<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Libraries and learning analytics</th>
<th>Interview: Magdalena Skipper</th>
<th>STM Frankfurt event report</th>
<th>Prediction markets: a forecast</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Are you (user) experienced?
Five hot riffs on UX
(see page 3 for explanation)
As a senior librarian, or a librarian managing a team, it is likely that you may often be placed in situations where the attributes of leadership need to be shown. But what exactly are these attributes? How are they attained? And how are they best applied?

Drawing on book chapters featuring helpful tips, expert advice and real-life examples, this FreeBook will help you to:

- Define leadership
- Identify your own leadership style
- Understand the core competencies of a good leader
- Recognise the impact of dysfunctional leadership
- Appreciate the role of kindness in leadership

To download the pdf, please go to: https://bit.ly/2mkPLLu
I’m writing this in downtown Charleston, where I’ve been lucky enough to attend the 39th library conference in this glorious South Carolina city.

Several technology sessions at the event were based around user experience (UX), the concept of making sure that industry software and systems are fit for purpose and encompass all stakeholders. On page 8 of this issue five industry experts update us on the latest developments in UX, and make some predictions for the future.

In our other set-piece feature, Rebecca Pool delves into the world of learning analytics – an area that has attracted great interest in many sectors of education but only more recently in the world of academic libraries.

The keynote speech at Charleston was from Brewster Kahle, founder of the Internet Archive, who announced an affiliation with a superb, socially-conscious organisation called Better World Books, which uses a revolutionary business model to collect used books from libraries, publishers and universities – and then resell, donate and recycle them. To date it has saved more than 300 million books from landfill.

There’s more on page 26; it’s truly inspirational stuff.

Oh, that front cover. For those not of a certain age, the image is of a certain rock star whose band was called the Jimi Hendrix Experience, and whose first album was called Are You Experienced? Tenuous and obscure, I know. Sorry.
Learning curves

As the pressure to understand student success rises, Rebecca Pool asks: are libraries coming around to learning analytics?

While learning analytics has swept through many sectors of education, only recently have libraries truly begun to show interest.

From the UK to the US, the last few years have seen more and more university libraries joining a growing number of societies, services and projects that aim to educate the library on how to use data to measure and promote student success.

As early as 2011, the Canada-based Society for Learning Analytics Research, Solar, had organised its first conference on learning analytics and knowledge, predominantly for researchers. More recently, and following several years of development, UK-based Jisc launched what it describes as the ‘world’s first national learning analytics service’ last year for institutions and academic libraries.

Also in 2018, the US-based Library Integration in Institutional Learning Analytics (LIILA) project issued a weighty report on how libraries can become more involved in learning analytics programs, while the Michigan University-led Library Learning Analytics Project was formed to understand how libraries impact learning.

‘This is a really interesting time, as the topic of student success and learning analytics is just starting to really gather speed,’ said Steve McCann, product manager at global library co-operative OCLC. ‘Recent studies in the US predict that in the next several years, universities could lose around 15 per cent of their student body just because of demographics, so learning analytics use is important right now.’

But what exactly are learning analytics? With roots in the deluge of educational data on students, these practices aim to gather this information with a view to improving learning experiences and outcomes. Typical data sources include virtual learning environment activity, attendance data and information from student registry systems such as assessment submission and grades. Library visits, borrowing, use of e-resources and information skills sessions can also be used to shed light on how students interact with the learning environment.

This data can then be neatly packaged in the form of graphs or tables that provide a bird’s-eye view of, how, say, a student’s assignment is going or an entire class is progressing. Any patterns in student output can then be used to improve course design to bolster support.

To this end, OCLC has collaborated with the UK-based University of Gloucestershire as part of the Jisc learning analytics project. To this end, the organisation shared datasets from its
cloud-based WorldShare Management Services and EZproxy access and authentication software, with its partners to establish the necessary processes to analyse data, to better understand the library’s impact on student learning and success.

As part of this, WMS provided a means to build learning analytics capabilities in the university’s library management system, while EZproxy logs provided access to detailed usage logs. Importantly, circulation statistics and user transactions from WMS and EZproxy datasets, as well additional contextual information were captured to build up a picture of student engagement with the library. And data was also integrated with the student record system to discover, for example, how many students from a certain course accessed ScienceDirect, shedding light on library resource use across a range of demographics.

The collaboration was a success. James Hodgkin, associate director of library technology and information, and university librarian at the University of Gloucestershire, said at the time: ‘When OCLC came on board and worked with us on the data and standard plug-in, they really set the bar.’ OCLC is now due to take part in a pilot alongside additional organisations also working with Jisc on its learning analytics service.

In a further development, OCLC is to launch its EZproxy analytics service next year. It will enable a library to use its proxying service to investigate user behaviour information and decide how best to measure student engagement.

‘Libraries really are sitting on great data. It is serendipitous that we are launching this service next year,’ said McCann. ‘EZproxy can provide a wealth of information; for example certain titles can be targeted, with the librarian then deciding if they want to track that activity down to a department or a student level, and then communicate how that activity is happening within the student body.’

Developed alongside France-based Couperin.org, analytics features are based on open source ezPaarse software, from Couperin.org which ingests, filters and enriches proxy log files to give users access to subscribed electronic resources. Given this, the new analytics option can augment EZproxy log data to illustrate, say, how a library user is accessing subscribed electronic resources via, for example, dashboard-style analytics and graphs.

Excitingly, earlier this year, a pilot with six universities, including the University of Manchester, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and the University of New England, delivered promising results. OCLC’s analytics were used to glean information on logins from around the world, as well as access events and insights into the top 10 journals, publishers and platforms across a 90-day time-frame. Librarians could
also query service availability at different times, security incidents, user preferences for, say, HTML, PDF or Readcube, look at vendor downtime and gauge student success versus library use.

As McCann highlights: ‘Libraries can choose to keep a user anonymous, but they can track the urls that a user is coming from and going to, and these will contain information such as the user’s platform, the subject’s title and whether a PDF or an image is being looked at.’

Clearly a resource such as EZproxy Analytics is set to help librarians tackle the challenge of using and communicating such data. However, past research has, time and time again, shown that libraries in higher education must communicate such data as a means to demonstrating value and showing how the library contributes to student success.

McCann said: ‘One of the challenges that libraries have is that they need to be able to essentially speak the language of the administration, so that they can match the library’s activities to the institution’s mission... but there has been some breakdown regarding this communication.’

Indeed, while libraries often work with, say, other student learning groups, learning analytics still take place without the library’s input or data. So McCann believes that collaboration between different groups on campus is crucial. ‘We are actively talking to librarians and asking them questions, such as how is it that you want to work with us, which stakeholders do you want to collaborate with, what is the data that you want to communicate and how do you want to communicate it?’

“We have this data that we can [analyse] using EZproxy and package up in a way that it can be easily communicated to an administration.’

Analytics ethics

As academic libraries warm to learning analytics, the thorny issue of privacy remains. Due to sensitive data practices,

Before

[Image of EZproxy analytics]

EZproxy analytics makes it easy to get actionable insights

these learning measures clearly challenge student privacy and raise intellectual freedom issues, so how should the library professional respond?

Earlier this year, Professor Kyle Jones, from the School of Informatics and Computing at Indiana University-Indianapolis published an article, Just because you can doesn’t mean you should: Practitioner Perceptions of Learning Analytics Ethics, in Portal: Libraries and the Academy. Jones pointed out how analytic possibilities created by granular data and information flows raise ethical questions, with student privacy rights being a key concern.

‘Given that students have neither the opportunity to consent to learning analytics, nor much (if any) control over how their institutions use identifiable data about them, concerns have grown that learning analytics might deleteriously affect student autonomy, due to paternalistic or institution-centric technological designs or both,’ he wrote.

Echoing past research, his analyses also highlighted a lack of ethical guidance for librarians, and a need to document and address the potential harms and benefits of learning analytics, so that practitioners could work through the ethical unknowns.

Professor Lisa Janicke Hinchliffe, from the University of Illinois Library, agrees. As she puts it: ‘User privacy is a very long-held value in libraries, so this question of user data immediately raises questions of how do we negotiate the tension between privacy, which seeks to protect people from scrutiny, and wanting to understand people’s experience, which depends on tracking.’

And, as she adds: ‘We have this continuous call for training... time and time again, I hear librarians say: ‘I feel like I need to understand more about how these two things interact’. And how do I, as an ethical practitioner, align my work to both values?’

Given their concerns, Jones and Hinchliffe joined forces to apply for a Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian grant, from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, to develop an education programme for librarians to address these learning analytics issues. They won, and Prioritizing Privacy: Training to Improve Practice in Library Analytics Projects is now underway.

Prioritizing Privacy is described as a three-year continuing education programme that will teach academic library practitioners about privacy and other related ethical issues associated with learning analytics. It aims to provide librarians with structured experiences to reflect on ethical issues intentionally and purposefully, and support the development of privacy protections for their own learning analytics projects.

As part of this, Hinchliffe intends to look at intentionality, transparency and consent. On intentionality, she believes librarians need to be well-informed of the
data they are collecting, and associated risks, so they can make informed choices on how to protect and secure that data, and mitigate risk.

Meanwhile, she also believes transparency and consent are crucial: library users should be aware that data on themselves is being collected, and librarians should also seek consent from the user. “Your ability to ask a question at the reference desk should not be dependent on your willingness to have that question and your response recorded in a dataset,” she says.

“As librarians grapple with privacy and ethics, learning analytics are developing fast”

“...We protect reader privacy so much, as we want people to have the intellectual freedom to pursue their interests without scrutiny,’ she adds. ‘The only option is to step up to engage with these issues intentionally, so that we are at least creating a transparent environment with the greatest degree of consent possible.’

As part of the latest grant, face-to-face and online training on privacy protections for up to 400 participants will be provided. And Hinchliffe and Jones are also creating an open educational resource package that includes the training curriculum and guidelines for facilitating training. ‘This allows our materials “to live”, if you will,’ says Hinchliffe. ‘Librarians tend to work with campus partners on learning analytics projects, and such projects may involve data from thousands of students.

