted a spoof research article, raising questions about peer-review practices in much of the open-access world.

- February 2014

**NATURE | NEWS**

*Publishers withdraw more than 120 gibberish papers*

Conference proceedings removed from subscription databases after scientist reveals that they were computer-generated.
The Journal Impact Factor is dominant
Determines research funding and directs research policy
Fails to embrace the real impact on practitioners, the public and on society
Is flawed & prone to manipulation

[Brembs: http://www.slideshare.net/brembs/access-is-only-the-tip-of-the-iceberg-science-needs-a-new-infrastructure - slide 48 onwards]

What counts is not WHAT you publish but WHERE you publish it!
How can DOAJ help the community?

More transparency is needed in these areas:

- The editorial process
- Peer-review
- Reuse and readers' rights
- Author services
- Archiving
- Permanent identifiers
- Discoverability
DOAJ's New Criteria

- How do we encourage transparency?
- Developed new Application Form with extended criteria
- Public consultation period: Advisory Board and the public to establish key quality indicators
- Old form: 6 questions. New form: 56!
1. Peer review process
2. Governing Body
3. Editorial team/contact
4. Author fees
5. Copyright
6. Identification of and dealing with allegations of research misconduct
7. Ownership and management
8. Web site
9. Name of journal
10. Conflicts of interest
11. Access
12. Revenue sources
13. Advertising
14. Publishing schedule
15. Archiving
16. Direct marketing

DOAJ's New Criteria
DOAJ's New criteria

- New form structured focusses on 3 different themes:
  - Quality
  - Openness
  - The delivery or technical quality

- Publishers have to provide much more information to be indexed

- Applications are reviewed and assessed manually
How do Tighter Criteria Help?

- Encourages widespread adoption
- Promotes best practice
- Transparency
- Empowers the community
- Tackles the problem of fake or low quality publishers etc
- Increases discoverability and visibility
How do Tighter Criteria help?

- To **motivate and encourage** ALL OA-journals, regardless of size, to:
  - be more explicit on issues of editorial process
  - be more explicit on issues of rights and reuse
  - improve their level of “technical” quality to foster dissemination and discoverability (e.g. 64% DOAJ publishers have no permanent article Ids or don't know what one is)
This calls for volunteers!

- The community are experts: tap that resource
- Get the community directly involved with DOAJ
- A call for volunteers in 2014 had a huge response
- Applying a crowdsourcing model
Crowdsourcing: harnessing librarian power!

- Organised in a network of Editors and Associate Editors
- Grouped by language and/or specialty
- Starting test pilot with Chinese, English & Spanish
- Aim is to cover as many languages/specialties represented in DOAJ
Crowdsourcing

- Associate Editor responsibilities include:
  - Processing journal applications
  - Translation work
  - Regular review of indexed journals
  - Handling questions or alerts from the Community

- Already started translating application form into Chinese, Portuguese & Spanish
Crowdsourcing

- Associate Editor is assigned an application to review, check, verify for accuracy

- Once satisfied, the journal is flagged for acceptance

- Acceptance is confirmed by Managing Editor, a two-step process ensuring objectivity and consistency
To conclude

- We're confident that our new criteria will improve the transparency and credibility of OA-journals!

- 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
  - through collaboration
Our ambition: DOAJ to be the white list!

I.E. if a journal is in the DOAJ, it complies with high standards and is of good or high quality
Upgrading the DOAJ is a big project! Please support us!

http://doaj.org/supportDoaj
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Thank you!

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