

# How to write a great research paper and get it accepted by a good journal

## *Understanding the publishing process*

Darren Sugrue

13<sup>th</sup> March 2018

# Workshop Outline

- Aristotle University of Thessaloniki
- Academic publishing
- Identifying the right journal
- Using proper scientific language
- Structuring your article
- The peer review process
- Publication ethics
- Open access publishing
- Get noticed
- Questions and Answers

# Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

# Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

501-550 (QS) • 501-600 (THE) • 401-500 (ARWU) | Greece | More details on this Institution

2014 to 2017



no subject area filter selected



ASJC

[Data sources](#)

Summary

Topics

Awarded Grants

Collaboration

Published

Viewed

Cited

Economic Impact

Societal I



## Overall research performance



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Scholarly Output



13,156 ▼

[View list of publications](#)

Authors

7,793 ▼

Field-Weighted Citation Impact



1.53

Citation Count



70,591

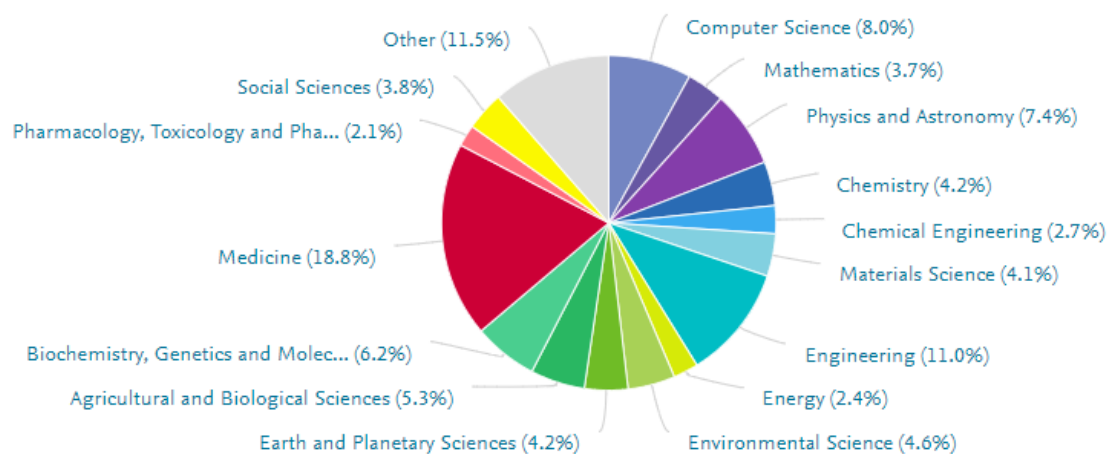
Citations per Publication

5.4

h5-index

110

+ Add to Reporting



> Analyze in more detail







## Collaboration

### Collaboration

[+ Add to R](#)

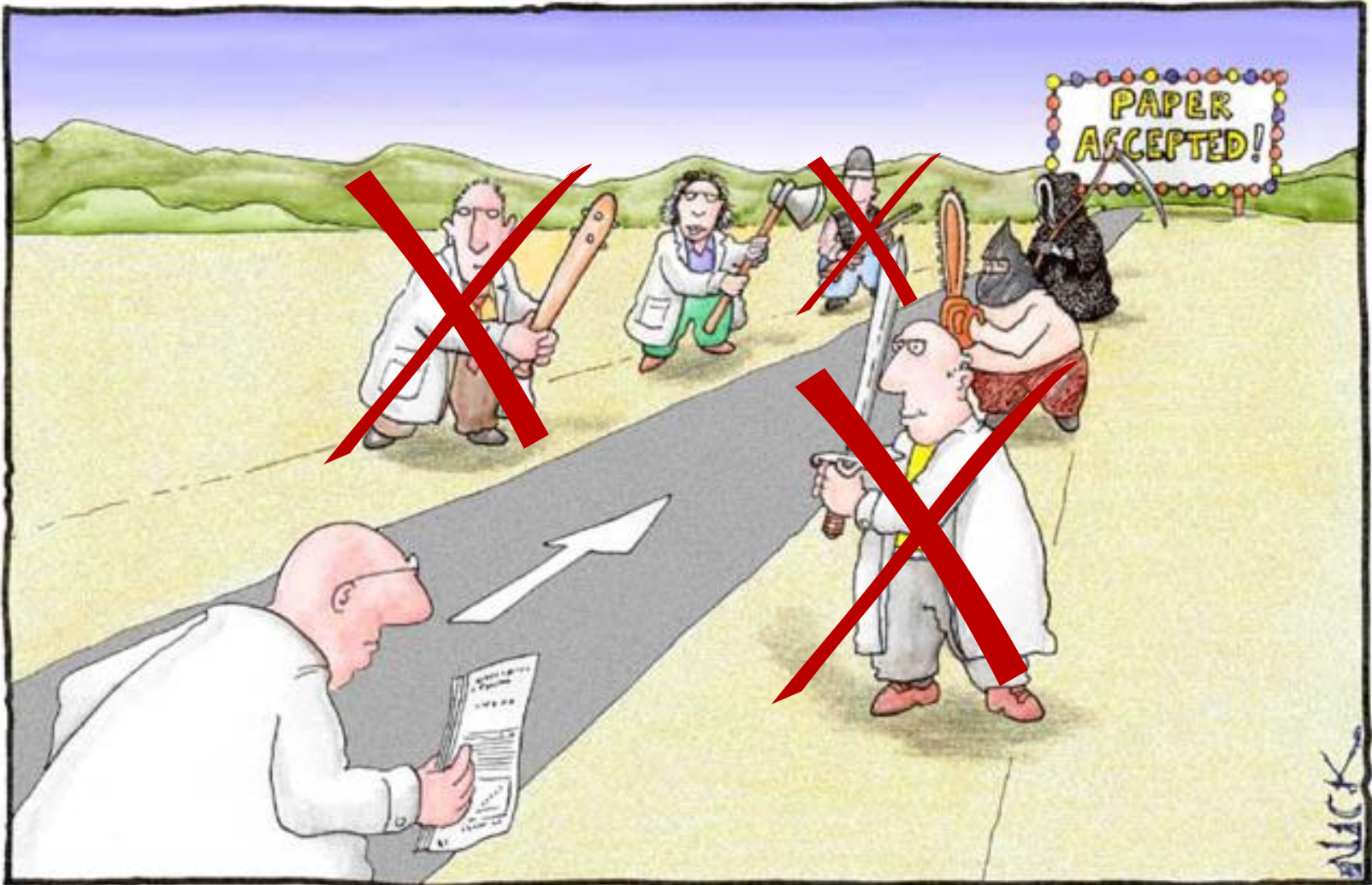
Publications at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, by amount of international, national and institutional collaboration



Metric		Publications	Citations	Citations per Publication
 International collaboration	47.9%	6,299	50,989	8.1
 Only national collaboration	17.7%	2,334	8,222	3.5
 Only institutional collaboration	28.7%	3,776	10,285	2.7
 Single authorship (no collaboration)	5.7%	747	1,095	1.5

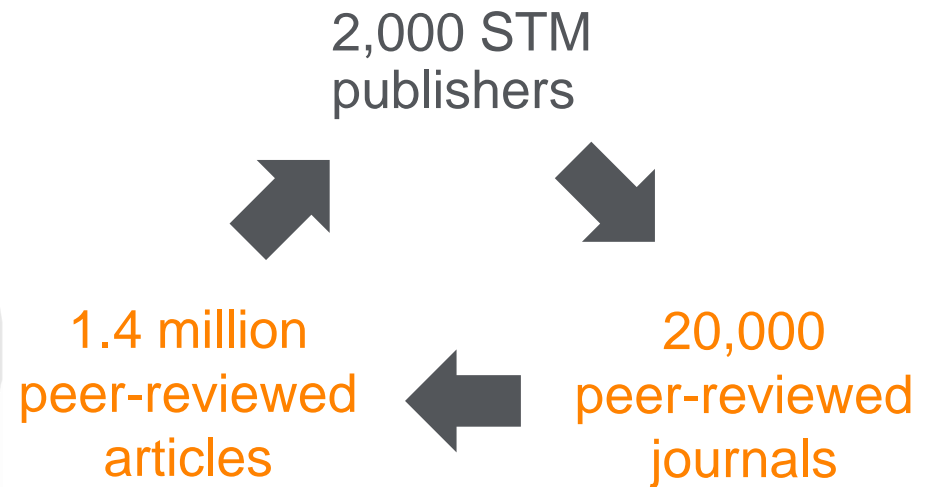
# Background

## Why are you here?



## Scholarly publishing today

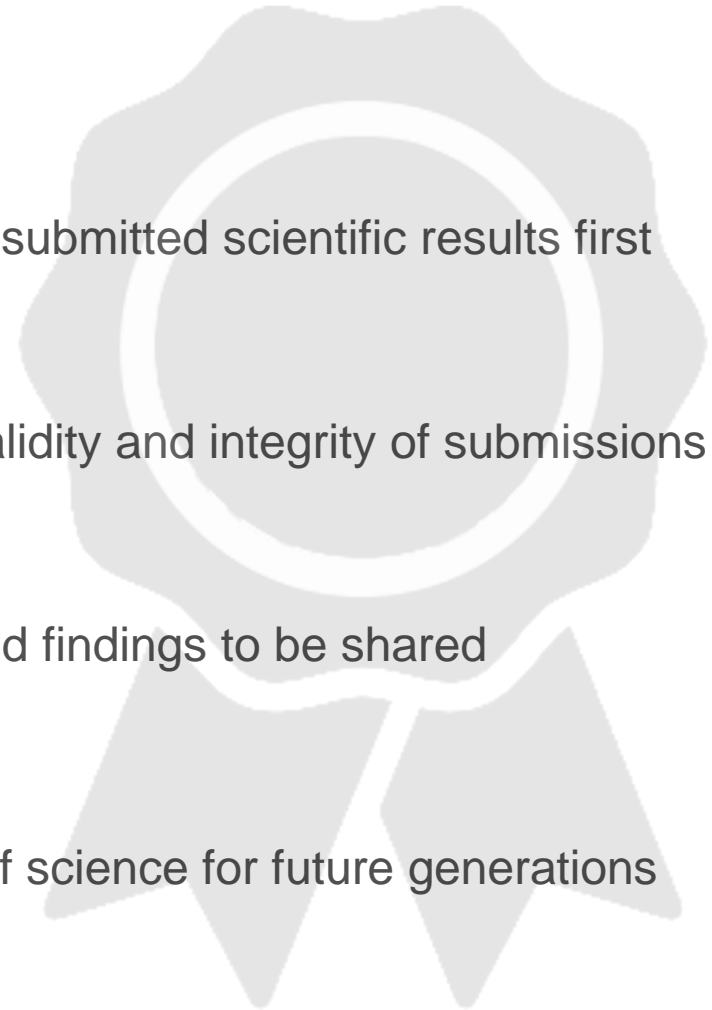
- **Scientific, technical and medical (STM) publishing**





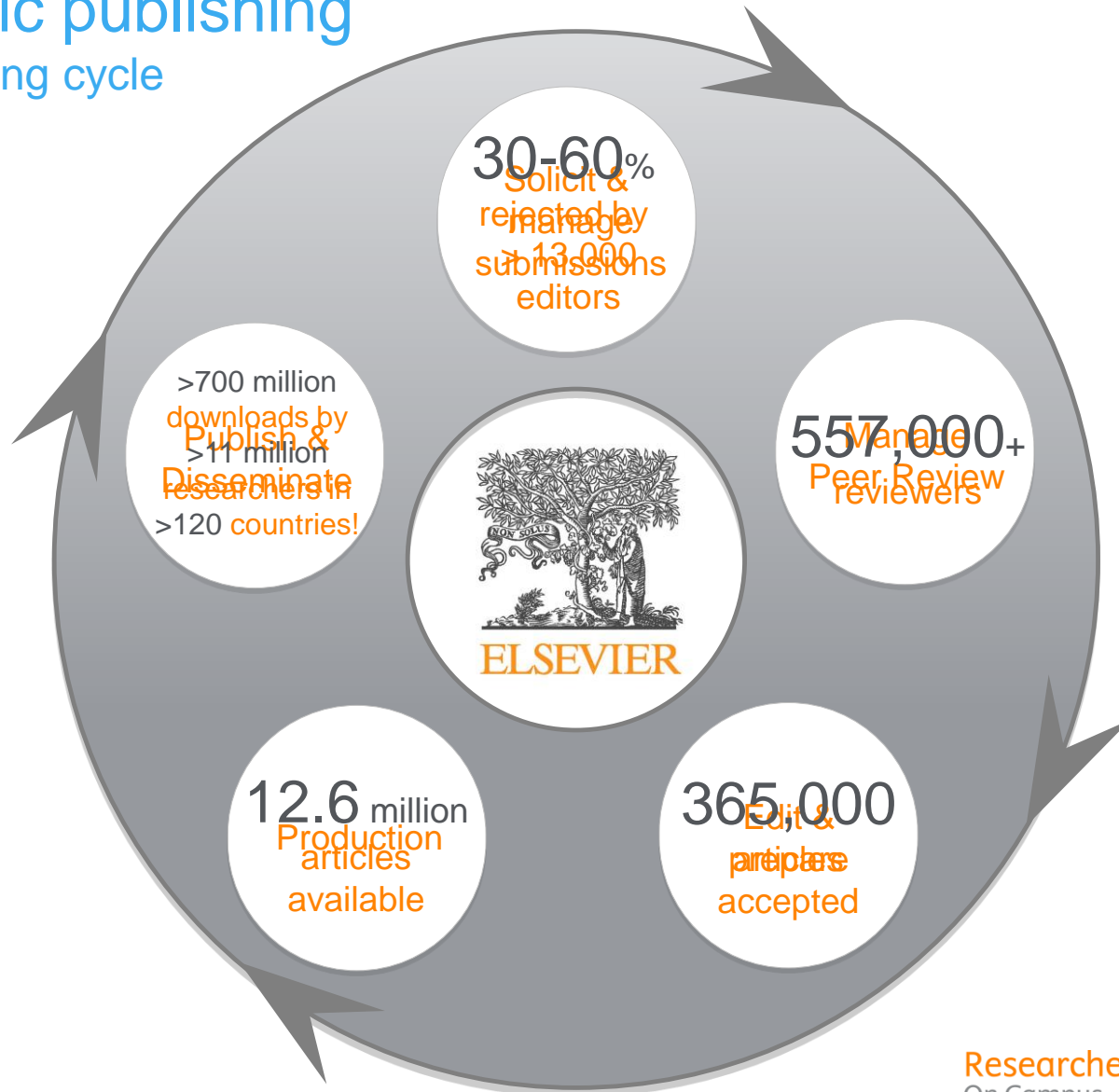
## Role of scientific publishers

- **Registration**
  - The timestamp to officially note who submitted scientific results first
- **Certification**
  - Perform peer-review to ensure the validity and integrity of submissions
- **Dissemination**
  - Provide a medium for discoveries and findings to be shared
- **Preservation**
  - Preserving the minutes and record of science for future generations