‘If, for example, each participant in the training conducts a leaning analytics project with 2,500 students, Prioritizing Privacy training will impact the privacy protections offered to one million students,’ she adds. ‘Once you release this into an open educational resource, then the reach becomes very large.’

But as librarians grapple with privacy and ethics, learning analytics are developing fast. Predictive learning analytics take historical and current data on learners and the learning process, to create models to predict how to improve the learning environment.

Indeed, as part of its collaborations with Jisc, the University of Gloucestershire intends to develop a fully predictive learning analytics model. Meanwhile, in its Library Learning Analytics Project, the University of Michigan is to formulate predictive models of the links between learning outcomes and library user-types – with results being shared using only aggregated and anonymised data.

As OCLC’s McCann points out, predictive analytics are probably still a way off, and many libraries will want to stick with simple descriptive analytics in the meantime. But he is watching this space with interest. ‘I would be very surprised if we didn’t get into predictive analytics,’ he says.

‘You can interpolate into existing data to fill any gaps and then extrapolate some of that data to make predictions on what, say, a student has a problem with, or what does a certain topic need,’ he adds.

But, as McCann points out, the onus lies on the library, as to how to intervene here. ‘We will need the librarians to tell us how they want to interpret those data, either as descriptive of student needs, or as predictive,’ he says. ‘A question that will be very important for librarians is – will they want to intervene in a student’s study? And of course this is a question that we just can’t answer.’"
Tools of the trade

Five industry experts give Tim Gillett the low-down on user experience

How would you define the term ‘user experience’ in terms of scholarly publishing?

Giuliano Maciocci, eLife head of product and UX: With scholarly publishing being so diverse, the definition of user experience (UX) should encompass every touchpoint for every stakeholder, from the systems administrators running publishing platforms, to the authors, editors, reviewers and journal staffers that interact with these platforms on a daily basis.

Ebsco Information Services senior director of user experience and design, Jesse Blank: Successful support of scholarly communications requires us, as a community, to consider the larger research/information needs that are driving their search behaviours, so that we can build our services to support the broad and diverse range of scholars and students who rely on us not only for their grades or careers, but for the information that supports them in making an impact in the world.

Paula de Matos, consultant at The Pistoia Alliance: User experience is about making the tools available to researchers as effective as possible, in order to accelerate innovation. It involves deeply understanding users through research, organising information, visual design (and more), all with the goal of meeting user needs and doing it elegantly. Specifically, in the field of science, context is crucial to understand how users utilise a tool to solve the right problems for them and simplify product development – this includes everything from designing a button to be easily found, to integrating a new feature into their workflow. User experience is foundational to the pursuit of good science. Practicing UX in scholarly publishing will go a long way to ensuring that scientists can find, access and discover publications relevant to their field.

Gaëlle Béquet, director, ISSN International Centre: From my perspective as an LIS researcher and as a librarian, the user experience is the set of perceptions and responses that result from the use of information systems offered by content providers and library discovery tools. As stated in the Library Reference Model developed under IFLA [International Federation of Library Associations] auspices, the user experience is the specific path that the researcher follows to find, identify, select, obtain and explore global information resources, notably those available online. This process consists of several steps with are critical to the success of the operation. The researcher brings together information about one or more resources of interest by searching on any relevant criteria: the simplicity of the search interface and the ability to query multiple databases simultaneously and seamlessly are paramount. He/she is able to understand the nature of the resources and select the most relevant to his/her purpose: quality metadata is required to complete these steps in an efficient way. The user can then access the selected content and relate it to other contents that redirects research towards other topics of interest: the links established between diverse resources are absolutely vital for the content search process to become a virtuous circle.

Vee Rogacheva, UX designer at OpenAthens: In scholarly publishing UX is the interaction of learners, researchers, faculty staff and librarians with the ecosystem of tools and services they use to navigate to required digital resources and to achieve their goals.

Please describe the work that your organisation is doing in terms of user experience

Maciocci, eLife: eLife has a strong user-centered design focus for everything it produces, from how a research article appears on its website to how its open-source Libero publishing platform is deployed. We incorporate UX research, design and testing into almost every aspect of our activities that is exposed to end users, and have built a talented product and UX team to ensure that process is constantly evolving. Most importantly, we have worked hard to ensure that key
“Conducting research has become a non-linear process, spanning digital and physical” aspects of design thinking have been internalised by the whole organisation.

Blank, Ebsco: At its core, delivering great UX is still about bringing content, technology and design together to create a “useful experience”. However, UX continues to broaden in definition, and we see conducting research has increasingly become a non-linear process, spanning both digital and physical, leveraging multi-device and collaborative tools to be effective and efficient. Leveraging UX design thinking methods will uncover ways to meet these evolving needs.

De Matos, Pistoia: The Pistoia Alliance launched a community of UX practitioners from the pharmaceutical, biotechnology and software industries. This User Experience for Life Sciences (UXLS) community is raising awareness of the value UX brings to science, and is a means for these UX practitioners to share best practices. The Alliance will be launching further measures to help foster greater understanding between organisations that design search, storage and retrieval software, and those that use it, which will be open to anyone who wants to get involved.

Béquet, ISSN: The ISSN International Centre and its global network of 90+ ISSN National Centres are involved in the process of identifying information resources by assigning a unique and standardised identifier to printed and digital serial publications, and describing these resources. The ISSN International Centre pursues a business-to-business model in the information chain to meet the needs of publishers, content-assessment agencies, indexing services and libraries. But we also target researchers and a broader audience through our Directory of Open Access Scholarly Resources (road.issn.org) for the identification of open access serial publications around the world. Road is the linchpin of our new online information service regarding serial resources.

Rogacheva, OpenAthens: Committed to empowering library users spanning a wide range of industries, OpenAthens plays a significant role in supporting institutions. Whether they are a PhD student, a hospital clinician or a research scientist, we provide quick, easy and secure access to online content for end-users from anywhere, at any time. The OpenAthens team works hard to ensure our products and services constitute a powerful tool which empowers both librarians and end-users. We have just launched our inaugural Best Publisher User Experience Award.
to inspire publishers across the globe to invest in developing the best user journey to content. We want to celebrate online publishers which have demonstrated how they’ve put the needs and experience of users at the heart of changes to digital services.

What have been the main developments in this area in the past few years?

Macioci, eLife: The relaunch of our website in 2017 was the first time the results of our then newly established UX-first practices were shown to the outside world. Two years later, and we’re confident that the eLife journal website is still one of the most user-friendly and accessible journal websites out there. So confident that we are using much of the UX research and design that went into it as a basis for our upcoming Libero publishing platform.

Blank, Ebsco: Personalisation continues to be a powerful opportunity to deliver more relevant content. The proliferation of available data and UX research methods create understanding on when, where and how a group of (or even single) users specifically needs it. The benefits of personalisation can be significant, but it also must be balanced with increasingly cautious aspects of privacy.

De Matos, Pistoia: In order to ease adoption of UX in the life sciences, the UXLS community has created a toolkit which enables businesses to adopt UX principles and methods as they develop scientific software. The toolkit includes a range of resources, such as case studies, templates and UX methodology, as well as templates. The community has also developed a set of UXLS procurement guidelines to aid (pharma) enterprises in selecting solutions which fit the needs of their users.

Béquet, ISSN: In 2018, the ISSN International Centre, with the support of network users, implemented the ISSN portal, the Global Index for Continuing Resources, relying on a freemium-type business model. On one hand, publishers log in to the service to create a user account, request ISSNs and track their request during processing. They also have a direct access to the descriptive metadata of their publications for which they can request corrections. On the other hand, information seekers can access the free version of the portal to check basic metadata about a resource. They can also subscribe when they need more detailed bibliographic information, or extended features such as APIs and records in different formats. Since 2018, the ISSN International Centre has extended its service offer with ETAS (journaltransfer. issn.org), the free tool for reporting and checking transfers of scholarly journals between publishers. The ISSN International Centre will soon integrate the Keepers Registry, which relies on information provided by partner archiving agencies to identify digital journals archived over the long term. We are mindful of feedback from our users and we will soon update the ISSN portal’s homepage to better reflect the diversity of our services. We have already translated the portal in six languages to reach out to our diverse constituencies.

Rogacheva, OpenAthens: Users’ expectations of their experiences have evolved rapidly and have been framed by the likes of Google and Netflix. The application of UX practices to optimise any aspect of publishing benefits everyone who interacts with their results, and it’s not all about dramatic innovations in UX, either: even one single minute saved in a process that happens dozens of times a day, at scale, can add up to hundreds, if not thousands of person hours a year. And every minute saved on handling or administering a system is one more minute that can go instead towards improving the quality of the research available.

Blank, Ebsco: Everyone can benefit, but it will require a greater level of collaboration and co-creation between sectors for everyone to see those benefits. Embracing evidence-based decision-making and putting aside what we think we know will enable progress, leading to tangible, measurable benefits.

De Matos, Pistoia: All of these sectors can benefit from the improvements to UX, but specifically researchers will benefit the most – we are at a time when they are dependent on increasingly vast and complicated datasets and need tools to be productive and help them easily dissect, understand and analyse their data. Research has shown that changing the UX of a product can boost productivity by up to 300 per cent. Unfortunately, today many are still having to make do with sub-standard UX. If researchers are to be effective, this has to change.

Béquet, ISSN: The ISSN Portal is a service tailored for all these audiences, because the activities of the ISSN International Centre and its network are at the intersection of the production, the archiving, the exploration and the dissemination of academic content.
Rogacheva, OpenAthens: The sector will benefit from improved user experience. However, publishers and institutions will seemingly be the parties shouldering the cost, in terms of redesigning content platforms which embrace new technology and different ways of working. Larger publishers and well-funded institutions may not view this as a major disruption, but smaller institutions and independent publishers might struggle to prioritise the changes needed to deliver a seamless journey to content to end-users, and remain competitive.

