Plan S transparency requirements
The Company of Biologists as pilots and what we did next...
O. Claire Moulton, Publisher
8 October 2020
The Company of Biologists’ journals
Plan S price transparency requirements - pilot

Why we joined the pilot

- We asked to join the pilot
- We believe that Open Access is the direction of travel
- We’d been thinking about more transparent metrics for a while
- Wanted our Gold OA journals to be compliant ASAP
- If you’re not involved, you can’t complain about the outcome
Plan S price transparency requirements - pilot

How we contributed to the pilot

• Submitted draft metrics
  • editorial metrics (2019)
  • price breakdown
• Attended workshops
  • great discussions with other publishers over consistency
  • lively debate over why we needed some of the metrics (which parties want which metrics?)
Challenges with the metrics

- We’ve always calculated e.g. speed metrics based on submission year
- We were asked for metrics based on publication year
- Our platform provider couldn’t provide the COUNTER 5 usage reports
- It excluded other metrics we thought were more interesting
What we’ve done since the pilot...

- Decided on a Transformative Journal strategy for our three hybrid journals
- Wanted to publish our transparent metrics quickly
  - of the two approaches we’d stick with the IP model
  - but the final format required additional work
    (new and changed metrics)
- So we decided to publish the tables we’d produced for the pilot
  - Original pilot metrics with a few small updates (all journals)
  - Pattern of OA uptake on each hybrid journal
  - Waiver metrics on fully OA journals
The following list will feature journals which are afforded the Transformative Journals Status according to Plan S criteria, as published in the Addendum to the Implementation Guidance for Plan S.

The Company of Biologists

- Development
- Journal of Cell Science
- Journal of Experimental Biology
What we’ve done since August’s announcements...

• Editorials on openness / transparency
• Updated the metrics to reflect the final IP model
  • Speed metrics are all different from the pilot
  • The table is not easy to browse by eye
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>research-articles-published</th>
<th>acceptance-rate</th>
<th>desk-rejection-rate</th>
<th>issue-publication-frequency</th>
<th>median-number-reviews</th>
<th>median-time-submission-to-first-decision</th>
<th>median-time-peer-review</th>
<th>median-time-acceptance-to-publication</th>
<th>counters_unique-item-requests</th>
<th>counters_total-item-requests</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>322</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>Continuously updated, compiled semiannually</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>694</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>1,287,395</td>
<td>1,287,395</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Yes  Yes  Yes  Yes  Yes  Yes  Yes  Yes  Yes  Yes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Integer</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Integer</th>
<th>Integer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>50%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of research articles published in reporting period specified by reporting period start and report period end</th>
<th>Acceptance rate for reporting period specified by reporting period start and report period end</th>
<th>Desk-rejection rate for reporting period specified by reporting period start and report period end</th>
<th>Issue-publication frequency</th>
<th>Median number of reviews for research articles in reporting period specified by reporting period start and report period end</th>
<th>Median time in days from submission to first decision in reporting period specified by reporting period start and report period end</th>
<th>Median time in days from the time a manuscript is accepted to the time the version of record is available using the MED definition of article version</th>
<th>The data should be aggregated across customers to provide global usage figures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of research articles published in reporting period specified by reporting period start and report period end: Exclude author corrections, compendium, errata, editorials, and reviews. The data should be aggregated across customers to provide global usage figures.
Response to our metrics

- As expected, authors said these were not the metrics they most wanted to see...
- Started on infographics for additional metrics of interest
- We hope not to repeat the metrics analysis every year!
What we’re doing now...

- More detailed speed metrics for authors
- For example separate:
  - Time to editorial reject
  - Time to ‘first’ decision after peer review
- Plus the % accepted / rejected at the different decision points
Speed metrics for authors

- Submission
- Peer review: 40 days
- Decision*
- Editorial reject: 13 days
- Author revisions: 48 days
- Revised manuscript
- Revised manuscript: 27 days
- Decision*
- Accept: 28 days
- Accepted manuscripts online: 18 days
- Published VOR: 33 days

*Denotes decisions made by editors and authors.
What we’re doing now...

- Additional facts and figures for authors:
  - Academic Editors
  - % Authors who would submit to the journal again
  - Welcome preprints
  - Published peer review reports

- Already show usage, citations and altmetrics for individual articles
- Compare metrics for OA articles versus subscription content

- Waiver info (fully OA journals)
Waiver info (fully OA journals)

13 waivers requested = 9% published papers

All were eligible for a waiver 70% or discount 30%
Waiver info (fully OA journals)

Geo distribution of waivers:
- Canada: 4
- United States: 4
- Israel: 1
- Germany: 1
- India: 2
- Argentina: 1
In summary

• Quite a bit of work for the pilot and then the revised metrics
• Big win for us being able to move quickly and gain Transformative Journal status
• The transparency table is the minimum amount of information to provide...
• Still a way to go to produce infographics etc
In summary

If I had to do it all over again, I would do it all over again.

Yogi Berra