# Academic publishing

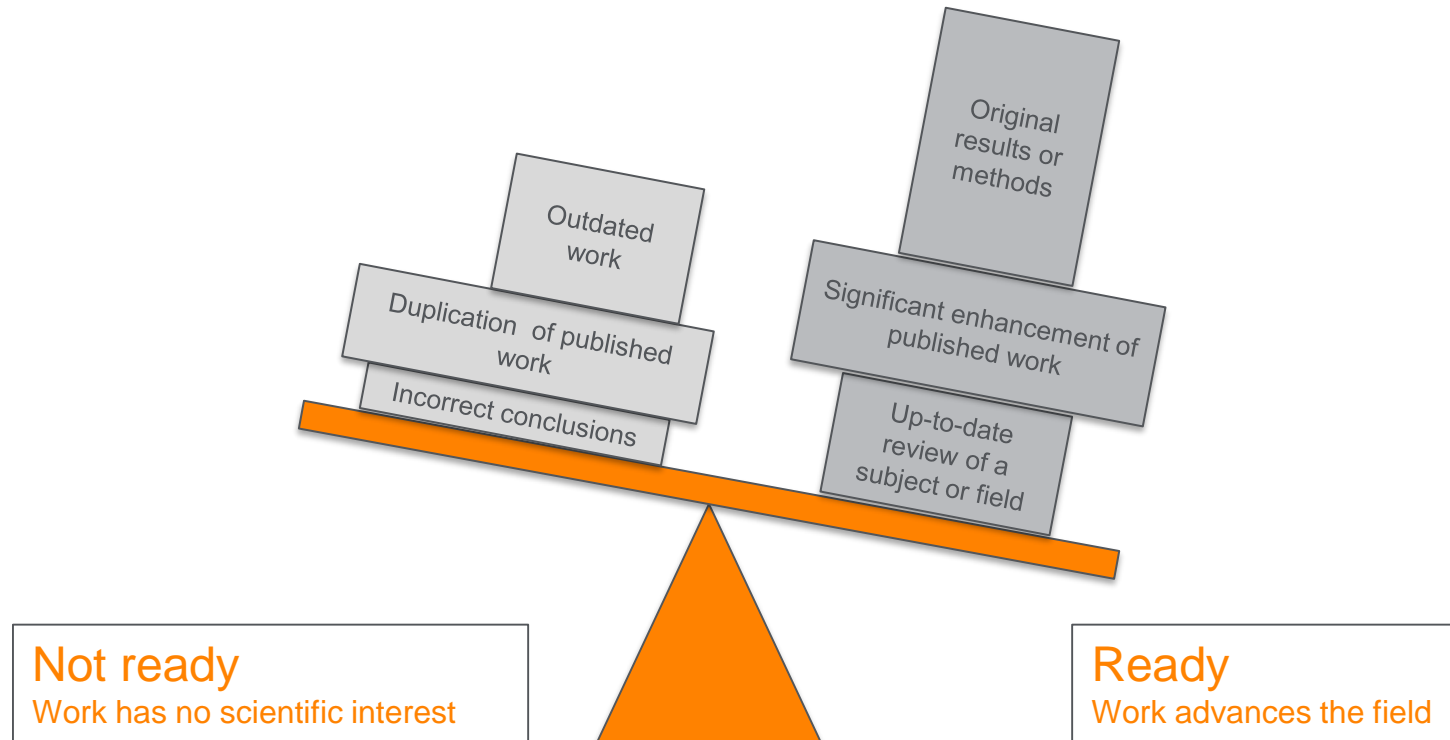
## The publishing cycle



# Identifying the right journal

# Planning your article

Are you ready to publish?



## What is a strong manuscript?

- Has a novel, clear, useful, and exciting message
- Presented and constructed in a logical manner
- Reviewers and editors can grasp the scientific significance easily



**Editors and reviewers are all busy scientists –  
make things easy to save their time**

# Selecting the best journal for submission

- Review recent publications in each “candidate journal”. Find out the hot topics, the accepted types of articles, etc.
- Ask yourself the following questions:
  - Is the journal peer-reviewed?
  - Who is this journal’s audience?
  - How fast does it make a decision or publish your paper?
  - What are the various Impact metrics for the journal?
  - Do you want/need to publish Open Access?
  - Does it really exist or is dubious? (check for example archived version of Beall’s List of Predatory Open Access Publishers)

A red, rectangular stamp with a distressed, ink-like texture. The word "SHORTLIST" is written in bold, uppercase letters, slanted slightly upwards from left to right.

# Beall's List of Predatory Open Access Publishers

## Google: Beall's List

### BEALL'S LIST OF PREDATORY JOURNALS AND PUBLISHERS

[PUBLISHERS](#)
[STANDALONE JOURNALS](#)
[CONTACT](#)
[OTHER](#)
[THINK CHECK SUBMIT](#)
 Search for publishers (name or URL)

#### Potential predatory scholarly open-access publishers

**Instructions:** firstly, find the journal's publisher – it is usually written at the bottom of journal's webpage or in the "About" section. Then simply enter the publisher's name or its URL in the search box above. If the journal does not have a publisher use the [Standalone Journals](#) list.

#### Original list

This is an archived version of the Beall's list – a list of potential predatory publishers created by a librarian [Jeffrey Beall](#). We will only update links and add notes to this list. A list of new predatory publishers is available below the original one.

- [1088 Email Press](#)
- [2425 Publishers](#)
- [The 5th Publisher](#)
- [ABC Journals](#)
- [A M Publishers](#)
- [Abhinav](#)
- [Academe Research Journals](#)
- [Academia Publishing](#)
- [Academia Research](#)
- [Academia Scholarly Journals \(ASJ\)](#)
- [Academic and Business Research Institute](#)

#### Other important lists

[List of journals falsely claiming to be indexed by DOAJ](#)

[DOAJ: Journals added and removed](#)

[JCR Master Journal List](#)

[Questionable conferences](#)

[How to avoid predatory conferences](#)

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[Journal Evaluation Tool](#)

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#### News



## What's in a name?

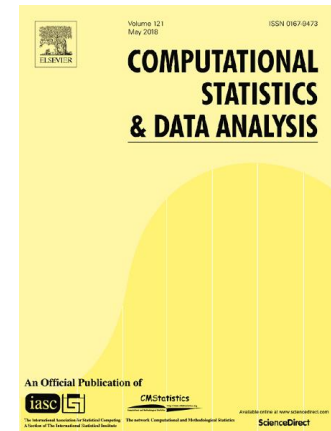
- Biosensors and Bioelectronics vs. Journal of Biosensors and Bioelectronics
- Biosensors and Bioelectronics (Impact Factor: 7.780)
- **Journal of** Biosensors and Bioelectronics (**Impact Factor: 0.620**)





# Select the best journal for submission

- Look at your references – these should help you narrow your choices.



- Scrucca, L., 2010. Dimension reduction for model-based clustering. *Statistics and Computing* 20 (4), 471–484.
- Spearman, C., 1904. The proof and measurement of association between two things. *American Journal of Psychology* 15, 72–101.
- Steiner, P.M., Hudec, M., 2007. Classification of large data sets with mixture models via sufficient em. *Computational Statistics and Data Analysis* 51 (11), 5416–5428.
- Tipping, M.E., Bishop, C.M., 1997. Probabilistic principal component analysis. Technical Report NCRG-97-010, Neural Computing Research Group, Aston University.
- Tipping, M.E., Bishop, C.M., 1999. Mixtures of probabilistic principal component analysers. *Neural Computation* 11 (2), 443–482.
- Tran, T.N., Wehrens, R., Buydens, L.M.C., 2006. Knn-kernel density-based clustering for high-dimensional multivariate data. *Computational Statistics and Data Analysis* 51 (2), 513–525.
- Tritchler, D., Fallah, S., Beyene, J., 2005. A spectral clustering method for microarray data. *Computational Statistics and Data Analysis* 49 (1), 63–76.
- Venables, W.N., Ripley, B.D., 2002. *Modern Applied Statistics with S*. Springer.
- Virolli, C., 2010a. The hmfa function for the R software. [http://www2.stat.unibo.it/virolli/Cinzia\\_Virolli/Software\\_Data.html](http://www2.stat.unibo.it/virolli/Cinzia_Virolli/Software_Data.html).
- Virolli, C., 2010b. The mmfa function for the R software. [http://www2.stat.unibo.it/virolli/Software/MFMA\\_1.0.tar.gz](http://www2.stat.unibo.it/virolli/Software/MFMA_1.0.tar.gz).
- von Borries, G., Wang, H., 2009. Partition clustering of high dimensional low sample size data based on p-values. *Computational Statistics and Data Analysis* 53 (12), 3987–3998.
- Vrbik, I., McNicholas, P.D., 2012. Analytic calculations for the EM algorithm for multivariate skew-t mixture models. *Statistics & Probability Letters* 82, 1169–1174.
- Wang, S., Zhou, J., 2008. Variable selection for model-based high dimensional clustering and its application to microarray data. *Biometrics* 64, 440–448.
- Ward, J.H., 1963. Hierarchical groupings to optimize an objective function. *Journal of the American Statistical Association* 58, 234–244.

# Journal Home Pages



ISSN: 0378-3758

## Journal of Statistical Planning and Inference

> Supports Open Access

Executive Editors: [H. Dette](#), [W.-L. Loh](#), [S. G. Walker](#)

> View Editorial Board

Submit Your Paper



View Articles



Guide for Authors



Abstracting/ Indexing

Track Your Paper



Order Journal



Journal Metrics



CiteScore: **0.87**



More about CiteScore



Impact Factor: **0.858**



5-Year Impact Factor: **0.925**



For more information on our journals visit: <http://www.elsevier.com/mathematics>

The *Journal of Statistical Planning and Inference* offers itself as a multifaceted and all-inclusive bridge between classical aspects of **statistics** and **probability**, and the emerging interdisciplinary aspects that have a potential of revolutionizing the subject. While we maintain our traditional strength in **statistical inference**, design, classical probability, and large sample methods, we also have a far more inclusive and broadened scope to keep up with the new problems that confront us as statisticians, mathematicians, and scientists.

We publish high quality articles in all branches of statistics, probability, **discrete mathematics**, **machine learning**, and **bioinformatics**. We also especially welcome well written and up to date review articles on fundamental themes of statistics, probability, machine learning, and general **biostatistics**. Thoughtful letters to the editors, interesting problems in need of a solution, and short notes carrying an element of elegance or beauty are equally welcome.

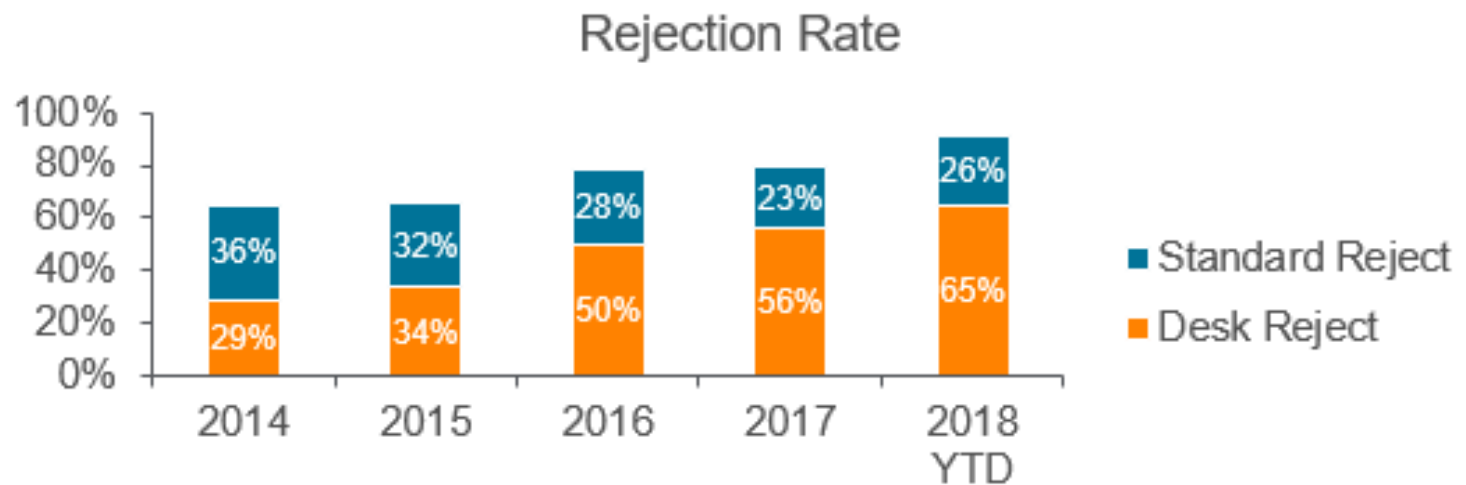
We want to serve as the broadest international platform for high quality research on every aspect of our field, traditional and cutting edge. The quality and the breadth of our [editorial board](#) reflects that singular priority.