Can you predict any significant developments on the horizon?

Maciocci, eLife: A whole new generation of researchers and end-users of publishing technology is coming up with expectations of one-click, highly optimised and highly designed user experiences as the norm, from how they order their food to how they choose what to watch on their streaming service of choice. Those expectations will naturally transfer to the publishing platforms they interact with, and it would be a missed opportunity for the academic publishing space to ignore them. From our perspective, the time for a more user-centred and design-driven approach to academic publishing is long overdue.

Blank, Ebsco: The amount of good research / information content will continue to grow exponentially. The unintended consequence of this may be that discovering great content will become more challenging, and in turn, push alternative ways to discover, evaluate and consume information.

De Matos, Pistoia: In R&D we expect to see significant process changes. The way we work has to change. The drug discovery process of 10 to 20 years is no longer viable. On the business side we will move towards targeted therapies that are fertile for profit, but harder to achieve. A smaller group of patients. How does that work? How do we empower that? The scientific publishing industry will have to adapt to this new model and practicing good UX will enable publication mechanisms and access that suit this new way of working.

Béquet, ISSN: The interaction between users and information systems is evolving to move beyond the old all-or-nothing alternative. A powerful information system can already suggest new search terms to any user based on searches already performed and stored, or make recommendations on resources bearing similarities to those identified by a specific search. Let’s bet that natural language conversational agents and chatbots will soon replace reference librarians and contact forms!

“A more user-centred, design-driven approach to academic publishing is long overdue”

already performed and stored, or make recommendations on resources bearing similarities to those identified by a specific search. Let’s bet that natural language conversational agents and chatbots will soon replace reference librarians and contact forms!

Rogacheva, OpenAthens: In 2018, we conducted research into the challenges faced by the modern librarian in which 99 per cent of respondents reported an increase in demand for remote access to library resources among students and researchers.

This has evidently driven educational institutions to place increasing emphasis on improving the student and researcher experience, leading to the better use of the rapidly advancing tools and technology. This provides seamless access to valuable digital resources, as well as to analyse resource usage and student/researcher engagement. Increased focus on user experience within scholarly publishing might also inadvertently accelerate the process of redefining the value of education, in line with the changing ways of working in both academic and professional settings. Ri

Interviews by
Tim Gillett

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All of this goes towards
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Magdalena Skipper reflects on her career and her work as editor-in-chief of Nature

Tell us a little about your background and qualifications...

I certainly cannot say that being editor-in-chief of Nature was something I aimed to be as I was growing up.

In fact, at some point I wanted to be a firefighter and then a ballet dancer. But the truth is that from a very early age I knew that biology was my passion.

In high school I was especially drawn to genetics. So I went to University of Nottingham to study genetics for my BSc and then University of Cambridge to do a PhD on a classic genetic model animal, to study sex determination. Like so many PhD students, I knew very well that one day I will have my own lab… In the end though, I was not completely satisfied, as I could never find the time to read outside my area of study, and there were so many interesting topics in science one could learn more about.

It was during my postdoc, at Imperial Cancer Research Fund (today Cancer Research UK) that I began to think about other ways in which I may fruitfully contribute to the advancement of science. My passion for science meant that I never really contemplated leaving the research community altogether.

Having considered a number of possibilities, I thought that the editorial career could be ‘the’ thing for me. So when one day I came across a job advert for an associate editor at Nature Reviews Genetics, very much in the area in which I specialised, I applied.

What happened next was this: the journal sent me a set of tests to be done at home; this is something that all Nature Reviews journals do when screening job applicants. The test consisted of a series of tasks you would do as part of the role. One of them was, for example, ‘developmentally’ editing a submitted review article to improve the story flow. Another one was to come up with a number of commissions, to effectively create a table of contents for a future issue of the journal; another still was to select some recently published research articles to write a short ‘research highlight’ about, and explain the choice.

I had no previous experience in writing nor editing. But I discovered that I enjoyed the test that I had at home so much that by the time I was called for the interview I obviously was imbued with so much enthusiasm that, as I now joke, I left my interviewer no choice but to give me the job. I have never looked back! Although today I do not think of myself as a scientist as such, I feel very strongly that I am part of the research community; I find this very fulfilling and feel very proud that I can make a contribution there.

What have been your career highlights to date?

I take pleasure in so many aspects of my job that highlights come on many levels. Perhaps not surprisingly, becoming editor-in-chief of Nature was a true highlight. It is an incredible honour to be leading Nature. I consider it an honour and a privilege to be the custodian of the journal today.

But there have been many highlights, back in the days of Nature Reviews Genetics, being able to bring researchers from different disciplines around an idea of a review article and being told later that they started an entirely new line of collaboration while working on that review.

Back in the days when I worked as a manuscript editor at Nature, I worked with an international consortium on the publication of their project, Encode. To enhance the take-home messages from this vast project, we devised a new publication solution called threads. To highlight new story lines which were not the focus on the main consortium papers, each thread wove together paragraphs, figures or tables from across the standard Encode papers. The approach was tailor-made and despite being adopted by other, similar consortium led-publication efforts, eventually it did not take off but it was a true highlight to have been able to experiment with publishing formats in this way. And the Encode threads became a very popular teaching tool!

Being able to train and mentor more junior colleagues and watch them develop professionally is always a highlight. And although it is hard for me to think of myself as a role model, it is always a highlight if I can inspire young people in science.

“Although today I do not think of myself as a scientist as such, I feel very strongly that I am part of the research community”
What do you think it takes to be a Nature editor? Tell us more about your role...

Let me start with the second part of your question. There are two, interconnected aspects to my role: I am editor-in-chief of Nature and chief editorial advisor for Nature Research. Nature doesn't typically need an introduction, and yet sometimes it may be all too easy to forget that it is unusual among scientific journals in that it combines science journalism and opinion with original scientific papers.

An important focus of my role is to make the most of the synergy within Nature – the journalistic part AND the journal part, which is the original research part. The whole can be so much more than the sum of its parts! I am also ultimately accountable for what Nature publishes, although, of course, what we publish is very much a result of a team effort.

As editor-in-chief, I represent Nature and Nature Research externally, and in general my time is very much split between externally focused and internally focused activities. In addition, an important aspect of my role involves being the champion and the guardian of the Nature brand.

When I describe what I do to those who do not work in publishing, I often say I am like a conductor of an orchestra – without the amazingly talented colleagues around me I could do very little, but our collective output is enhanced and amplified by our co-ordinated efforts.

What does it take to be a Nature editor? It takes passion, dedication, understanding and a drive to bring the fascinating and vast research worlds we work in, before our readers. It takes the desire to work with the research community to help them disseminate their work in a rigorous and transparent way. Editors at Nature are all former researchers who continue to grow their expert knowledge of their fields. They need to have an eye for detail, and they need to be persistent and patient.

Why do you think Nature has had so few editors?

In Nature’s 150-year history there have been only seven editors-in-chief before me. My predecessor held this role for more than 22 years! I think it goes back to your question around what it takes to be a Nature editor – passion and dedication. It’s so much more than a job. We are all so strongly connected to the work we do and the fields that we are working in.

It is a labour of love for many and the ability to support the outstanding work of the researchers who publish in Nature keeps us all here. It is a role that we are all incredibly proud of. We also recognise the privilege to be able to engage with, as well as help shape Nature’s future, to ensure that it remains a relevant platform for research communication, news, engagement and the advancement of robust scientific discoveries.

I believe that it is also the reflection of how receptive the publishers of Nature have been to the editors’ desire to evolve the journal and adapt it to the changing needs of the research community; this is also what has kept my predecessors in their role for so long. One good example comes from the very early days of our history – Nature was originally not meant to include first reports of original scientific findings; it was meant to be more like Scientific American of today.

But the scientists of the day wanted a new platform for rapid communication and the guardian of the Nature brand. It is a labour of love for many and the privilege to be able to engage much more with early career researchers. Such closer engagement will be mutually beneficial and it will be interesting to see where it may take us; could it mean new formats for disseminating research, could it mean greater emphasis on other platforms, including the multimedia? Time will tell.

One very exciting aspect of this focus is that our own drive towards open research and transparency is also very much at the forefront of many early career researchers’ minds. For some time now, Nature has championed the sharing of data, materials and the guardian of the Nature brand. It is a labour of love for many and the privilege to be able to engage much more with early career researchers. Such closer engagement will be mutually beneficial and it will be interesting to see where it may take us; could it mean new formats for disseminating research, could it mean greater emphasis on other platforms, including the multimedia? Time will tell.

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and protocols. This focus continues to gather momentum and these days we work with the research community more than ever before to develop tools that help our authors to showcase the integrity of their research.

I am also very keen for us to engage with members of hitherto underrepresented groups. The scientific community itself could and should be more diverse; I would like Nature to make a contribution to this transformation. Not only is it the right thing to do but it will also improve research itself.

It is important to remember that we are all products of our times; I am able to do things that my predecessors couldn’t just because I am the helm of Nature at a time when we are more connected to one another than ever before. For example, I am the first editor-in-chief to engage with our community on social media; a mode of interaction I value a lot.

Because we live in a digital age, we are able to enhance the visual aspects of our communication in ways that were not possible before. For example, just in time for our 150th anniversary we’ve just redesigned our look, under the leadership of our creative director. The redesign was very much driven by the desire to improve our readability online, as this is the principal way our content is consumed these days, but also to respond in the ways that science is changing (for example, we retired our Letter format, which was no longer serving researchers sufficiently well because of its brevity).

Do you think the Nature brand is still as strong as it ever was, or is it changing? What makes researchers want to publish with you?

I actually believe the brand is stronger than it has been in the past. A brand and what it stands for needs time to establish itself and we have worked hard over the decades, building on what we have done right but also learning from our mistakes.

But we continue to have much to learn. We like to think that researchers submit their work to us because of the service and support we can offer them, because we are highly professional and dedicated, because we are independent and strive to be unbiased. In all we do we strive for rigour; take peer review as an example: we ensure rigorous peer review so that the papers we consider can be improved through the combined efforts of our editors and carefully selected reviewers.

We develop tools for and provide guidance on the best practice for the reporting of methods and data availability, always striving to publish research which is robust and reproducible.

When you look at our journalistic content, we make analogous efforts to ensure rigour, balance and excellence in our reporting, and our journalists have been recognised by international award-granting bodies. All of this contributes to our reputation among our readers.

At a time when boundaries between disciplines are blurring, many researchers are keen to publish their work in multidisciplinary journals, so it may come to the attention of the whole scientific community, not just those in their field. When you think about work that addresses the UN’s sustainable development goals, much of contemporary impactful research requires reaching beyond conventional research disciplines.

Nature has evolved over its 150 years; this evolution is set to continue. I believe that it is our willingness to adapt, our responsiveness and the service that we have, and will continue to offer, that have ultimately led to the strength of brand created, and continues to make Nature an attractive choice for researchers.
Why is the 150th such a landmark year for *Nature*? What’s changing, if anything, going forwards? What are you plans for the next era of *Nature*?

*Nature* has always evolved with the scientific community and with science itself. The future promises to be more data-rich, more computationally-heavy, more interdisciplinary, and more focused on the interface between science and society. We are also working towards making *Nature* more inclusive and diverse, both in terms of the topics and the groups it represents. Looking into the future, it is impossible not to think about early career researchers who are the future of research. They are a major focus for us also, as they should be.

Although not an entirely new initiative, we have made a lot of effort towards rewarding and surfacing efforts to make research reproducible and robust. Although clearly much work remains to be done.

Another important focus of ours is transparency. Transparency of research goes hand in hand with reproducibility. That said, in my view publishers and editors, who demand transparency from researchers, should themselves be more transparent about their own practices. We have begun this journey already: we try to surface exactly what it is that editors do, how we consider submissions and how peer-review is conducted.

It is important to add much more transparency to the whole scientific discussion that surrounds the publication of a paper. These are just a couple of examples of where we should be increasingly moving, and certainly that I would like to champion.

The 150th anniversary has been an exciting time for all of us, as it has given us a chance to reflect and look back into old archives, learning more about our heritage, but it has also been a great chance to refocus for the future. Publishing continues to change and our anniversary in many ways is about preparing for the future and best supporting the next generation of researchers in effectively and sustainably communicating their work – not just through publishing platforms but also through our Nature Conferences programme, our Nature Careers portal, our Nature Masterclasses and through diverse approaches to content curation and production.

Finally, are there any interesting facts, pastimes or hobbies that you would like to tell us about?

I find what I do absolutely fascinating and as I said before, being editor-in-chief of *Nature* is much more than just a job. That said, I find exploring our ‘blue planet’ absolutely irresistible and when I travel on my own time I switch off completely, literally. And when I wish to take a break closer to home, I go to a pottery studio of which I am a member. I don’t claim to be very good at all, but I derive a different kind of satisfaction from sitting at the potter’s wheel.

For many of us, balancing leisure and work requires active management of time, but I believe it is an effort worth making.
Introducing attribute release

Tim Lloyd discusses the key to patron privacy in an era of single sign-on

Although attribute release may not be a phrase you’re familiar with, it’s a critical part of the infrastructure that enables organisations to protect the privacy of their users, whether that’s library patrons, educators or researchers. It’s probably also a process you already manage in your personal life!

Every time we use a single sign-on solution like Google or Facebook to access an app on our phones, we’re allowing them to share some information about us with that application. Think of those annoying (but important) pop-up windows that ask us to agree to share information with third parties. In some cases, it’s just your name and email, and in others it may be more information, such as access to your documents or contact list.

Attributes are simply information about you that your identity solution is sharing with a third party as part of an authentication process. Attribute release is the process by which this information is shared.

So, how does this play out when we use single sign-on to access educational resources that rely on our organisational affiliation? For example, a student accessing a library resource; a researcher searching for a journal article; or an academic collaborating with colleagues to write a paper.

And, more importantly, how can organisations protect our privacy when sharing the information needed to give us access to these external resources?

If you work with electronic resources – whether as an information provider (such as a publisher) or as an information consumer (such as a library) – here’s an overview of what you need to know about single sign-on and user privacy.

First, some basics. In an educational context, single sign-on involves three parties. There’s you, the user, who wants to access an online resource. There’s the service provider, who provides that resource, such as a publisher or a research collaboration. And there’s the identity provider who authenticates your identity as someone with the right to access that resources, such as your organisation.

When you use single sign-on to access a resource, the service provider asks your organisation to confirm your right to access that resource. In turn, your organisation may ask you to enter credentials, such as a username and password. Once you’ve been successfully authenticated, your organisation will confirm back to the service provider that you’re authorised for access, and, at this point, will release one or more attributes to them. What attributes are we talking about? They come in several different flavours, depending on how much information the service provider needs to successfully deliver service.

Why do we need attributes at all? Attributes are important because they give organisations and their service providers greater control over your experience. For example:

- Access control: a resource could be limited to users who are full-time staff, preventing, say, alumni or contractors from access;
- Cost control: a resource could be limited to users with a certain role, or from a certain department; or
- Risk control: pseudonymous identifiers allow users to benefit from personalisation, without the risks associated with sharing and storing personal credentials with yet another service (and the hassle of remembering yet another username and password).

What’s recommended practice here? NISO is a member of The Coalition for Seamless Access, an important cross-industry initiative aimed at simplifying institutional access to online resources via single sign-on. They recommend the following practices for attribute release:

- By default, organisations should only share anonymous or, if necessary, pseudonymous attributes with service providers;
- Service providers should only request the least-intrusive set of attributes needed and shouldn’t retain any extra

“Attributes are important because they give organisations and their service providers greater control over your experience”

| Identifier Type | Suitable for... | Attributes
<table>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Anonymous identifier</strong></td>
<td>Suitable when an individual identity is not needed, eg ‘a3c5d4e99’</td>
<td>• identifier changes for every visit (session) and service provider, so returning users cannot be recognised • real identity unknown (anonymous) • no personalisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pseudonymous identifier</strong></td>
<td>Suitable when the service provider needs to recognise a returning user (but doesn’t need their identity). Same format as above.</td>
<td>• identifier unique for every person and service provider, so returning users can be recognised by the same service provider • real identity unknown (pseudonymous) • enables personalisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organisational information</strong></td>
<td>Used to transfer details about a user’s organisation, such as organisation name, entitlements, role, department etc</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personal information</strong></td>
<td>Used to transfer details about a user, such as name and email address</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1
attributes received. If more information is desired from users, consent must be sought and users should have the opportunity to add/review/edit the information they share, such as via a profile page; or
• Attributes shouldn’t be used by service providers for non-access purposes without prior consent or proper legal basis, and should be deleted or anonymised when no longer needed for service access.

And what does that mean in practice?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>Attributes released</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Users access a website or resource that provides full-text articles with</td>
<td>Anonymous attributes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no need for personalisation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Users access a website that provides personalised content recommendations</td>
<td>Pseudonymous ID</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>based on your search history in previous visits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty have the ability to purchase ebooks using library funds</td>
<td>Pseudonymous ID, User role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinicians receive email confirmation of Continuing Education credits</td>
<td>Pseudonymous ID, User email address (with user consent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>received</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2

Attribute release needs to vary according to the differing needs of service providers. For example, here are four different real-world scenarios (table 2, above) and the attributes needed to support them.

Getting this right requires co-ordination in organisations to ensure that the attributes released by internal identity systems (typically controlled by IT) reflect the needs of the users and the services they want to access (typically managed by other departments, such as the library). These conversations need to start with a common understanding of the critical role attribute release plays in resource access.

Can we make this co-ordination easier? Yes! We all face a similar challenge in managing how we share information via social networks – it’s much easier to arrange your contacts into groups (friends, family, work etc) and to set rules on sharing at the group level, rather than manually configuring for each person.

The Coalition for Seamless Access is similarly exploring how service providers could be grouped into categories based on their attribute requirements. This would allow organisations to automate attribute release based on a service provider’s category, rather than manually configuring attributes for each service provider.

For example, attributes to enable access to library resources are typically far more limited than those needed to support research collaboration between academics in different institutions. RI

Tim Lloyd is CEO of LibLynx

If you’d like to learn more about The Coalition for Seamless Access, or would you like to get involved in the development of standards in this area, please visit https://seamlessaccess.org/

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COLLABORATING TO ADDRESS THE KEY CONCERNS OF TODAY

Nature Research Journals publishing from 2020

Nature Cancer

Nature Cancer will publish across the spectrum of the natural, applied and social sciences, from basic pre-clinical studies to translational and clinical work.

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Nature Food will publish cutting edge research on all aspects of food production, processing, distribution and consumption that contribute to human and planetary health.

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Nature Reviews Earth & Environment will publish high quality Review, Perspective and Comment articles across all aspects of Earth and Environmental science.

For more information or to request a quote for your institution: springernature.com/newlaunches2020
Assessing the quality of research is difficult. Jisc and the University of Bristol are partnering to develop a tool that may help institutions improve this process.

To attract government funding for their crucial research, UK universities are largely reliant on good ratings from the Research Excellent Framework (REF) – a process of expert review designed to assess the quality of research outputs. REF scores determine how much government funding will be allocated to their research projects. For instance, research that is world-leading in terms of originality, significance and rigour, will be scored higher than research that is only recognised nationally.

Considerable time is spent by universities trying to figure out which research outputs will be rated highest (4*) on quality and impact. The recognised ‘gold standard’ for this process is close reading by a few internal academics, but this is time-consuming, onerous, and subject to the relatively limited perspective of just a few people. It’s far better to include the insights of more people – which is where prediction markets come in. This online, crowdsourcing mechanism has been gathering steam in assessing academic research, and has, for example, been remarkably accurate at predicting which social science experiments will replicate, or how various chemistry departments would rank in the REF.