[Hide full Aims & Scope](#)

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[Random matrix theory in statistics: A review](#) [Debashis Paul](#) | [Alexander Aue](#)

## Will it happen to you?

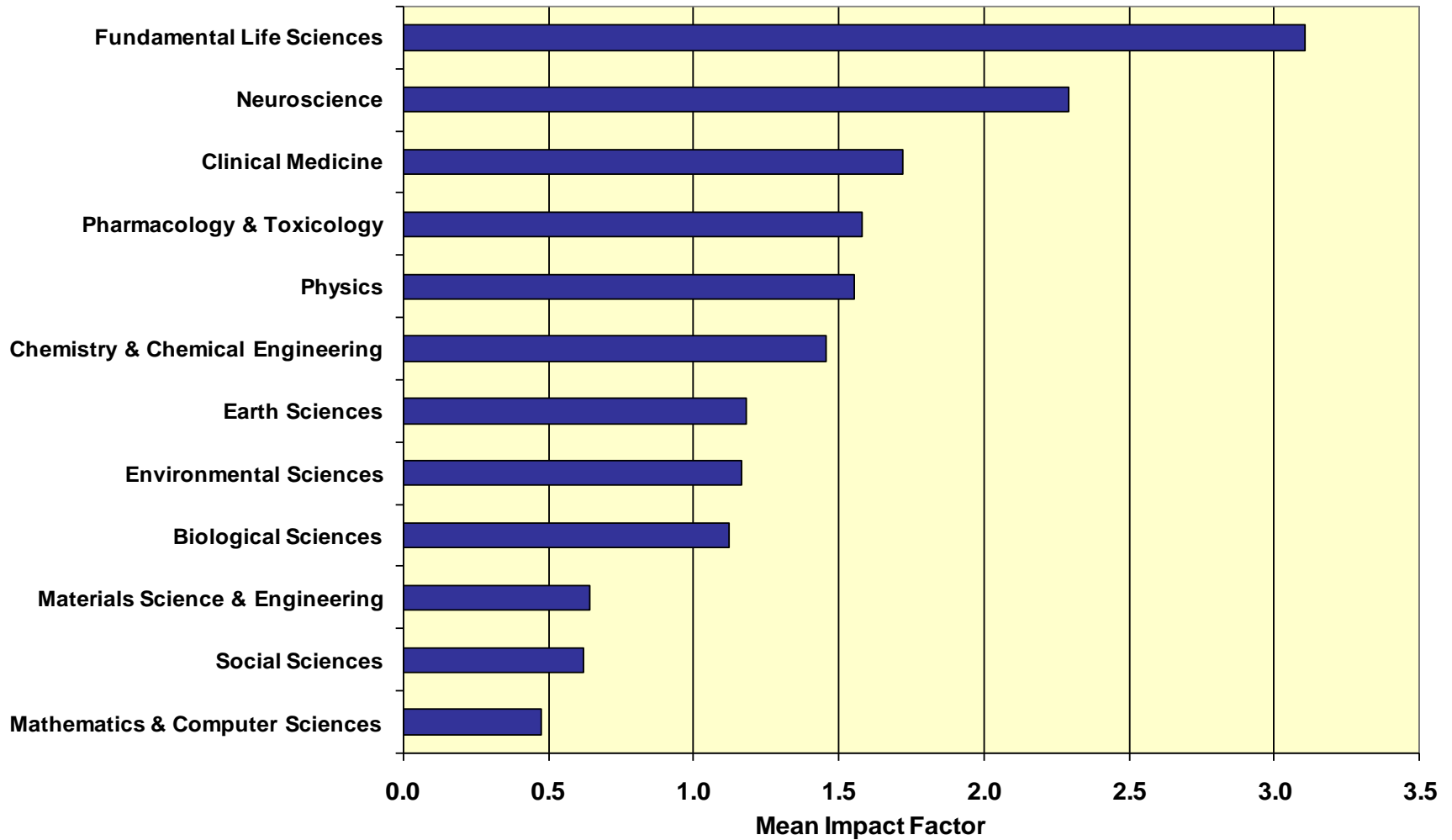


## What is the Impact Factor (IF)?

- The average annual number of citations per article published
- For example, the 2016 impact factor for a journal is calculated as follows:
- A = the number of times articles published in 2014 and 2015 were cited in indexed journals during 2016. Let's say **600 citations**.
- B = the number of "citable items" (usually articles, reviews, proceedings or notes; not editorials and letters-to-the-Editor) published in 2014 and 2015. Let's say **150** per year.
- 2016 impact factor =  $A/B$
- e.g. **600 citations** = 2.000  
**150 + 150 articles**



# Influences on Impact Factors: Subject Area



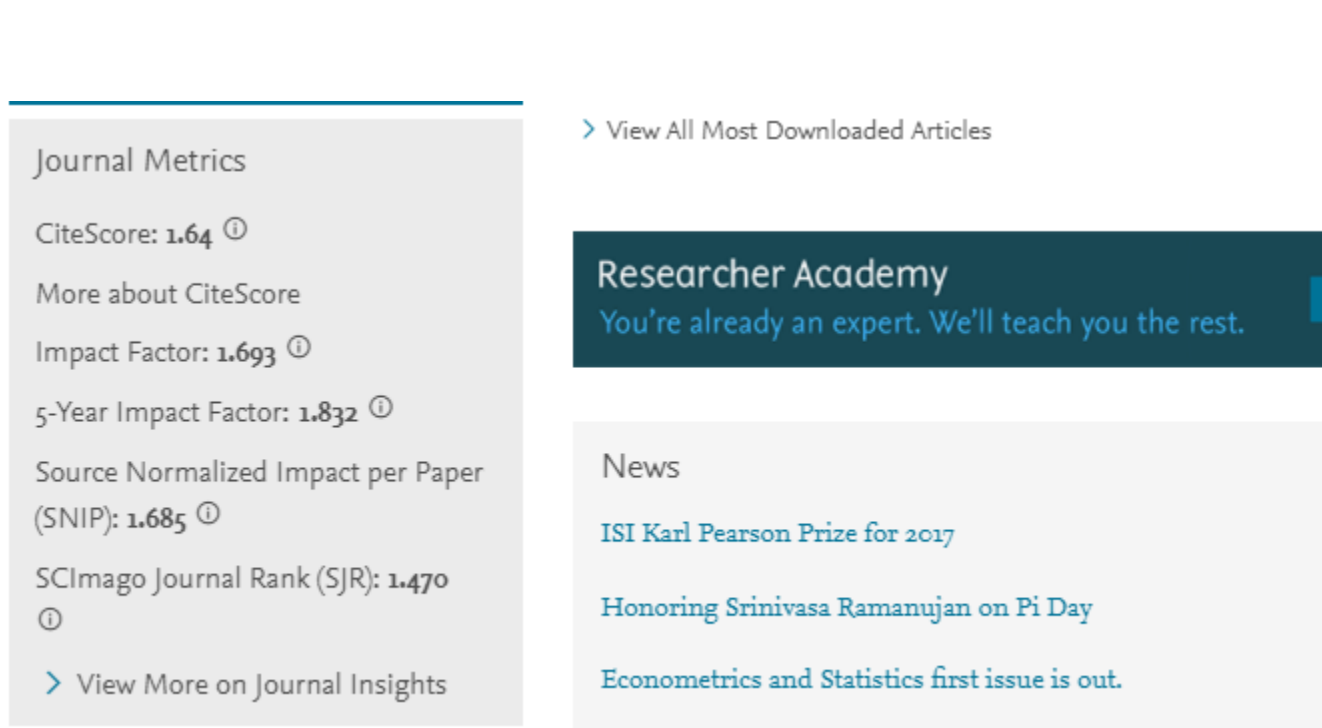
# CiteScore

CiteScore: a simple metric for all Scopus serial titles



CiteScore	Impact Factor
A = citations to 3 years of documents	A = citations to 2 or 5 years of documents
B = all documents indexed in Scopus	B = only citable items (articles and reviews)

# Metrics should be available on Journal Home Pages



The screenshot displays a journal's home page layout. On the left, a grey sidebar titled 'Journal Metrics' lists several performance indicators: CiteScore (1.64), Impact Factor (1.693), 5-Year Impact Factor (1.832), Source Normalized Impact per Paper (SNIP) (1.685), and SCImago Journal Rank (SJR) (1.470). Each metric is accompanied by an information icon. A link to 'View More on Journal Insights' is at the bottom of the sidebar. To the right of the sidebar, a link to 'View All Most Downloaded Articles' is visible. Below this, a dark teal banner for 'Researcher Academy' features the tagline 'You're already an expert. We'll teach you the rest.' and a small 's' icon. At the bottom right, a 'News' section lists three items: 'ISI Karl Pearson Prize for 2017', 'Honoring Srinivasa Ramanujan on Pi Day', and 'Econometrics and Statistics first issue is out.'.

Journal Metrics

CiteScore: 1.64 ⓘ

More about CiteScore

Impact Factor: 1.693 ⓘ

5-Year Impact Factor: 1.832 ⓘ

Source Normalized Impact per Paper (SNIP): 1.685 ⓘ

SCImago Journal Rank (SJR): 1.470 ⓘ

> View More on Journal Insights

> View All Most Downloaded Articles

**Researcher Academy**  
You're already an expert. We'll teach you the rest. s

News

ISI Karl Pearson Prize for 2017

Honoring Srinivasa Ramanujan on Pi Day

Econometrics and Statistics first issue is out.

## Identify the right audience for your paper

- ✓ Identify the sector of readership/community for which a paper is meant
- ✓ Identify the interest of your audience
- ✓ Get advice from your university library team on where to publish
- ✓ Ask your supervisor or colleagues for recommendations





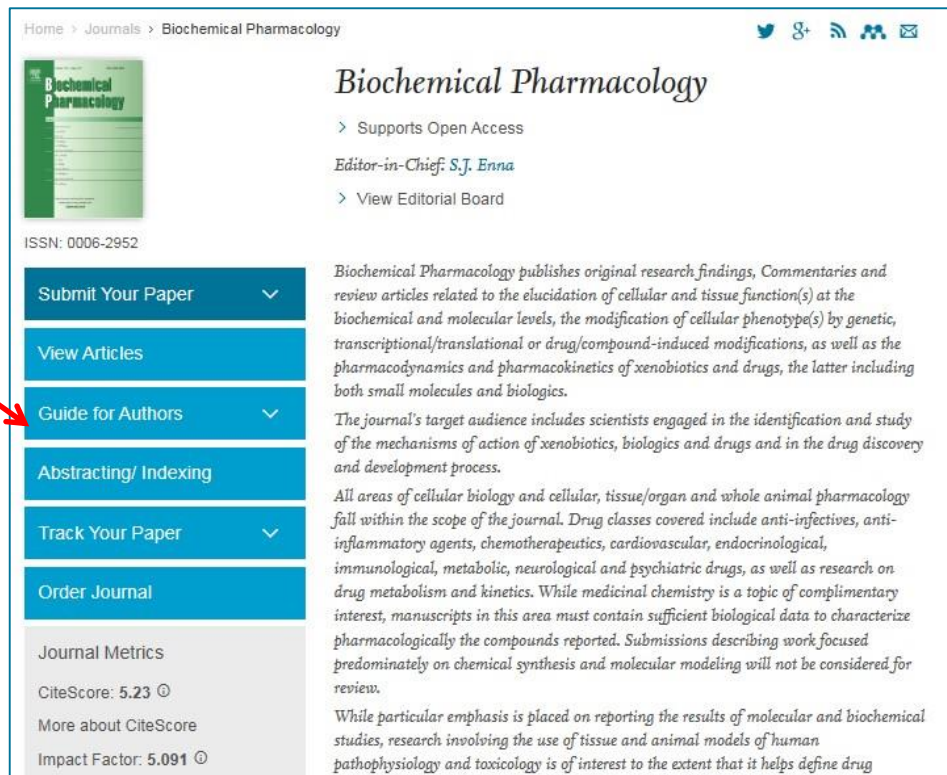
## Your Journals list for this manuscript

**So you now have a list of candidate journals for your manuscript.....**

- ✓ All authors of the submission agree to this list and the sequence of journals
- ✓ Write your draft as if you are going to submit to the first journal on your list. Use its Guide for Authors - these differ per journal
- ✗ **DO NOT gamble by submitting your manuscript to more than one journal at a time.**
  - International ethics standards prohibit multiple/simultaneous submissions, and editors DO find out! (Trust us, they DO!)