How prediction markets work
Prediction markets capture the ‘wisdom of crowds’ by asking large numbers of people to bet on outcomes of future events – in this case how impactful a research project will be in the next REF assessment. It works a bit like the stock market, except that, instead of buying and selling shares in companies, participants buy and sell virtual shares online that will pay out if a particular event occurs – for example, if a paper receives a 3* or above REF rating.

Markets usually run over the course of a few days or weeks, during which time participants can update their bets and compete to earn points by buying low and selling high. After the market closes, the final output is a list of ‘market prices’ (one for each paper). A paper’s market price represents the group’s collective confidence that the paper will achieve a certain threshold of ratings.

Benefits over other assessment methods
Prediction markets have several advantages over other assessment methods. Crucially, the fine-grained market prices allocated to various elements of the research assessed allow the papers to be ranked against each other. And, in comparison to most other assessment methods, such as surveys or close-reading panels, prediction markets have a built-in mechanism for weighting participants’ confidence in their own ratings. Namely, participants can choose to bet (or not bet) on whichever papers they like, plus they see real-time information on the group’s overall confidence in each paper, which they can use to inform their bets.

“Prediction markets have several advantages over other assessment methods”

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Our Jisc pilot project
Over the past six months, Jisc ran three pilot markets at the University of Bristol, in the psychology, biology and chemistry departments. The pilots showed promising results: the outcomes (market prices) from all three correlated highly with the ratings that were given by the internal REF panel.

The psychology market was also compared against a machine learning algorithm trained on various metrics; the machine learning results correlated at similar levels with both the prediction market and the internal REF panel. Crucially, these levels of correlation suggest that all of these methods are picking up relevant information, but the underlying information that each reflects is somewhat different.

Judging by our discussions with the REF co-ordinators from these Bristol University departments, we envision that the results of the prediction markets will not take the place of the traditional close-reading approach, but instead will be most useful as an extra source of information for uncertain or borderline cases.

We also measured participants’ feedback on the experience of taking part in the markets. After all, these are busy academics, who are often deluged with requests to fill out surveys or help with assessment exercises. We were pleased to find that, overall, participants reported that they felt engaged with the process and found it enjoyable – one even reported playing the prediction market for fun, instead of checking football scores!

Future directions
We are expanding our series of pilots beyond Bristol to explore how the prediction market tool works in various types of institutions and departments. We still have bandwidth to include more institutions in the pilots, so do contact us if your institutions may want to take part. Once these are complete, we plan to publish results from the full set of studies in a paper, with our collaborators at the University of Innsbruck and Stockholm School of Economics.

In the next year we also aim to develop a more specialised and optimally user-friendly interface for the prediction market tool through Jisc, based on feedback. Ultimately, we hope the tool may be useful for other areas of research assessment outside the REF – after all, the REF isn’t the only context where research quality is difficult to assess! We’re betting that in all sorts of areas, the old adage may prove to be correct: two heads are better than one.

Jacqueline Thompson is a research associate at the University of Bristol; Marcus Munafò is a professor of biological psychology in Bristol’s School of Psychological Science; Ian Penton-Voak is a professor of evolutionary psychology at the University of Bristol.
Content marketing boosts open access adoption

The publishing industry has yet to fully acknowledge the need to create accessible stories to increase the uptake of OA articles, writes Sabine Louët

Open access (OA) is meant to bring us one step closer to open science.

But the lack of widespread adoption of OA is often blamed for slowing down research progress. The truth is, accessing the literature is only half the story. The other half is the obstacle created by the use of specialised language in it. That is, the inability to understand the meaning of the research represents a greater hindrance than access to multidisciplinary collaboration and open science. It is, therefore, important to carefully consider developing value-added content that is designed to make the original OA research accessible to a wider audience.

Open does not mean understood

The next step to a more open science requires OA journals to make research articles accessible to a wider audience. The time has now come for publishers to change the way they market research articles. As soon as they make the shift from journal-led to author-led marketing, they will become much more attractive to scientists. Creating accessible stories or interviews outlining key findings of research papers provides authors with further reassurance their work is being adequately promoted by their publisher.

We know that transforming complex scientific papers into clear, concise and compelling digital stories helps increase visibility. Used as part of a publisher’s content marketing strategy, these accessible digital stories become value-added assets, because they offer unique value to the reader. In this case, they also contribute to research impact.

Academics may be new to the idea that marketing tools can be applied to their research

OA impact requires making sense of research in an accessible language

As we move forward with OA adoption, academic and research institutions need to ask themselves who is responsible for the marketing and promotion of research papers their scientists publish. This could not be more important, given the new library and national consortium-level article processing charge (APC) deals. Ensuring enough scientists avail of these pre-ordered OA publications is a challenge for publishers and their customers.

Therefore, publishers and consortia alike need an effective content marketing approach to fully benefit from any deals. To guarantee success, an effective content marketing approach requires content that makes sense of research in accessible language. But this value-added content requires specific skills, which many scientists don’t have. Publishers have repeatedly tried to demand authors produce plain language summaries of their papers. Some publishers then put their skilled editors to attempt to polish these scientist-produced summaries. The result is often a jargon-filled, ‘longer’ abstract intelligible to neither experts nor a wider audience. Such demands should not be made of scientists; they should continue to do what they do best: research.

Likewise, it makes sense to leave such value-added content to the professionals that do that best – science writers. An expert science writer not only can understand the science behind the research, they are skilled at interviewing researchers, drawing out the significance of key findings and methods, and translating this into compelling stories. Accuracy is paramount; therefore, it is essential that stories are also checked by science editors, familiar with the style required to reach wider target audiences.

OA-style funding for content marketing

There are many ways the stories can be funded. The most obvious may be marketing budgets of publishers. But, the library and national consortia in charge of negotiating transformational deals with publishers should be more proactive in including such services in the deal. They could allocate a fraction of the OA deal budget to content marketing.

Publishers working with consortia have an interest in ensuring scientists included in the deal use the APC provided as part of it. Typically, the APC is calculated based on previous publication levels. To ensure publication volumes stay the same, publishers and institutes must adopt effective content marketing approaches to support pre-ordered APC uptake.

For scientists whose papers are not included in consortia or publisher marketing efforts, we envision the possibility of authors selecting which of their papers merit being professionally turned into accessible digital stories – such as a proper plain language summary, a news-style article, an infographic, or a Q&A interview. This requires the option of adding a marketing fee to the APC. Ultimately, this does not fundamentally change the way resources are spent vis-a-vis publication, but represents a shift in who bears the costs of marketing.
What is the future for the monograph? It is an important debate, but one that has become dominated by anecdote and binary thinking: either the format is obsolete or of enduring value. To move the debate on, the university presses of Cambridge and Oxford decided to carry out some joint research into how authors, readers and researchers in humanities and social sciences really see the academic monograph.

We had several goals. First and foremost, we wanted to help inform an evidence-based view of the role of the monograph in the research workflow in 2019.

Secondly, as university presses embedded in the academic ecosystem, we wanted to engage and give voice to the communities involved in creating and using research. Developments around open access have bought an urgency to the debate, but also shifted the conversation away from the format itself, and towards the method of delivery and funding of the process.

We wanted to better understand where the monograph fits in the scholarly communications process. We hope that the findings of the report bring context to the ongoing debate around research evaluation and open access books, and are mindful that the UKRI and REF open access consultations, which are imminent in the UK, are considering future policies for open access and monographs.

The survey, which was open for two weeks, received just under 5,000 usable responses, including a large number of detailed and passionate textual responses. This, in itself, speaks volumes about engagement with the format. There is a huge amount of detail in the original report. The bulk of the responses (more than 90 per cent) were split fairly evenly between academics in Europe and the USA, with around half of the EU respondents based in the UK. This partly reflects the researcher and author base of the respective Presses, but also reflects the areas in which the humanities and social sciences are currently most studied. The subject breakdown shows higher engagement in the humanities, with history and literature the most represented subjects, underlining the centrality of the monograph to those disciplines.

Core to the findings, as a whole, was the view that the monograph, rather than simply being the output of research, was central to the research process itself. Respondents described how working towards a monograph provided a framework that helped to structure their research. Monographs are valued as an extended form, allowing scope and space for complex perspectives and arguments, with detailed exposition and analysis of source material.

The survey results provide insight not only into the creation of monographs, but also how they are used. While many academics said they still read monographs cover to cover, over 80 per cent of respondents indicated that they were either extremely or very likely to engage with monographs at a chapter level. This was particularly true of early career researchers. This use of monographs at a more granular level may well be something that has been unlocked by digital access, although we did not gather specific data on what has driven this shift.

While the results of the survey point broadly towards the sustainability of the monograph, a very small percentage (two per cent) of respondents did not use monographs or find them useful. Others said they found the sheer volume of monograph publishing overwhelming, which suggests a continued importance in publishers developing tools and services focused on curation and discoverability.

It is clear that the monograph will remain relevant for many years to come. Indeed, when asked to contemplate a world without monographs, respondents said they found it difficult, even catastrophic, to imagine. Given this view, open access represents an exciting opportunity to dramatically increase the dissemination and impact of monographs. This highlights an urgent need to find sustainable models to support their ongoing creation and publication, which work for all parties: creators, curators, and consumers.

We need to factor in the enduring currency of scholarship in the social sciences and humanities, balancing the need for broad access with a funding model which takes account of the long shelf-life of scholarship in these fields. Publishers should not be complacent, but need to evolve to stay relevant. In an increasingly open world with an expectation of broad and equitable access to the best scholarship, we need to develop tools and services to increase the discoverability and usability of our books. Doing so will help researchers, and indeed authors of future monographs, both find and make best use of the in-depth knowledge and learnings they contain.