## Read the 'Guide to Authors' - Again and again!

- Stick to the Guide for Authors in your manuscript, **even in the first draft** (text layout, nomenclature, figures & tables, references etc.). In the end it will save you time, and also the editor's.
- Editors (and reviewers) do not like wasting time on poorly prepared manuscripts. It is a sign of disrespect.



Home > Journals > Biochemical Pharmacology

**Biochemical Pharmacology**

> Supports Open Access  
Editor-in-Chief: S.J. Enna  
> View Editorial Board

ISSN: 0006-2952

- Submit Your Paper
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- Guide for Authors
- Abstracting/ Indexing
- Track Your Paper
- Order Journal

Journal Metrics  
CiteScore: 5.23  
More about CiteScore  
Impact Factor: 5.091


Biochemical Pharmacology publishes original research findings, Commentaries and review articles related to the elucidation of cellular and tissue function(s) at the biochemical and molecular levels, the modification of cellular phenotype(s) by genetic, transcriptional/translational or drug/compound-induced modifications, as well as the pharmacodynamics and pharmacokinetics of xenobiotics and drugs, the latter including both small molecules and biologics.

The journal's target audience includes scientists engaged in the identification and study of the mechanisms of action of xenobiotics, biologics and drugs and in the drug discovery and development process.

All areas of cellular biology and cellular, tissue/organ and whole animal pharmacology fall within the scope of the journal. Drug classes covered include anti-infectives, anti-inflammatory agents, chemotherapeutics, cardiovascular, endocrinological, immunological, metabolic, neurological and psychiatric drugs, as well as research on drug metabolism and kinetics. While medicinal chemistry is a topic of complimentary interest, manuscripts in this area must contain sufficient biological data to characterize pharmacologically the compounds reported. Submissions describing work focused predominately on chemical synthesis and molecular modeling will not be considered for review.


While particular emphasis is placed on reporting the results of molecular and biochemical studies, research involving the use of tissue and animal models of human pathophysiology and toxicology is of interest to the extent that it helps define drug

# Read the 'Guide to Authors'- Again and again!



[Browse journals](#) > [Biochemical P...](#) > [Guide for auth...](#)

## Guide for Authors

 Author information pack

>

Submit your paper

>

Track your paper

>

Order journal

>

View articles

>

Abstracting

>

Editorial board

**INTRODUCTION**

- Types of papers
- Scientific Checklist

**BEFORE YOU BEGIN**

- Ethics in publishing
- Declaration of interest
- Submission declaration and verification
- Changes to authorship
- Copyright
- Open access
- Submission
- Categories

**PREPARATION**

- Manuscript preparation
- Language
- Use of Word Processing Software
- Article Layout
- Title and Abstract
- Keywords
- Compounds
- Acknowledgments
- Nomenclature and abbreviations
- GenBank
- Footnotes

- Figure Legends
- Tables
- References
- Institutional Email Address
- Graphical Abstract
- Archival Material Requirement
- AudioSlides

**AFTER ACCEPTANCE**

- Online proof correction
- Offprints
- Useful Links

# Common problems with submissions:

An international editor says...

*“The following problems appear **much too frequently**”*

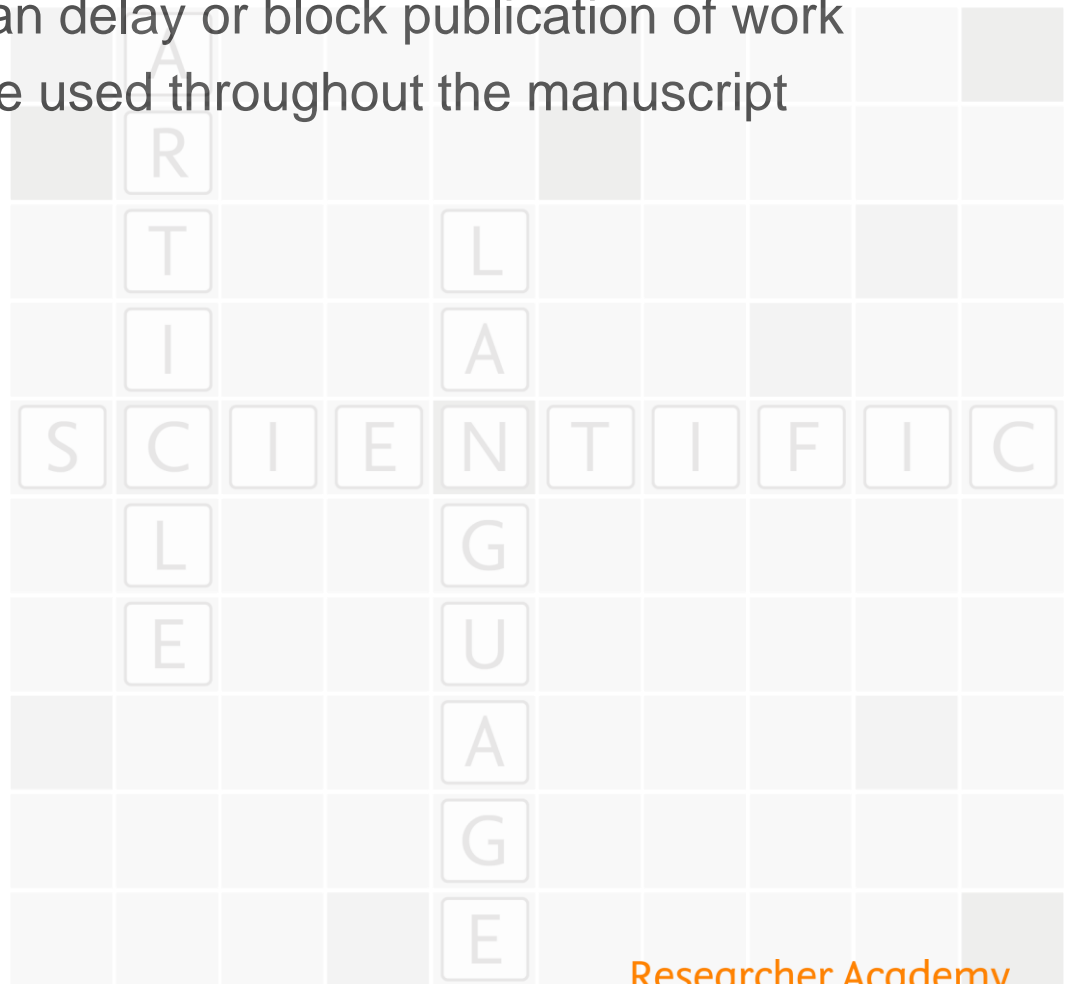
- *Submission of papers which are clearly out of scope*
- *Failure to format the paper according to the Guide for Authors*
- *Inappropriate (or no) suggested reviewers*
- *Inadequate response to reviewers*
- *Inadequate standard of English*
- *Resubmission of rejected manuscripts without revision*

– **Paul Haddad, Editor, *Journal of Chromatography A***

# Using proper scientific language

## Why is language important?

- Poor language quality can delay or block publication of work
- Proper English should be used throughout the manuscript



## Why is language important?

Save your editor and reviewers the trouble of guessing what you mean

### Complaint from an editor:

“[This] paper fell well below my threshold. I refuse to spend time trying to understand what the author is trying to say. Besides, I really want to send a message that they can't submit garbage to us and expect us to fix it.

My rule of thumb is that if there are *more than 6 grammatical errors* in the abstract, then I don't waste my time carefully reading the rest.”

## Manuscript language: Overview

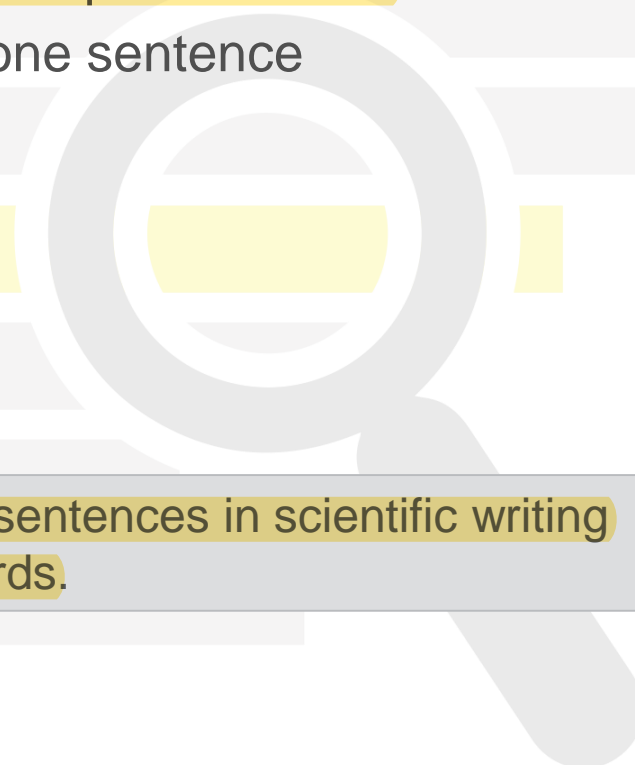
- Clear
- Objective
- Accurate
- Concise

Always read the journal's **Guide for Authors** to check for any additional language specifications.



## Manuscript language: Sentences

- Write direct, short, and factual sentences
- Convey one piece of information per sentence
- Avoid multiple statements in one sentence



The average length of sentences in scientific writing is only about 12-17 words.

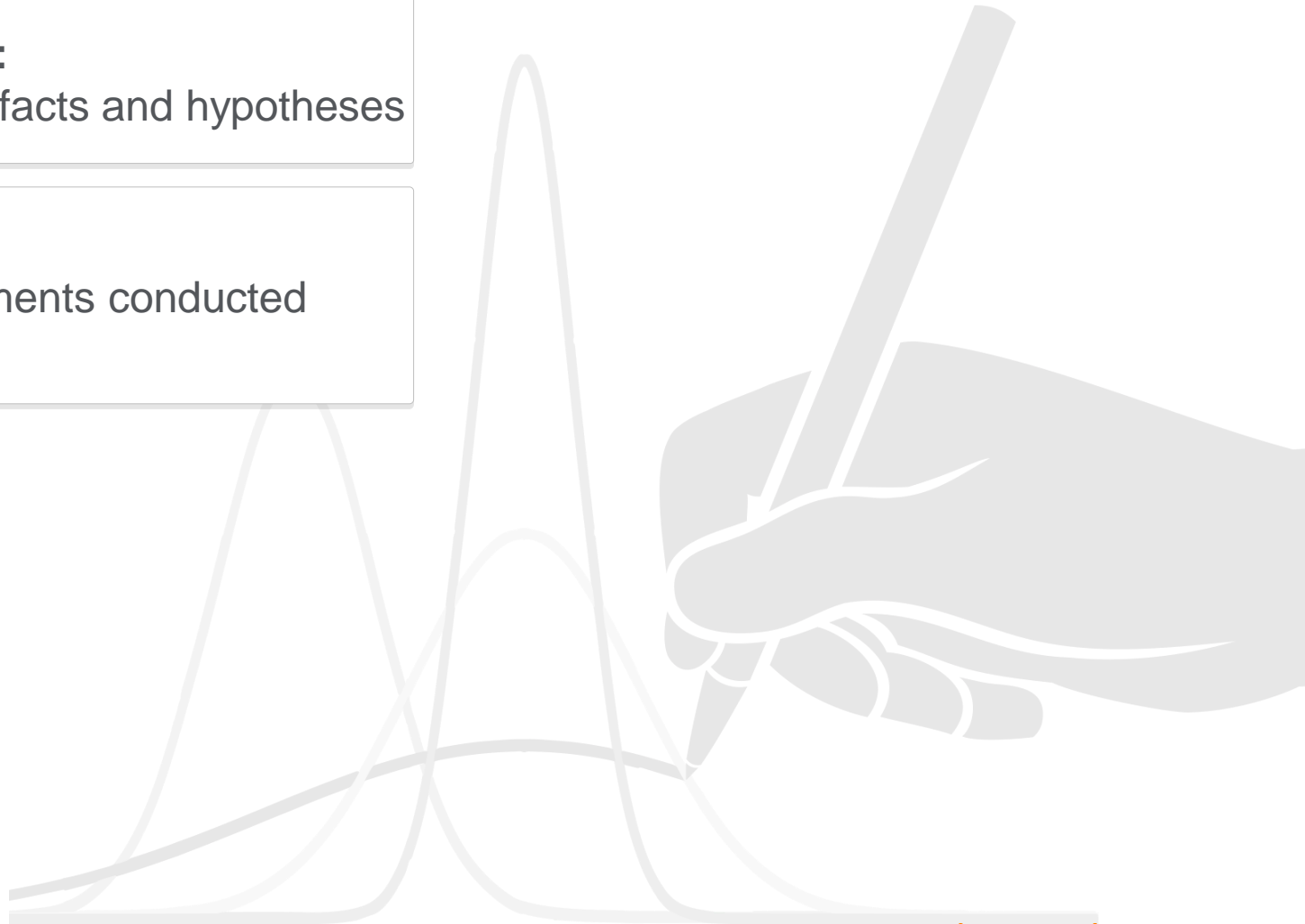
# Manuscript language: Tenses

**Present tense:**

Use for known facts and hypotheses

**Past tense:**

Use for experiments conducted and results



# Structuring your article

# General structure of a research article

- Title
- Abstract
- Keywords
  
- Introduction
- Methods
- Results and Discussion
  
- Conclusion
- Acknowledgements
- References
- Supporting Materials

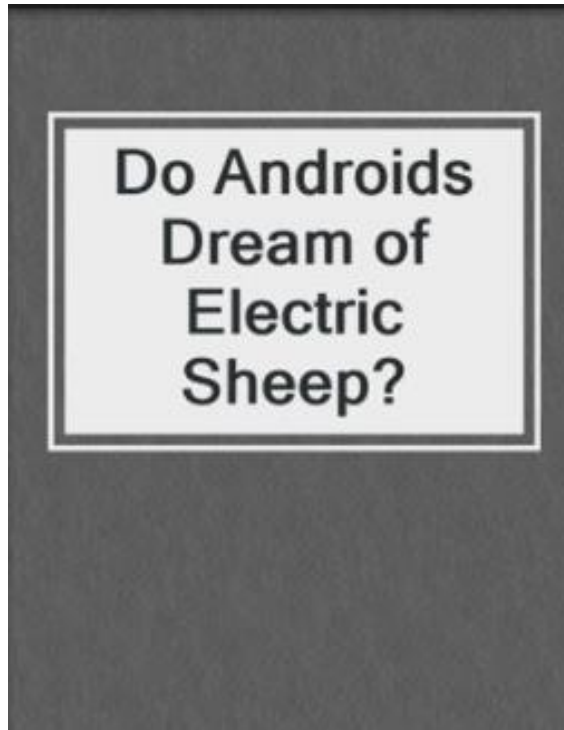
Read the Guide for Authors for the specific criteria of your target journal.

## Effective manuscript titles

- Attract reader's attention
- Contain fewest possible words
- Adequately describe content
- Are informative but concise
- Identify main issue
- Do not use technical jargon and rarely-used abbreviations

Editors and reviewers do not like titles that make no sense or fail to represent the subject matter sufficiently. Additionally, if the title is not accurate, the appropriate audience may not read your paper.

## Different titles – same story



## Authorship

- **Good** listing principle
- ✓ First author
- ✓ Corresponding author

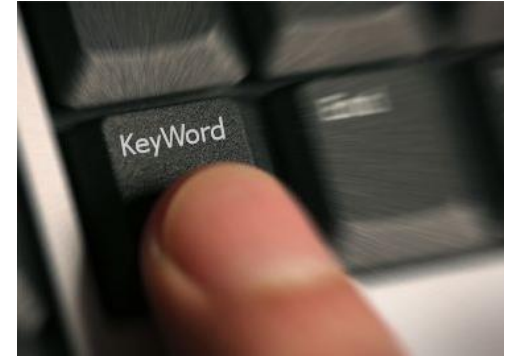
### **Poor** listing procedure

- ✗ Ghost authorship
- ✗ Gift authorship

Be consistent in how you write the authors' names.

## Keywords

**In an “electronic world”, keywords determine whether your article is found or not!**



Avoid making them

- ✗ too general (“drug delivery”, “mouse”, “disease”, etc.)
- ✗ too narrow (so that nobody will ever search for it)

### **Effective approach:**

Look at the keywords of articles relevant to your manuscript

Play with these keywords, and see whether they return relevant papers, neither too many nor too few – a good guideline.



## Abstract

- Tell readers **what you did** and the **important findings**
- **One paragraph (between 50-250 words)** often, plus Highlight bullet points
- **Advertisement** for your article, and should **encourage reading** the entire paper
- A clear abstract will strongly influence if your work is considered further

Graphite intercalation compounds (GICs) of composition  $C_xN(SO_2CF_3)_2 \cdot \delta F$  are prepared under ambient conditions in 48% hydrofluoric acid, using  $K_2MnF_6$  as an oxidizing reagent. The stage 2 GIC product structures are determined using powder XRD and modeled by fitting one dimensional electron density profiles.

A new digestion method followed by selective fluoride electrode elemental analyses allows the determination of free fluoride within products, and the compositional  $x$  and  $\delta$  parameters are determined for reaction times from 0.25 to 500 h.

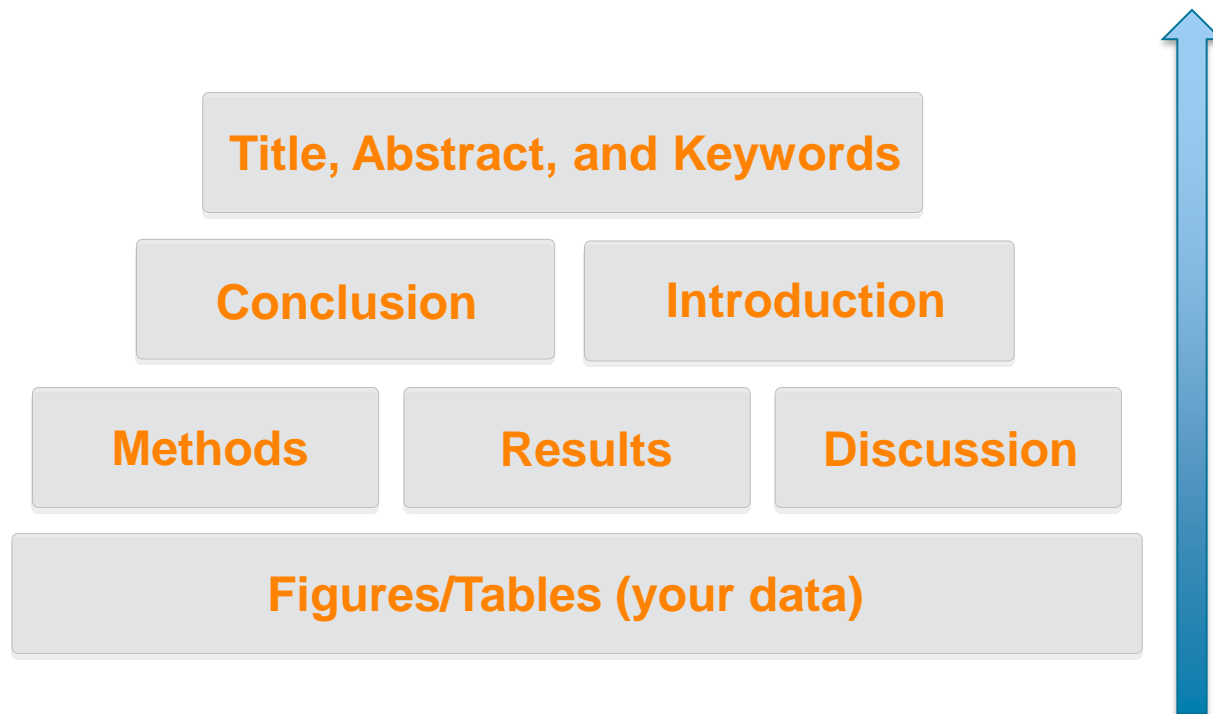
**What has  
been done**

**What are the  
main findings**

## Take your time

Take the time to write the abstract very carefully. Many authors write the abstract **last** so that it accurately **reflects the content of the paper.**

## The process of writing – building the article

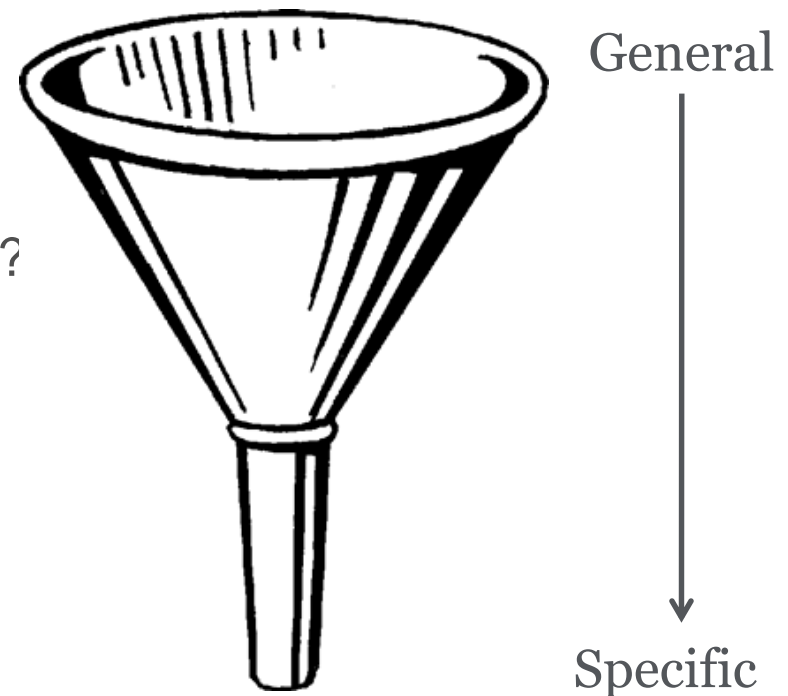


## Introduction

The place to **convince** readers that you know why your work is relevant, also for them.

### Answer a series of questions:

- What is the problem?
- Are there any existing solutions?
- Which one is the best?
- What is its main limitation?
- What do you hope to achieve?



Write a unique introduction for every article. DO NOT reuse introductions.

## Pay attention to the following

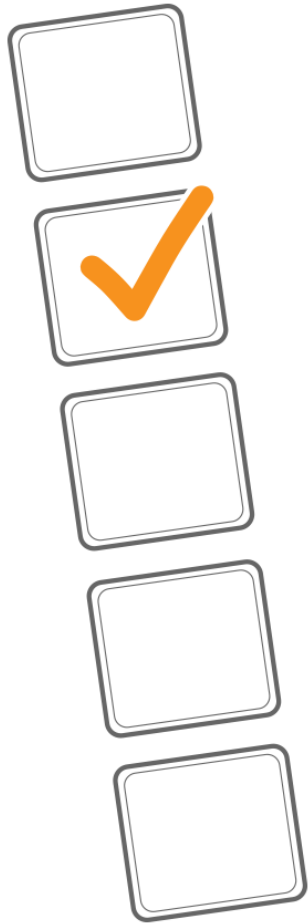
- ✓ Before you present your new data, put them into perspective first
- ✓ Be brief, it is not a history lesson
- ✗ Do not mix introduction, results, discussion and conclusions. Keep them separate
- ✗ Do not overuse expressions such as “novel”, “first time”, “first ever”, etc.
- ✓ Cite only relevant references
  - Otherwise the editor and the reviewer may think you don't have a clue what you are writing about!

## Methods

- Describe **how** the problem was studied
- Include **detailed information**
- Do not describe previously published procedures
- Identify the equipment and materials used

*Reviewers will criticise incomplete or incorrect method descriptions, and may even recommend rejection*

## Methods – ethics committee approval



- Experiments on humans or animals must follow applicable ethics standards
- Approval of the local ethics committee is required and should be specified in the manuscript, covering letter, or the online submission system
- Editors can make their own decisions on ethics

# Results – what have you found?

The following should be included

- ✓ the **main findings**
  - Thus not *all* findings. Decide what to share.
  - Findings from experiments described in the Methods section
- ✓ Highlight findings that **differ** from findings in previous publications, and **unexpected** findings
- ✓ Results of the **statistical analysis**



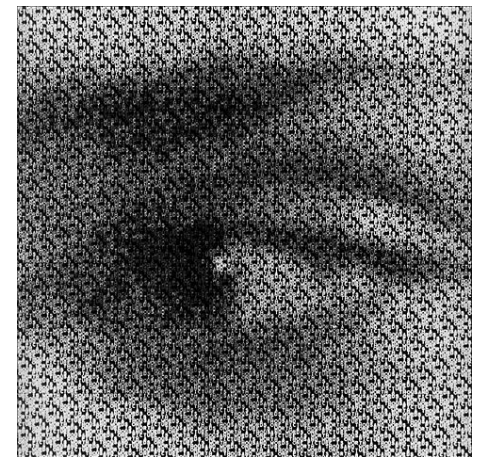


# Results – Figures and tables

## Illustrations are critical, because:

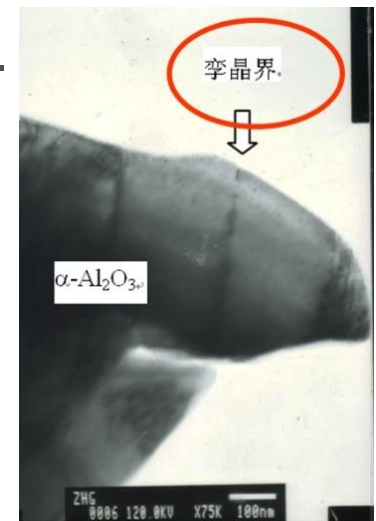
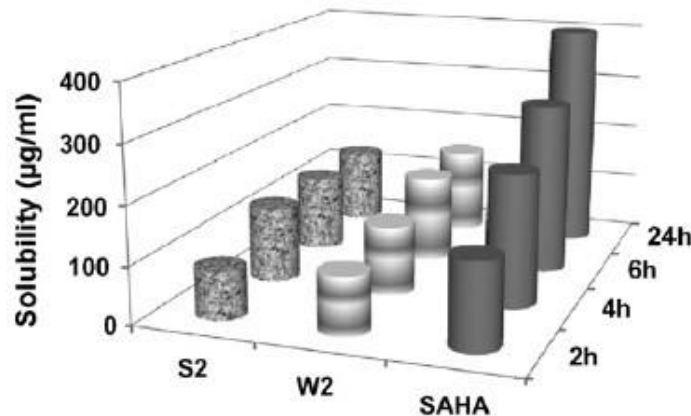
- Figures and tables are the most efficient way to present results
- Results are the driving force of the publication
- Captions and legends must be detailed enough to make figures and tables self-explanatory
- Figures and tables should not need further explanation or description in text. Less writing and less reading. Let your figures do the work instead of words.