Sophie Goldsworthy is editorial director for academic and trade at Oxford University Press. Ben Denne is director of publishing for academic books at Cambridge University Press.

Monographs ‘central to research process’ – Cambridge/Oxford study

Sophie Goldsworthy and Ben Denne sift through 5,000 responses from HSS researchers
<table>
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| **The role of health care professionals in a changing sector**  
*Springer Nature*

The health care sector is undergoing a significant change, moving away from a system of caring for the sick to early intervention, prevention and supporting of wellbeing.

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| **Using the MLA International Bibliography to Guide the Research Process**  
*EBSCO*

In a recent webinar presented by Research Information, Angela Ecklund and Farrah Lehman Den of the Modern Language Association (MLA) shared an overview of the free online teaching tools developed for use with the MLA International Bibliography. Claire Buck, Professor of English at Wheaton College, also described how she integrates the Bibliography into the curriculum to engage students in the research process.

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| **Latest trends in AI and robotics**  
*Springer Nature*

Artificial Intelligence has long entered our workplace and home. It is used in robotics, where collaborative robots deliver parts and perform repetitive or even dangerous tasks.

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| **Six ways to improve your journal’s impact**  
*Highwire*

Last month, following the publication of Clarivate’s 2019 Journal Impact Factor report, HighWire founding director John Sack took a look at some of the uses and misuses of the impact factor.

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| **ISSN-L is the cluster identifier for periodical titles that simplifies management and discovery**  
*ISSN*

Communities interested in the publication, distribution and management of serials and other continuing resources know a standard code for the unique identification of these contents is essential.

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| **The Engineering Literature Review – Five Quick Steps to Starting Research**  
*IET*

Engineering researchers who take these steps can save time and improve outcomes.

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| **Are your readers who you expect? Altmetric Badges for Books**  
*Altmetric*

For academic journal articles Altmetric badges are a widely used and well understood measurement of impact. Historically, due to both complexities in the data and differences in the way audiences engage with the content, it has been more difficult to provide the same kind of insights into the impact of books and book chapters – until now.

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| **The Importance of MathSciNet to Mathematicians**  
*EBSCO, Mathematical Reviews, MathSciNet*

Leading subject indexes provide critical information to academic researchers, enabling them to conduct a thorough review of literature with speed and efficiency.

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| **Escaping the silo**  
*Digital Science*

How Dimensions allows publishers and institutions to escape the limitations of siloed data... Since Dimensions launched in January, Digital Science has been talking and writing about how the platform breaks down barriers between different types information that have previously been siloed. But how do silos develop and why are they so damaging?
Kick-starting open data support

Szabi Steiner describes efforts to encourage data sharing at City, University of London

There has been rapid growth in interest in the potential of open data in recent years, and at City, University of London, we quickly recognised that if the university was to become more research intensive, we had to provide a more proactive research data service to our researchers.

One of the steps that we took to encourage data sharing was to create an institutional data repository for non-traditional publications, using Figshare for Institutions (https://city.figshare.com). Like many other research institutions, City doesn’t have a long history of providing data support and for political and historical reasons City’s data repository sits outside the library in the research & enterprise office. I’m very much an ‘accidental data manager’, rather than a data specialist. I knew nothing about research data management two years ago, and it is only one of many responsibilities I have at the university.

Unfortunately uptake of the institutional repository was lower than anticipated. We found that researchers often have little experience of sharing data, and unlike traditional forms of publication (such as research articles and book chapters) data is not typically a priority for researchers, as it doesn’t count in the UK’s Research Excellence Framework (REF).

It’s not easy to convince someone to do something that they haven’t done before, especially when there is no immediate benefit to them. They ask “OK, what’s in it for me?”, and I’ll say “Well, you’re going to get a DOI and the data will be more visible”, and they just say “Oh I don't care”.

The low uptake was expected to continue without specialist data staff to offer more support to the researchers in their data submissions. Even when researchers see the importance of making their data discoverable, there are still significant practical challenges for them to overcome. They must identify an appropriate repository, organise and describe the data in a useful way, and then ensure adherence to copyright and licensing restrictions. All this takes time and knowledge that they often don’t have, and have little incentive to acquire.

I wanted to hire someone to provide specialist data support, but I couldn’t get approval because I couldn’t demonstrate that there was a need for a person that does it in-house. I couldn’t predict the workload, and without a higher uptake of the data repository, it was difficult to demonstrate the need for specialist data staff. To help get around this impasse, we decided to partner with Springer Nature to provide all City researchers and doctoral students with access to its research data support services.

Working with Springer Nature means that all I am required to do is carry out a preliminary check on the suitability of the data before assigning it to the data specialists in the Springer Nature research data team. This is done with just the click of a button from within the Figshare repository. Responsibility for helping the researchers is then passed to Springer Nature, who liaise with the researcher directly to provide one-to-one specialist research data support.

The data specialists help with the creation of detailed metadata records, and ensure the accessibility and discoverability of the data, and its adherence to funder policy requirements. Where more information is required, they will request it from the researcher; where the data is out of the scope of the repository, because it contains mandated specialist data, they will provide guidance about specialist repositories to the researcher; where the submission contains sensitive data the research data team will either guide the researcher on anonymisation, or initiate controlled access. As well as the metadata record, the researcher receives a feedback report identifying enhancements that have been made to the data record, and the areas that could still be improved.

“Interest in open research, open access and open data is only going to increase”

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The process is interactive; data specialists work with the researcher to describe and present their data. By the end of the process, researchers can be assured that the data and metadata are published (or stored privately) with adherence to best practices and standards, and that they are as discoverable and accessible as possible.

Outsourcing research data support has enabled us to provide our researchers with specialist data services that we just don’t have in-house. There’s a lot of knowledge and expertise required to do data curation properly, and without a science background it’s difficult for me to tell whether the data is reusable for someone else, how to write the metadata or even what different metadata standards there are.

City now has the potential to scale-up its data support in a way that wasn’t possible while relying solely on our in-house resources. Interest in open research, open access, and open data is only going to increase, and it is not inconceivable that we will find by the next REF that open data is as necessary as open access is today. I have many other responsibilities at the university, and outsourcing data management support has allowed me to focus on these other responsibilities, while giving me the confidence that City’s researchers are provided with the specialist skills, knowledge and expertise they require.

It’s too early to predict how great the impact of specialist data support will be on uptake of our data services, but it is already clear that the metadata at the end of the support process is often very different from the metadata initially submitted by the researchers. One dataset submitted recently was just a single Excel file with metadata stating ‘this is the data’. By the end of the support process it had been transformed with metadata, keywords, categories, and even the title of the final record, all being added by the research data team. The hope is that easing the submission of data will encourage researchers to use the repository in the near future, while improving the quality of the metadata will encourage use in the longer term, as the improved impact of the data begins to be seen.

Do Szabi’s experiences chime with you? Would you like to share your thoughts as a librarian with the readers of Research Information?
Email: tim.gillett@europascience.com

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Registration required

As a not-for-profit publisher with the mission to fundamentally understand and best serve the information needs of the food community, IFIS Publishing commissioned research into research behaviour and the challenges around carrying out literature reviews.

As a result, IFIS have developed best practice guidance around literature reviews in food science, with supporting educational content.

Relevant to all subject disciplines, this session will explore:

- What a literature review is and why they are so important
- Summary of the findings from the research IFIS commissioned
- What contributes to these challenges (i.e. information overload, predatory journals, ineffective search practices)
- Tips for carrying out effective literature reviews, including developing your search strategy, undertaking information searches (with some tips for focused searches), and critical appraisal
- What IFIS Publishing is developing to support the community in response to the findings
- Q&A

Literature reviews in food science – what, why and how?

Presenter

Rhianna Gamble
Head of Marketing, IFIS

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Global Trends in Libraries: Challenges and Changing Roles

Presenters

Dan Penny
Director, Market Intelligence
Springer Nature (UK)

Bob Boissy
Director of Account Development
Springer Nature (USA)

In October of 2018, Springer Nature conducted a global survey on library challenges, publisher engagement, and our level of service to the library community. The goal of this survey was to better understand the trials facing librarians and the ways publishers and libraries can partner.

In this webinar, we'll present the findings of the survey and what it may mean for the academic community. Some of the questions covered in the survey include responsibilities, challenges to individuals' roles and to the library as a whole, and how content is evaluated.
From artificial intelligence to research data and innovation strategy – the 50th annual conference of STM, the global trade association for academic and professional publishers in Frankfurt, was awash with inspiration for academic publishers looking to the future.

Held at the Westin Grand hotel last month, delegates arrived eager to soak up the opinions of expert speakers and panellists, who warned the audience repeatedly of the need to go back to basics, particularly on data.

This year’s keynote speaker was Annie Callanan, CEO of Taylor and Francis. Her epic 322-slide presentation was titled ‘The best of times, the worst of times’. Warning that ‘the world has forgotten what publishers do, and why we do it’, she perhaps controversially described publishers as ‘comfortably numb and smug’ with both the 20th Century publishing business of moderating and validating, and the ‘hallowed buildings’ of physical libraries effectively no more.

Noting that anyone can now publish their own brand of fake truth, she positioned publishers as having a unique role to play in mitigating these risks, urging the audience to be a positive force for change in disseminating evidence. In Callanan’s vision, 21st Century evidence-based publishing could cultivate and highlight authenticated truths from the ‘digital wasteland’, building on our experiences of taking innovation to larger publishers looking to the future.

Risk-taking was a theme of the day, surfacing again in the ‘Keys to Innovation’ panel”

“Risk-taking was a theme of the day, surfacing again in the ‘Keys to Innovation’ panel.”

Hampered by legacy systems. Various techniques were discussed, including agile development, innovation tournaments and hackathons. The panel also debated the importance of culture in encouraging and rewarding innovation within the business.

Announcing 2020 as STM’s official Research Data Year, a roundtable panel discussion featuring Grace Baynes, from Springer Nature, PLOS’ Iain Hrynaszkiewicz, and Wouter Haak, from Elsevier, made a compelling case for going back to basics and ensuring that data can be shared, linked and cited easily.

Chairing the panel, Eefke Smit, of STM, emphasised the importance STM places on data publishing and standardised research data policies to encourage reproducibility and credit. The audience heard evidence showing that publication of a data availability statement alongside the original article can increase citations of the article by up to 25 per cent. Baynes highlighted Springer Nature data showing that researchers want credit for sharing data in the form of citations.

While other metrics must be explored, citations remain ‘easily understood and recognisable’, also having the advantage of being recognised by funders at a time when funders are placing increasing importance on data, with many monitoring compliance with data sharing policies. The panel noted that NISO will be launching reproducibility badges during STM Week in early December.

Confronting issues in catering for both human and machine readers, and the need for publishers to embrace the benefits of artificial intelligence, the panel on AI discussed the evolving global legal landscape. With each country having its own policies, copyright lawyer Carlo Scollo Lavizzari described the legal situation as ‘alphabet soup’, with those wishing to influence policy needing to focus on the consultations that really matter.

Other discussion points included avoiding bias in AI algorithms, the difference between true AI and machine learning, and ethics issues specific to publishing, such as who owns the copyright to a book written by AI, how peer review is conducted, and who takes responsibility when a machine summarises something irresponsibly. As Neils Peter Thomas, from Springer Nature, said: ‘You can’t go back to a machine and say, please re-write chapter three.’

The executive panel included four industry leaders (unusually, three were women); Tracey Armstrong, Copyright Clearance Center, Judy Verses, John Wiley and Sons, Daniel Ebneter, Karger Publishers, and Annie Callanan. They discussed the challenges of innovating as an incumbent, fostering an environment where people feel safe enough to be disruptive, and working with startups.

Armstrong summarised the challenges facing the industry: ‘There are epic challenges in the world today and we are not set up to address them. We need to look beyond business outcomes to the common good, and work out how this community is addressing that. It’s a very, very big mandate.’

The final session was an interview with outgoing STM CEO Michael Mabe, speaking frankly of the changes the industry has seen over his years of tenure, Mabe’s leadership has steered STM for many years, and his impact was warmly acknowledged by his peers as a fitting end to a fascinating conference. 

Jo McShea is director of market intelligence for the Web of Science Group, part of Clarivate Analytics
Unsilo has released the results of a survey on artificial intelligence (AI) usage in academic publishing, asking questions such as: how is it used and what factors impede its adoption.

More than 3,000 new academic journal articles are published every day, and yet many of the tools for processing content through the academic workflow are frequently very manually based. The Unsilo survey, featuring the views of publishers and other stakeholders in the scholarly workflow, was carried out between June and September. The results were presented at a panel session at the Frankfurt Book Fair, chaired by Toby Green, former head of publishing at OECD.

**Take-up of AI**

The findings of the survey show a steady take-up of AI tools by publishers. Two-thirds of respondents are currently using at least one AI tool, and only 3 per cent of respondents felt that AI could not benefit their activities in some way. Some 45 per cent of respondents not currently using AI plan to introduce some AI tools in the coming 12 months.

As for the perennial ‘build or buy’ question, around a third of publishers use only their own in-house resources. The remainder use external suppliers, or a mixture of the two. How the publishers plan to expand their AI capability is interesting. The largest response was to expand the publisher’s internal AI team, which suggests an emphasis on keeping skills internal to the organisation, rather than buying in external tools.

For publishers currently using AI tools, the biggest justification for AI tools was saving time (65 per cent), suggesting that the current implementation of AI tools is based very much around tools to improve specific pain points in the academic workflow. By far the biggest application is to add and curate metadata. Remarkably, more than 40 per cent of metadata is added by in-house staff, which suggests there is ample scope for automation.

**Trust, bias and accuracy**

For all the coverage in the media about questions of bias and privacy being topics of major concern, few of the respondents seemed to be taking action about these issues. Fewer than 10 per cent of publishers check their AI tools for bias, and only 8 per cent for privacy and compliance with GDPR.

There is a paradox here; the two biggest reasons cited for not using AI tools more were ‘not enough time’ and ‘uncertain quality of results’. But fewer than 20 per cent of respondents stated they were checking the AI tools they use for reliability and consistency.

Unsilo CEO Thomas Laursen said: ‘This survey confirms our experience with several academic publishers, who are both keen to get involved with AI and yet, at the same time, reluctant to relinquish human control over the academic workflow. We hope this survey will encourage more publishers to take the plunge with this transformational technology. It will be interesting to compare these results with the situation in a year’s time, as more publishers learn from their experience and provide feedback.’

"As for the perennial ‘build or buy’ question, around a third of publishers use only their own in-house resources”

Michael Upshall reports on the results of a survey on the use of AI in academic publishing

Major socially-conscious partnership announced as part of keynote speech at Charleston Library Conference

Better World Books, the socially conscious online bookseller, is now owned by Better World Libraries—a mission-aligned, not-for-profit organisation affiliated with longtime partner, the Internet Archive—it was announced at Charleston Library Conference.

According to Internet Archive founder Brewster Kahle, delivering the keynote speech on the opening morning, the partnership will allow both organisations to pursue their collective mission of making knowledge universally accessible to readers everywhere. The relationship will provide additional resources and newfound synergies, backed by a shared enthusiasm for advancing global literacy and dedicated to ensuring that books are accessible to all for generations to come.

Better World Books was founded in 2003, when a group of recent college graduates sold their used textbooks online. Their success eventually led to the creation of a revolutionary business model, where used books are collected from libraries, booksellers, colleges and universities in six countries, and then are either resold online, donated or recycled. To date, Better World Books has donated almost 27 million books worldwide, has raised close to $30m for libraries and literacy, and has saved more than 326 million books from landfills.

Kahle said: ‘The Better World Books origin story is inspiring, and the service they provide to libraries is invaluable. These are our kind of people. We share their values, and we are proud to partner with Better World Books and libraries around the world to promote the goal of universal access to all knowledge.’

The Internet Archive is committed to digitising books and library materials, so they can be accessed by users globally. Through digitisation, these materials can be used by researchers in large-scale, data-driven computing investigations, preserved in digital and physical form, and where appropriate, loaned to readers.

Dustin Holland, the newly appointed president and CEO of Better World Books, said: ‘We exist to make a difference in the world, and our customers make that possible. We are honoured to join the Internet Archive family, and our partnership allows us to extract the maximum value out of every book we collect at scale, while continuing to delight readers all over the world.’

In a wide-ranging and passionate presentation, Kahle explained to delegates that, in our current era of disinformation, ready access to trustworthy sources is critical. He said that fake news, sophisticated disinformation campaigns, and propaganda distort the common reality, polarise communities, and threaten open democratic systems. He explained that what citizens, journalists and policymakers need is a ‘canonical’ source of trusted information. For millions, that trusted source resides in the books and journals housed in libraries, curated and vetted by librarians. Yet today, as we turn inevitably to our screens for information, if a book isn’t digital, it is as if it doesn’t exist.

To address this gap, the Internet Archive is actively working with the world’s great libraries to digitize their collections and to make them available to users via controlled digital lending, a process whereby libraries can loan digital copies of the print books on their shelves. By bringing millions of missing books and academic literature online, libraries can empower journalists, researchers and Wikipedia editors to cite the best sources directly in their work, grounding readers in the vetted, published record, and extending the investment that libraries have made in their print collections.

Kahle said: ‘This has to be our day, people need us. We have lots of information that is not true. People are looking for better information … they need librarians, publishers, researchers to understand their world.’
Web of Science launches partner programme in ScholarOne

The Web of Science Group has launched a partner programme to connect publishers with trusted third parties in ScholarOne, the workflow-management system for publishers.

Keith Collier, vice president for product management at Web of Science, said: ‘With up-and-coming vendors entering the marketplace all the time, the ScholarOne partner programme supports publishers in working with trusted third parties seamlessly. It will connect publishers with more than 15 of our partners, including bioRxiv, Unsilo, Copyright Clearance Center and Code Ocean, to name just a few. It will help publishers to speed up their submission times, build relationships with their authors and reviewers, and streamline their peer review workflow. In addition, partners will get access to extensive API and integration capabilities, and ScholarOne users will have a wider range of options.’

One of the inaugural partners is Unsilo – the result of a successful pilot conducted over the past year, with 43 editors across seven publishers. The pilot tested five AI capabilities focused on improving the time to screen and peer review papers.

As a result, ScholarOne has already integrated two new capabilities from Unsilo; key sentences and key words, which give editors additional insight into the manuscript, simplifying their decision to send a paper out for peer review. The ability to view the key sentences and key words extracted from the manuscript is built directly into the ScholarOne platform workflow, providing editors with assistance at exactly the time and place that they need it.

Collier added: ‘The next phase of the partnership will test new automated technical checks. Our initial goal is to reduce the time it takes to make a decision about whether to send the manuscript to peer review, and to reduce the number of manuscripts that go to peer review and end up rejected.’

In addition to providing these services to editors, the Unsilo integration also provides checks directly to authors at the point of submission, allowing them to correct errors or provide missing data before the manuscript reaches an editor.

Prize draw: win a free ticket to top London conference!

Research Information has teamed up with the Researcher to Reader event to give one of our readers a free ticket to the two-day conference in London.

Researcher to Reader (R2R), which will be held at BMA House (pictured) in central London on 24 and 25 February, is a collaborative forum for discussion of the international scholarly content supply chain. It attracts a wide range of delegates including librarians, researchers, publishers and other vendors.

Speakers at the event will include: Dr Soumya Swaminathan, chief scientist at World Health Organisation; Tasha Mellins-Cohen, director of publishing at the Microbiology Society; Catriona Fennell, director of publishing services at Elsevier; and Sabine Hossenfelder, research fellow at the Frankfurt Institute for Advanced Studies.