*"One Picture is Worth a  
Thousand Words"  
Sue Hanauer (1968)*



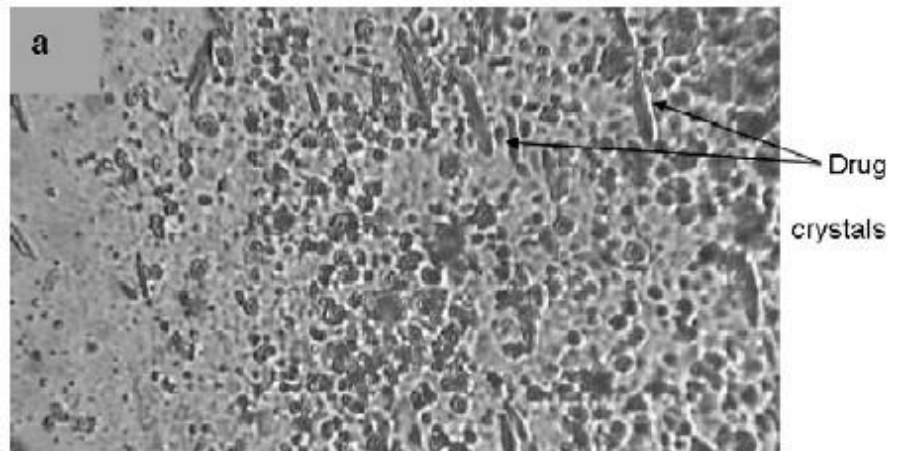
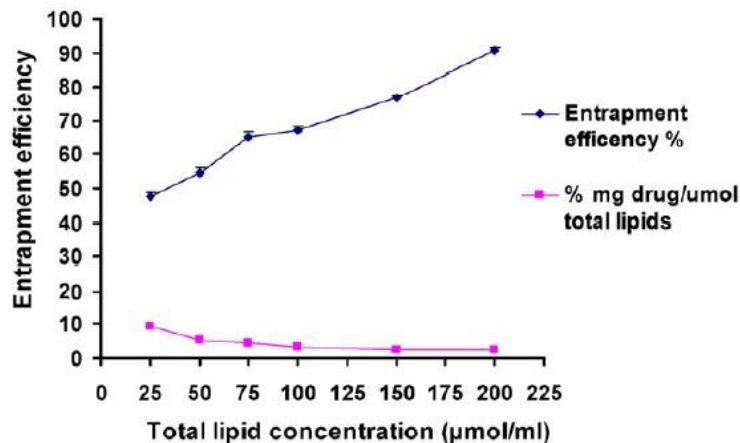
## Results – appearance counts!

- ✓ Un-crowded plots
  - ✓ 3 or 4 data sets per figure; well-selected scales; appropriate axis label size; symbols clear to read; data sets easily distinguishable.
- ✓ Each photograph must have a scale marker of professional quality in a corner.
- ✓ Text in photos / figures in English
  - ✗ Not in French, German, Chinese, Greek, Korean, ...



## Results – appearance counts!

- ✓ Use colour ONLY when necessary.
  - ✗ If different line styles can clarify the meaning, then do not use colours or other thrilling effects.
- ✓ If used, colour must be visible/distinguishable when printed in black & white.
- ✗ Do not include long boring tables!



## Discussion

Interpretation of results

Most important section

Make the discussion correspond to the results and complement them

Compare published results with your own

**Be careful **not** to use the following:**

- Statements that go beyond what the results can support
- Non-specific expressions
- **New terms** not already defined or mentioned in your paper
- Speculations on possible **interpretations based on imagination**

## Conclusion

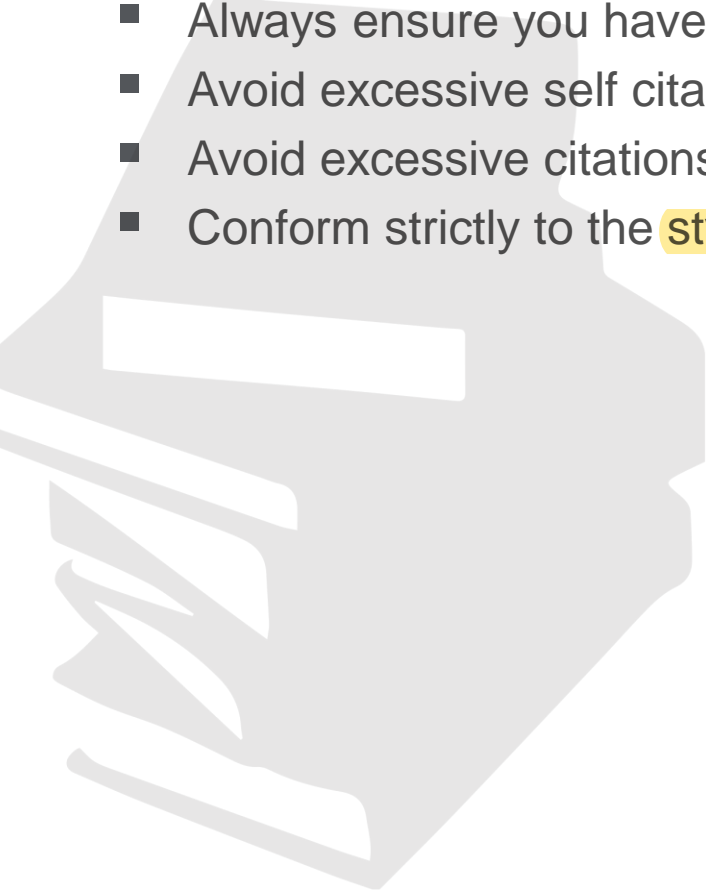
- ✓ Present global and specific conclusions
- ✓ Indicate uses and extensions if appropriate
- ✓ Suggest future experiments and indicate whether they are underway
- ✗ Do not summarise the paper
  - The abstract is for that purpose
- ✗ Avoid judgments about impact
  - Others can comment, you should not.

# Acknowledgments

- Advisors
- Financial supporters and funders
- Proof readers and typists
- Suppliers who may have donated materials

# References

- Do not use too many references
- Always ensure you have fully absorbed the material you are referencing
- Avoid excessive self citations
- Avoid excessive citations of publications from the same region or institute
- Conform strictly to the style given in the Guide for Authors



## Help with your article

- Writing an article is hard work – finding and sorting research, preparing references, sourcing feedback...
- You can get help from Mendeley ([www.mendeley.com](http://www.mendeley.com)), a free reference manager and academic social network.
- The Mendeley Reference Manager generates citations and bibliographies in Word, OpenOffice, and LaTeX.
- You can also use Mendeley to connect with colleagues and securely share papers, notes.
- You can also use Mendeley's social network to identify potential collaborators.



## Cover Letter

- Submitted
- Mention v
- Note spec

Professor H. D. Schmidt  
School of Science and Engineering  
Northeast State University  
College Park, MI 10000  
USA

January 1, 2008

Dear Professor Schmidt,

Enclosed with this letter you will find an electronic submission of a manuscript entitled "Mechano-sorptive creep under compressive loading – a micromechanical model" by John Smith and myself. This is an original paper which has neither previously nor simultaneously in whole or in part been submitted anywhere else. Both authors have read and approved the final version submitted.

Mechano-sorptive is sometimes denoted as accelerated creep. It has been experimentally observed that the creep of paper accelerates if it is subjected to a cyclic moisture content. This is of large practical importance for the paper industry. The present manuscript describes a micromechanical model on the fibre network level that is able to capture the experimentally observed behaviour. In particular, the difference between mechano-sorptive creep in tension and compression is analysed. John Smith is a PhD-student who within a year will present his doctoral thesis. The present paper will be a part of that thesis.

Three potential independent reviewers who have excellent expertise in the field of this paper are:

Dr. Fernandez, Tennessee Tech, [email1@university.com](mailto:email1@university.com)  
Dr. Chen, University of Maine, [email2@university.com](mailto:email2@university.com)  
Dr. Singh, Colorado School of Mines, [email3@university.com](mailto:email3@university.com)

I would very much appreciate if you would consider the manuscript for publication in the *International Journal of Science*.

Sincerely yours,

A. Professor

Final approval from  
all authors

Journal  
(interest)

Explanation of  
importance of research

Suggested reviewers

# Do everything to make your submission a success

- **No one gets it right the first time!**
  - ✓ **Write, and re-write ....**
- **Suggestions**
  - ✓ After writing a first version, **take several days of rest**. Come back with a **critical, fresh view**.
  - ✓ Ask **colleagues** and **supervisor** to review your manuscript. Ask them to be **highly critical**, and ***be open to their suggestions***.
  - ✓ Make **changes** to incorporate comments and suggestions. Get all **co-authors to approve** version to submit.





# The Peer Review Process

## What is peer review?

- Peer review places the reviewer, with the author, at the heart of scientific publishing
- Reviewers make the editorial process work by examining and commenting on manuscripts
- Without peer review there is no control in scientific communication
- Reviewers are the backbone of the whole process

## Why do reviewers review?

- Value from mentoring young researchers
- Enjoyment in reviewing
- General interest in the area
- Awareness of new research and developments before their peers
- Career development
- Help with own research or new ideas
- Association with journals and Editors
- Keep updated with latest developments

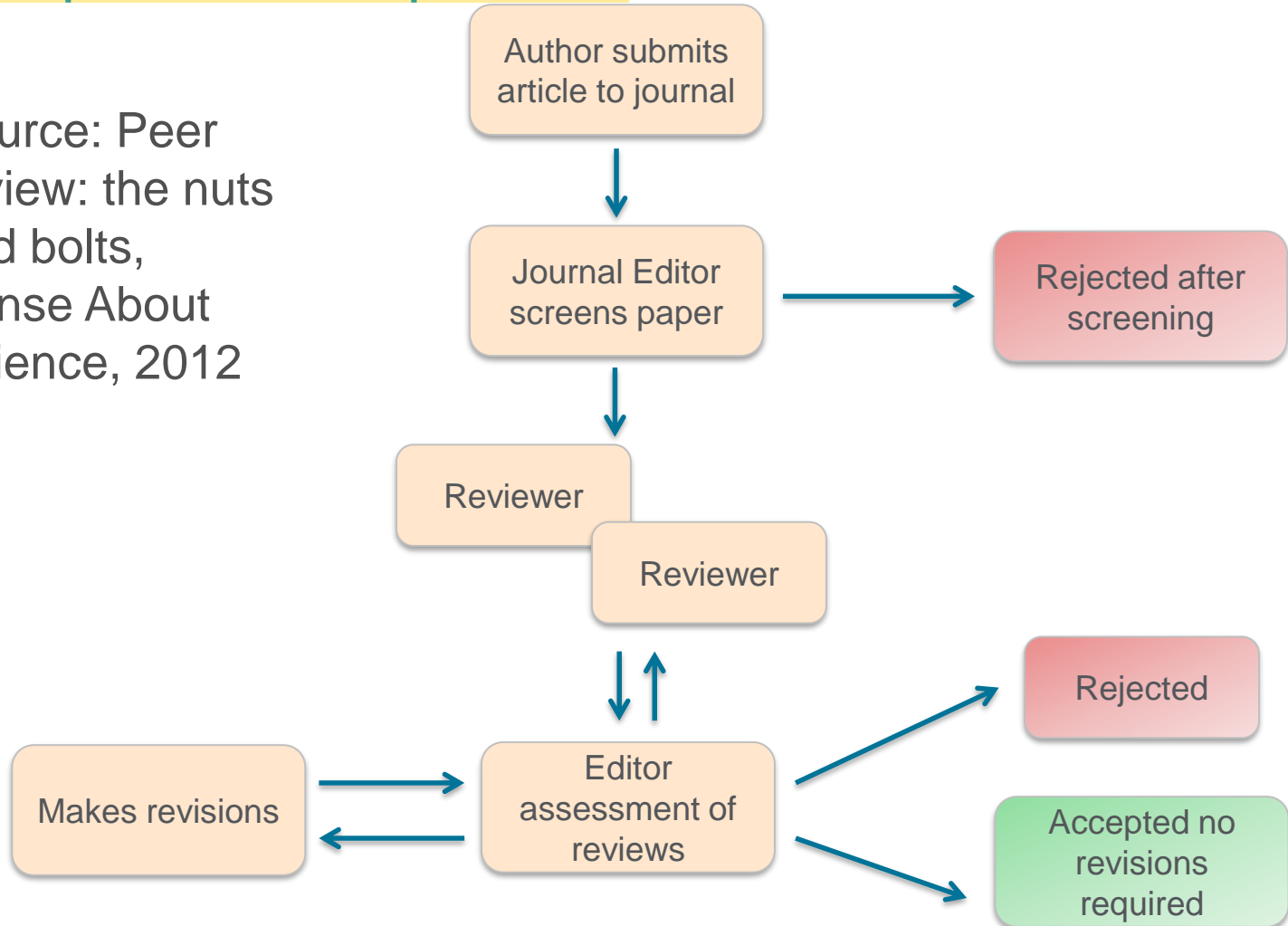
## Purpose of peer review



- Improves **quality** of the published paper
- Ensures previous work is acknowledged
- Determines the importance of findings
- Assesses the **originality** and significance of the work
- Highlights any omissions in the reference list and any **ethics** concerns

## Typical peer-review process

- Source: Peer review: the nuts and bolts, Sense About Science, 2012

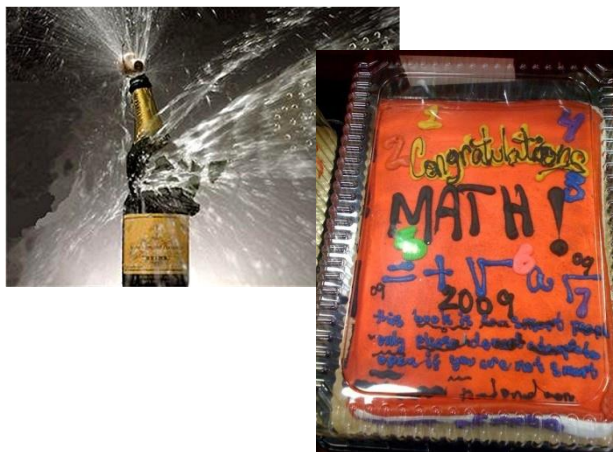




## First Decision: “Accepted” or “Rejected”

### Accepted

- Very rare, but it happens



- Congratulations!
  - Cake for the department
  - Now wait for page proofs and then for your article to be online and in print

### Rejected

- Probability 40-90% ...
- Do not despair
  - It happens to everybody
- Try to understand **WHY**
  - Consider reviewers' advice
  - Be **self-critical**
- If you submit to another journal, begin as if it were a new manuscript
  - **Take advantage of the reviewers' comments** and revise accordingly
  - They may review your manuscript for the next journal too!
  - Read the **Guide for Authors** of the new journal, again and again.