R2R also features a series of panel debates, workshops and discussions across the two-day programme – as well as numerous opportunities for networking with other delegates.

The draw is open to librarians and academics who subscribe to Research Information. We will hold the draw on 10 January, and the winner will be notified soon after that. Please note that this offer does not include travel to the event, or accommodation, so may be more suited to readers in the south-east of the UK – though it is open to all.

For more details about the event, visit: https://r2rconf.com/

Sponsors who supported the 2019 conference include HighWire, Atypon, The Royal Society of Chemistry, Research Information, Mosaic, Ringgold and Aries.

Sponsors who are already supporting the 2020 conference include HighWire, Atypon, The Royal Society of Chemistry, Research Information, Mosaic, Ringgold and Aries.

To enter, please email charlie.mitchell@europascience.com, with the header: R2R 2020 PRIZE DRAW, by 10 January. Please include your name and job title in the body of the email.
Jisc and the Microbiology Society have announced a two-year pilot transitional open access (OA) agreement. The ‘publish and read’ deal will allow researchers at participating institutions to publish an unlimited number of OA articles, as well as access to the society’s full portfolio, in return for a ‘cost-neutral’ fixed fee.

The Microbiology Society is the first small learned society publisher to strike a transitional deal through the Jisc consortium. Jisc Collections undertakes negotiations and licensing for 180 UK universities and is close to agreeing similar deals with Portland Press, the International Water Association and the European Respiratory Society.

Kathryn Spiller, licensing manager at Jisc, who has worked with the society to negotiate the agreement, said: ‘We are thrilled to have worked with universities, funders and the Microbiology Society to create a transitional model that allows 100 per cent of UK output to be published open access on a cost-neutral basis.’

Under the terms of the agreement, which will be effective from 2020, scientists will be able to publish in the Microbiology Society’s six journals, two of which are born OA journals, and the other four subscription and/or hybrid journals.

Peter Cotgreave, chief executive of the Microbiology Society, said: ‘We are delighted to have forged this agreement with our first national consortium for the benefit of microbiology researchers in the UK. As a small publishing society, we are keen to introduce models to promote new, innovative and country-wide OA publishing across our portfolio of journals.’

Robert Kiley, head of open research at Wellcome, said: ‘Following the work we commissioned with UK Research and Innovation and the Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers, to help learned society publishers transition to full and immediate open access, I am pleased to see these cost-neutral transformative agreements come to fruition and I hope others will follow the lead of the Microbiology Society.’
Million-page science collection to be digitised

The not-for-profit technology provider Jisc and publisher Wiley are to digitise a one-million-page collection on the history of science.

The collection will largely comprise content from the British Association for the Advancement of Science (BAAS), now the British Science Association (BSA). Universities in the UK will also be able to put their collections forward for inclusion in this digital archive, provided that the content complements the BAAS archive and meets practical and logistic considerations.

The collaboration offers universities a chance to influence what material is digitised by a commercial publisher.

Paola Marchionni, head of digital resources for teaching, learning and research at Jisc, said: ‘Digitising specialist archives is a costly enterprise and, over the last few years we have been exploring new business models to support digitisation of collections.

‘This deal is a first for Jisc and Wiley, and was struck in response to our members’ concern over the cost of content and the desire to democratise access to all institutions, no matter their size or income.

We are hoping this project will pave the way for similar alliances with other publishers and collections.’

Through the partnership, the resulting digital collection will be free to all UK universities and colleges and, once the licences to the content expire, will be made available openly and globally password-free. Scholars and teachers will be able to freely access materials dating roughly between 1800 to the 1970s via the Wiley Digital Archives platform. The history of science collection will be available from March next year, giving access to primary source material that might otherwise have been hard to access, and difficult to use.

Jay Flynn, chief product officer at Wiley Research, said: ‘We are thrilled to be working so collaboratively with Jisc, the British Science Association (BSA) and leading UK universities to add a new collection to the Wiley Digital Archives programme. Wiley Digital Archives allows researchers to peer into the science of the past to create scholarship for the future. This partnership will help the BSA and UK universities to unlock their content for a larger research audience through our global platform and expand access into educational settings at the same time. Wiley Digital Archive’s built-in text and data mining tools will increase discoverability, while adding context to this powerful content.’

Katherine Mathieson, chief executive at BSA, said: ‘The association is delighted to have the opportunity to share its extensive archives of the history of science with researchers across the world. Currently these papers are only available to scholars who can travel to the archives looked after by the Bodleian Library at Oxford.

‘This transformative partnership will extend access to many more researchers. These papers show that from the very beginning, scientists wanted to share their knowledge with everyone. We continue to realise this vision, through our work with communities and schools which supports our vision of a world where science is seen as a fundamental part of society.’

OA potential remains untapped – report

Researchers want to improve access to research but remain largely unaware of initiatives and services established to increase open access (OA).

A survey of 2,755 Taylor & Francis authors, released for Open Access Week, reveals little consensus when it comes to permitting reuse of published research – and that researchers should be taking advantage more of the open access options available.

Some 66 per cent didn’t recognise any of 11 different initiatives presented, including the 2002 Budapest Open Access Declaration (with the highest level of researchers, 12 per cent, aware of this) and the Open Access Button (with the lowest level of awareness, at just 2 per cent).

Just 5 per cent of researchers are aware of Plan S – an initiative with potential to significantly affect publishing options for researchers around the world. Plan S had been a headline story in the scholarly communications industry, and been the focus of many political discussions around its aim of making all scholarly publications OA by 2025.

The survey asked researchers about publishing habits. Gold OA, making the final version of a research article open, has seen increased uptake (42 per cent used this option in the last 12 months). However just 26 per cent have made use of green OA, archiving an earlier version of a manuscript in a repository.

Additionally, although researchers support the principle of greater access to their work (88 per cent) and only a minority (41 per cent) agree that their research is already available to those who need it, there is less consensus on the extent to which others should be able to reuse that published research – the other pillar of the OA movement. Some authors support maximum reusability of their work, but there appears reticence in others.

CC BY, the Creative Commons Attribution License that gives others complete freedom to build on and distribute original work, is researchers’ least preferred publishing license (29 per cent). While the highest number of first preferences go to CC BY-NC-ND (26 per cent), which doesn’t permit derivatives or commercial reuse. The option with the highest combined first and second preferences is the Exclusive License to Publish, giving the journal exclusive right to publish the article and handle reuse requests.

Caroline Sutton, director of open research at Taylor & Francis, said: ‘This new survey demonstrates that researchers see value in anyone being able to access their published research. However, it’s sobering to note that so many of the routes to enable this access, which scholarly communication professionals are very familiar with, are still largely unknown among the larger body of researchers.

‘There is clearly much more that publishers, funders, librarians, and open access advocates need to do to raise awareness among researchers of the OA options that are available to them.’
Cambridge to trial crowdfunding open access book

Cambridge University Press (CUP) is launching a crowdfunding campaign to publish a book in the open access model. CUP has teamed up with the book site Unbound to determine if crowdfunding can support making selected titles open access (OA) – free to read online by anyone with an internet connection, anywhere in the world.

The move is a two-time first. For CUP it’s the first time it has tried to crowdfund a book, while for Unbound it is the first time it has worked with an academic publisher. The book – The Case for Scottish Independence by Ben Jackson – will be published next year. The three-month crowdfunding campaign will cover the costs of making it available online and OA. If the campaign’s target is reached, everyone who pledged will get a copy of the book and have their names listed in the back. A range of other rewards will be on offer to backers, including a chance to have dinner with the author.

Ben Denne, director of publishing for CUP’s academic books, said: ‘As a university press we welcome and support the goals of open research – to increase collaboration and to improve the accessibility, efficiency and impact of research. The challenge is to do so in a way that allows us to continue investing in high-quality content.

‘The open access movement started with academic research journals, and books are still catching up. We are excited by the potential of open access publishing to reach wide audiences, and determined to find sustainable ways to publish more of our books open access.

‘Of course, the nature of the internet means pretty much anyone can now put content online themselves, but you then lose the huge benefits of curated, high-quality content that comes from publishers’ rigorous approach to content selection, enhancement and production.’

Mathew Clayton, head of publishing at Unbound, said: ‘This feels like a groundbreaking moment – using Unbound’s platform to help increase open access in academic publishing would dramatically shift the way things have previously worked. We are really delighted to be partnering with Cambridge University Press in this bold experiment.

The book argues that the roots of Scottish nationalism lie in the decades after the 1960s and not in the distant past of the Acts of Union or the Scottish Enlightenment. It offers a fresh, original and up to date examination of the politics of Scottish nationalism, written in a readable style for students, researchers, politicians and anyone else interested in modern Scottish identity and politics.

Research project to focus on impact outside academia

Kudos, the service for accelerating research impact through strategic communications management, is launching a research project, ‘Bridging the Divide’.

This study is aimed at exploring: the growing requirement for researchers to engage with audiences outside of academia; the motivations and expectations of funders relating to this ‘broader impact’, and the budget being made available; and opportunities for publishing in developing service and content offerings to help bridge the ‘knowledge chasm’ between those that produce and use research.


While that project focused on potential publisher services most likely to be valued by academic authors ‘upstream’ of the point of publication, it also uncovered the scale of collaboration between academic and non-academic audiences, and the need for new content formats, business models, platforms and services. An overwhelming majority (95 per cent) of Upstream’s 9,500-plus respondents indicated that such broader communications are important to their future funding and career.

‘The need to demonstrate impact – meaningful and measurable effects in the real world – has begun to break down the barriers between academics and stakeholders such as industry, educators, policy makers and other non-academic audiences,’ said Melinda Kenneway, CEO at Kudos. ‘This shift represents one of the largest emerging opportunities in the publishing sector, and publishers have a potentially hugely valuable role to play in bridging this divide.’

Project partners will benefit from opportunities to suggest content for the research instruments, and access to results data and analysis, including custom findings and recommendations based on specific respondent groups.
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