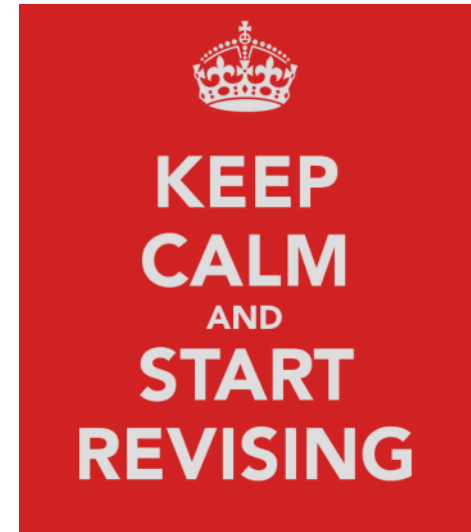


## First Decision: “Major” or “Minor” Revision

- Major revision
  - The manuscript may eventually be published in the journal
  - Significant deficiencies must be corrected before acceptance
  - Usually involves (significant) textual modifications and/or additional experiments
- Minor revision
  - Basically, the manuscript is worth being published
  - Some elements in the manuscript must be clarified, restructured, shortened (often) or expanded (rarely)
  - Textual adaptations
  - “Minor revision” does NOT guarantee acceptance after revision, but often it is accepted if all points are addressed!

## First steps

- **Once you get your paper back.....**
- Stay calm
- Read the comments
- Re-read the comments
- Get someone else to read the comments
- Take a break
- Make a table that details every comment and the changes required



# Responding to comments

- Deal with minor comments first
- Deal with major comments
- Begin drafting response letter
- Golden Rules:
  - Be polite
  - Be thorough
  - Answer with evidence



## Be polite

- Reviewers do this for free
- Encourages good feeling
- Makes a good impression
- Especially important if you disagree with reviewers
- Don't use harsh language or sweeping statements



## Useful phrases

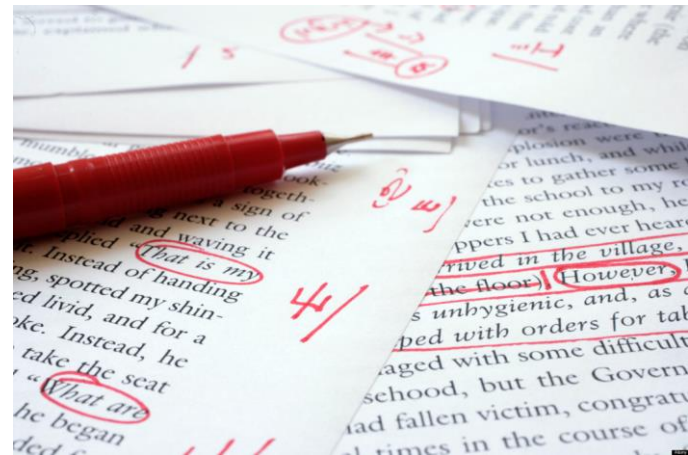
- We agree with the referee that ..., **but**
- The referee is right to point out ..., yet
- Whilst we agree with the referee that.....
- It is true that ..., but
- We acknowledge that our paper might have been...., but
- We too were disappointed by the low response rate...
- We agree that this is an important area that requires further research.....
- We support the referee's assertion that ...., although



Taken from H.C. Williams (2004) *“How to reply to referee’s comments when submitting manuscripts for publication”*, Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology 51, 71-83.

# Be thorough

- Address every comment
- Do not ignore any comments
- Makes a good impression
- Clarity and structure
- Take your time



## Answer with evidence

- Especially when disagreeing
- Provide extra data
- Add information to your article





# Response letters

- Addressed to Editors and reviewers
- Include manuscript title and ID
- Summarize
- Address disagreements
- Be polite



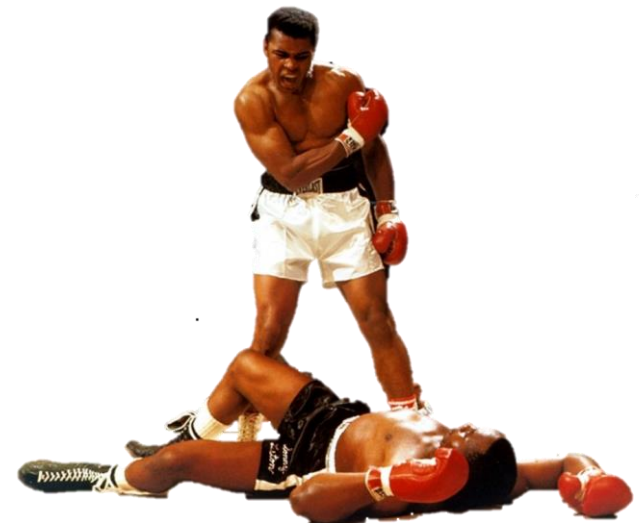
## Specific Scenarios

- Two reviewers disagree
- The reviewer is wrong
- Comments you don't understand
- Rude reviewers
- Resubmit or go elsewhere?



## Two reviewers disagree

- Happens often, but why?
- Ask the Editor
- Don't use as an opportunity to play reviewers off
- Don't go for the middle ground



# The reviewer is wrong

- Can happen, but why?
- Not all reviewers are equal
- Don't agree with them
- Use the Editor as the judge
- Be polite
- Don't presume you are right



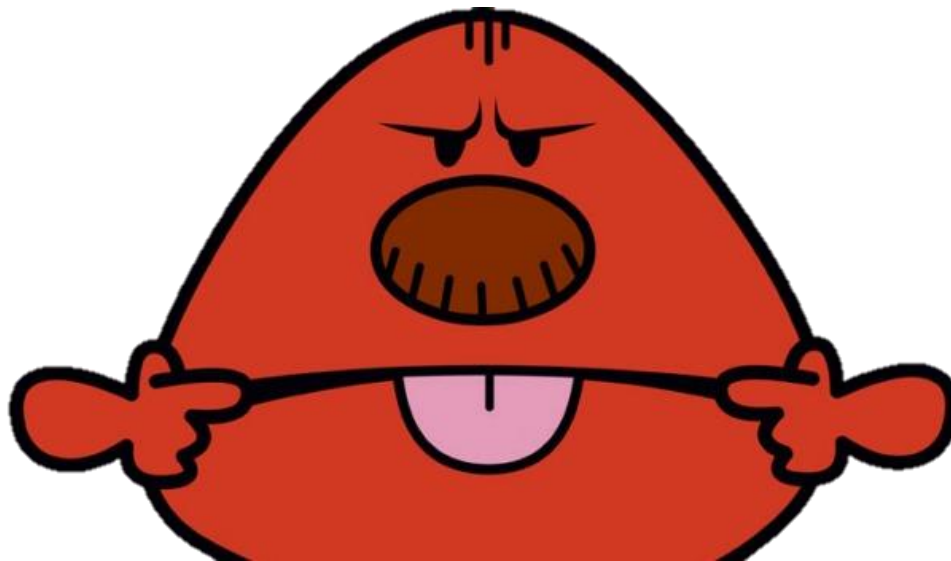
# Comments you don't understand

Ask



# Rude reviewers

- Sadly quite common
- Rudeness or sensitivity?
- Take criticism on board
- **Contact the Editor**



## Resubmit or go elsewhere?

- Never submit the same version of the article elsewhere
- Always use the reviewers comments



# Manuscript Revision

- Prepare a detailed Response Letter
  - ✓ Copy-paste each reviewer comment, and type your response below it
  - ✓ State specifically which changes you have made to the manuscript
    - ✓ Include page/line numbers
    - ✗ No general statements like “Comment accepted, and Discussion changed accordingly.”
  - ✓ Provide a *scientific* response to comments to accept, .....
  - ✓ ..... or a convincing, solid and polite rebuttal when you feel the reviewer was wrong.
  - ✓ Write in such a manner, that your response can be forwarded to the reviewer without prior editing
- Do not do yourself a disfavour, but cherish your work
  - You spent **weeks** and **months** in the lab or the library to do the research

*.....Why then run the risk of avoidable rejection by not taking manuscript revision seriously?*



# Increasing the likelihood of acceptance

**All these various steps are not difficult.**

- ✓ You have to be consistent.
- ✓ You have to check and recheck before submitting.
- ✓ Make sure you tell a logical, clear, story about your findings.
- ✓ Especially, take note of referees' comments. They improve your paper.

*This should increase the likelihood of your paper being accepted, and being in the 30% (accepted) not the 70% (rejected) group!*

## What leads to acceptance ?

- ✓ Attention to details
- ✓ Check and double check your work
- ✓ Consider the reviewers' comments
- ✓ English must be as good as possible
- ✓ Presentation is important
- ✓ Take your time with revision
- ✓ Acknowledge those who have helped you
- ✓ New, original and previously unpublished
- ✓ Critically evaluate your own manuscript
- ✓ Ethical rules must be obeyed

– Nigel John Cook  
Editor-in-Chief, *Ore Geology Reviews*

# Publication Ethics

## Author Responsibilities

As authors you have lots of rights and privileges, but also you have the responsibility to be ethical.

## Ethics Issues in Publishing

### Scientific misconduct

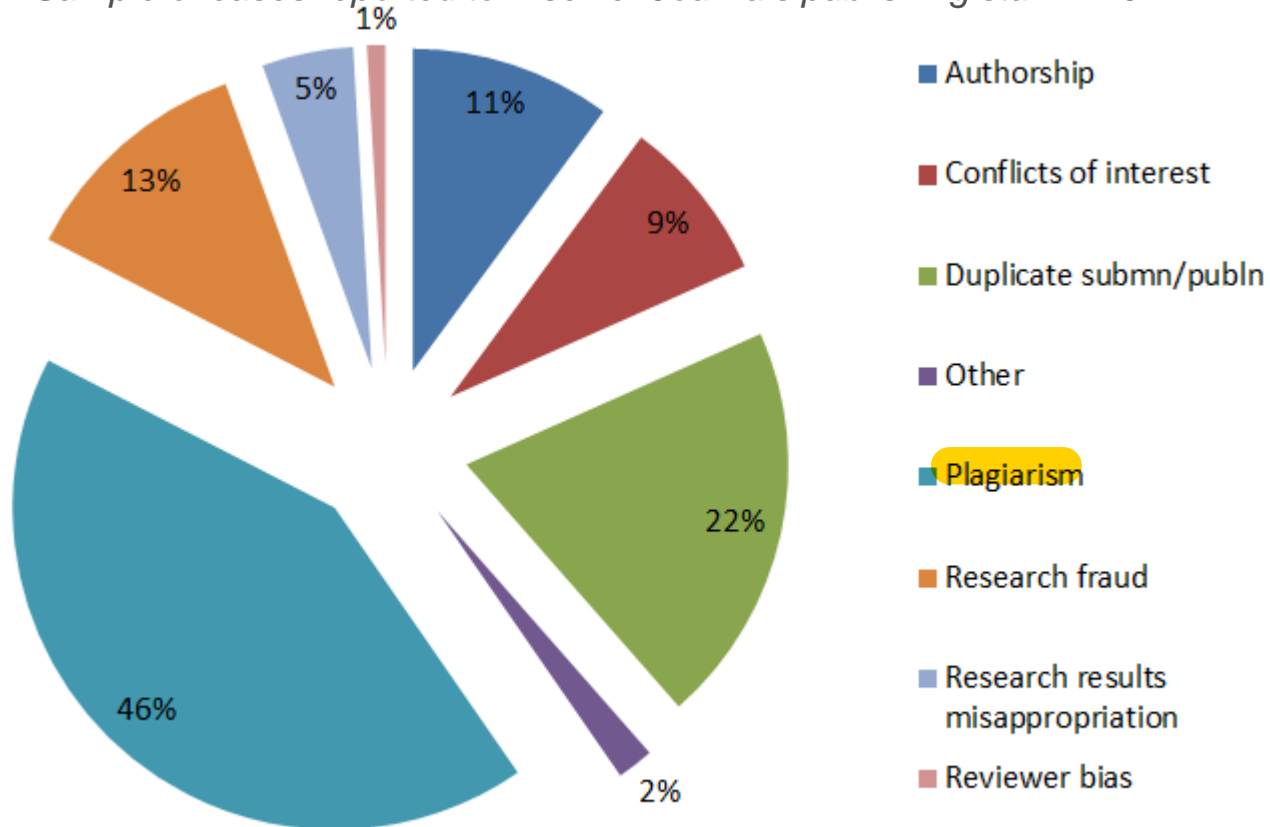
- Falsification of results or images

### Publication misconduct

- Plagiarism
  - Different forms / severities
  - The paper must be original to the authors
- Duplicate publication
- Duplicate submission
- Appropriate acknowledgement of prior research and researchers
- Appropriate identification of all co-authors

# Plagiarism high amongst ethics issues

*Sample of cases reported to Elsevier Journals publishing staff in 2012*



# Plagiarism

- A short-cut to **long-term consequences!**
- Plagiarism is considered a serious offense by your institute, by journal editors, and by the scientific community as a whole.
- Plagiarism will certainly cause rejection of your paper.
- Plagiarism will hurt your reputation in the scientific community.



## Plagiarism Detection Tools

- Huge database of 30+ million articles, from 50,000+ journals, from 400+ publishers
- Software alerts Editors to any similarities between the article and this huge database of published articles
- Many Elsevier journals now check every submitted article using CrossCheck





## Publication ethics – Self-plagiarism

# 2003

[illegible]

Fig. 1. Schematic representation of the organization of the *hsp70* gene. The gene is organized into 11 exons (numbered 1 to 11) and 10 introns (numbered 1 to 10). The exons are represented by boxes and the introns by lines. The size of the exons and introns is indicated in base pairs (bp) in parentheses. The size of the gene is indicated in base pairs (bp) in parentheses.

12. The following are the components of the cost of capital:

1. 下列各句，加粗的词语使用不恰当的一项是（3分）

(A) 他**不假思索**地站了起来，向主席台走去。

(B) 他**不假思索**地站了起来，向主席台走去。

(C) 他**不假思索**地站了起来，向主席台走去。

(D) 他**不假思索**地站了起来，向主席台走去。

[illegible]

12. **Answer: D** The patient has a low-grade fever, malaise, and myalgias. The patient has a recent history of contact with a patient with a similar illness. The patient has a recent history of contact with a patient with a similar illness. The patient has a recent history of contact with a patient with a similar illness.

10.  $\frac{1}{2}$   
 11.  $\frac{1}{2}$   
 12.  $\frac{1}{2}$   
 13.  $\frac{1}{2}$   
 14.  $\frac{1}{2}$   
 15.  $\frac{1}{2}$   
 16.  $\frac{1}{2}$   
 17.  $\frac{1}{2}$   
 18.  $\frac{1}{2}$   
 19.  $\frac{1}{2}$   
 20.  $\frac{1}{2}$

1000

[illegible]

---

[illegible][illegible]

# 2004

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Same colour  
left and right  
=  
Same text



doi:10.1016/j.sigpro.2005.07.019 ? Cite or Link Using DOI

Copyright © 2005 Elsevier B.V. All rights reserved.

**RETRACTED: Matching pursuit-based approach**

Available online 24 August 2005.

This article has been retracted at the request of the Editor-in-Chief and Publisher of *Signal Processing*.  
<http://www.elsevier.com/locate/withdrawalpolicy>.

Reason: This article is virtually identical to the previously published article "A matching pursuit-based approach for SNR improvement in ultrasonic NDT", *Independent Nondestructive Evaluation*, volume 38 (2005) 453 – 458 authored by M. F. ...

An article in which the authors committed plagiarism: it will not be removed from ScienceDirect ever. Everybody who downloads it will see the reason for the retraction...

the echoes issuing from the flaws to be detected. Therefore, it cannot be cancelled by classical time averaging or matched band-pass filtering techniques.

Many signal processing techniques have been utilized for signal-to-noise ratio (SNR) improvement in ultrasonic NDT of highly scattering materials. The most popular one is the split spectrum processing (SSP) [1–3], because it makes possible real-time ultrasonic test for industrial applications, providing quite good results. Alternatively to SSP, wavelet transform (WT) based denoising/detection methods have been proposed during recent years [4–8], yielding usually to higher improvements of SNR at the expense of an increase in complexity. Adaptive time-frequency analysis by basis pursuit (BP) [9,10] is a recent technique for decomposing a signal into an optimal superposition of elements in an over-complete waveform dictionary. This technique and some other related techniques have been successfully applied to denoising ultrasonic signals contaminated with grain noise in highly scattering materials [11,12], as an alternative to the WT technique, the computational cost of the BP algorithm being the main drawback.

In this paper, we propose a novel matching pursuit-based signal processing method for improving SNR in ultrasonic NDT of highly scattering materials, such as steel and composites. Matching pursuit is used instead of BP to reduce the complexity. Despite its iterative nature, the method is fast enough to be real-time implemented. The performance of the proposed method has been evaluated using both computer simulation and experimental results, when the input SNR (SNR<sub>in</sub>) is lower than 0 dB (the level of echo from the microstructures is above the level of the echoes).

## 2. Matching pursuit

Matching pursuit was introduced by Mallat and Zhang [13]. Let us suppose an approximation of the ultrasonic backscattered signals  $x[n]$  as a linear expansion in terms of functions  $g_i[n]$  chosen from an over-complete dictionary. Let  $H$  be a Hilbert

space. We define the over-complete dictionary as a family  $D = \{g_i; i = 0, 1, \dots, L\}$  of vectors in  $H$ , such as  $\|g_i\| = 1$ .

The problem of choosing functions  $g_i[n]$  that best approximate the analysed signal  $x[n]$  is computationally very complex. Matching pursuit is an iterative algorithm that offers sub-optimal solutions for decomposing signals in terms of expansion functions chosen from a dictionary, where  $\ell^2$  norm is used as the approximation metric because of its mathematical convenience. When a well-designed dictionary is used in matching pursuit, the non-linear nature of the algorithm leads to compact adaptive model.

In each step of the iterative procedure, vector  $g_i[n]$  which gives the largest inner product with the analysed signal is chosen. The contribution of this vector is then subtracted from the signal and the process is repeated on the residual. At the  $m$ th iteration the residue is

$$r^m[n] = \begin{cases} x[n] & m = 0, \\ r^{m-1}[n] + a_{km} g_{km}[n], & m \neq 0, \end{cases} \quad (1)$$

where  $a_{km}$  is the weight associated to optimum atom  $g_{km}[n]$  at the  $m$ th iteration.

The weight  $a_i^m$  associated to each atom  $g_i[n] \in D$  at the  $m$ th iteration is introduced to compute all the inner products with the residual  $r^m[n]$ :

$$\begin{aligned} a_i^m &= \frac{\langle r^m[n], g_i[n] \rangle}{\langle g_i[n], g_i[n] \rangle} = \frac{\langle r^m[n], g_i[n] \rangle}{\|g_i[n]\|^2} \\ &= \langle r^m[n], g_i[n] \rangle. \end{aligned} \quad (2)$$

The optimum atom  $g_{km}[n]$  (and its weight  $a_{km}$ ) at the  $m$ th iteration are obtained as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} g_{km}[n] &= \arg \min_{g_i[n] \in D} \|\langle r^m[n], g_i[n] \rangle\|^2 \\ &= \arg \max_{g_i[n] \in D} |a_i^m|^2 = \arg \max_{g_i[n] \in D} |a_i^m|. \end{aligned} \quad (3)$$

The computation of correlations  $\langle r^m[n], g_i[n] \rangle$  for all vectors  $g_i[n]$  at each iteration implies a high computational effort, which can be substantially reduced using an updating procedure derived from Eq. (1). The correlation updating procedure [13] is performed as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} \langle r^{m+1}[n], g_i[n] \rangle &= \langle r^m[n], g_i[n] \rangle \\ &\quad - a_{km} \langle g_{km}[n], g_i[n] \rangle. \end{aligned} \quad (4)$$

## Correct citation is key

**Crediting the work of others (including your advisor's or your own previous work) by citation is important for at least three reasons:**

- To place your own work in context
- To acknowledge the findings of others on which you have built your research
- To maintain the credibility and accuracy of the scientific literature

## Question

- A researcher notices a paragraph in a previously published article that would be suitable as the Materials and Methods in his article.
- The researcher decides to copy that paragraph into his paper without **quotes** or attribution.

**Has the researcher violated any ethical boundaries?**

## Answer

**Yes**

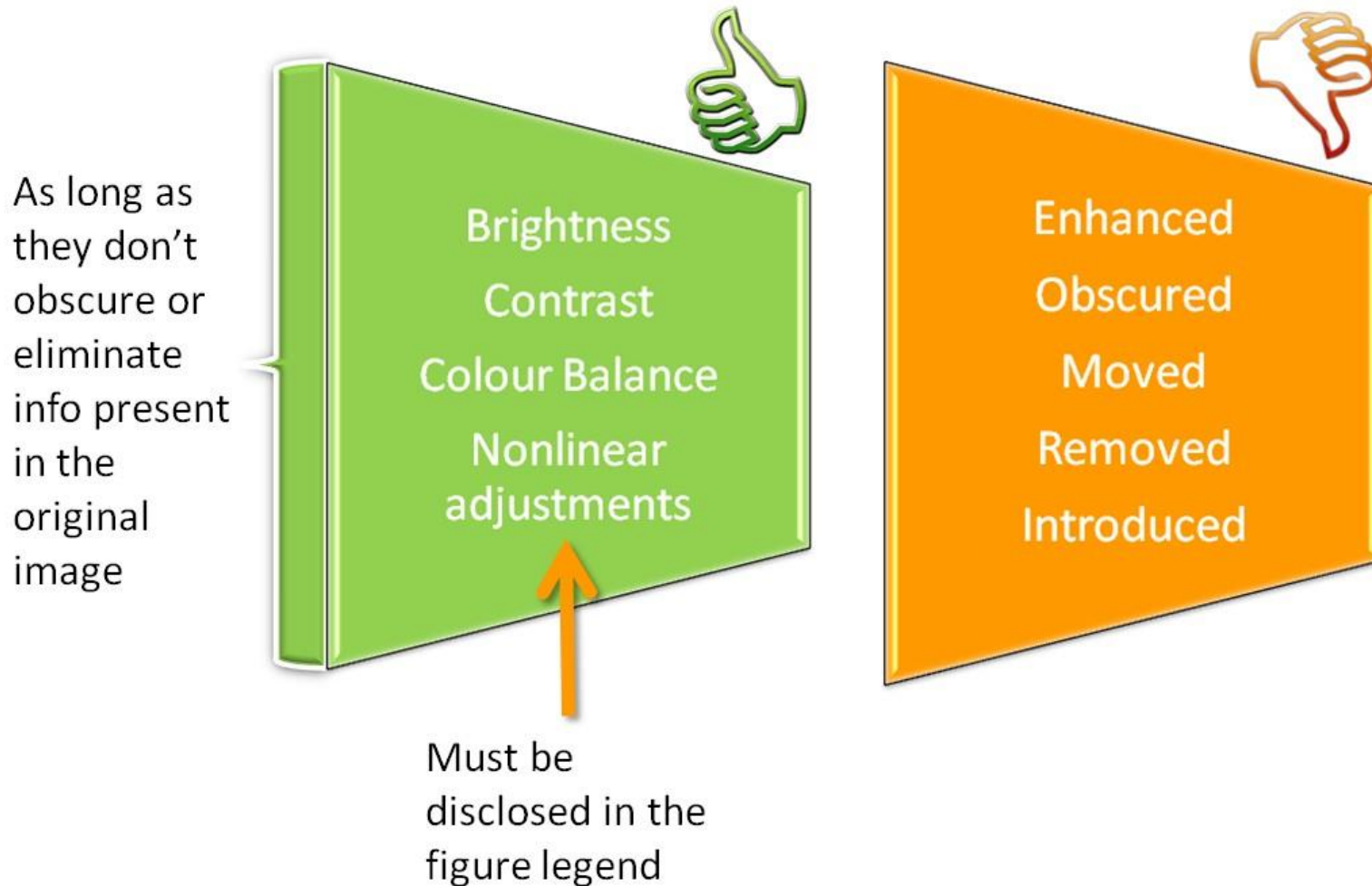
Re-using texts in the materials and methods when you followed the same technique and used the same equipment as another author may be a less serious form of plagiarism. However, it is still unacceptable: instead, just say that you followed the same technique as another author and **cite** them fully.

## Duplicate Publication

- Duplicate Publication is also called Redundant Publication, or Self Plagiarism
- Definition: Two or more papers, without full cross reference, share the same hypotheses, data, discussion points, or conclusions
- ✗ An author should not submit for consideration to another journal a previously published paper.
  - ✓ Published studies do not need to be repeated unless further confirmation is required.
  - ✓ Previous publication of an abstract during the proceedings of conferences does not preclude subsequent submission for publication, but full disclosure should be made at the time of submission.
  - ✓ Re-publication of a paper in another language is acceptable, provided that there is full and prominent disclosure of its original source at the time of submission.



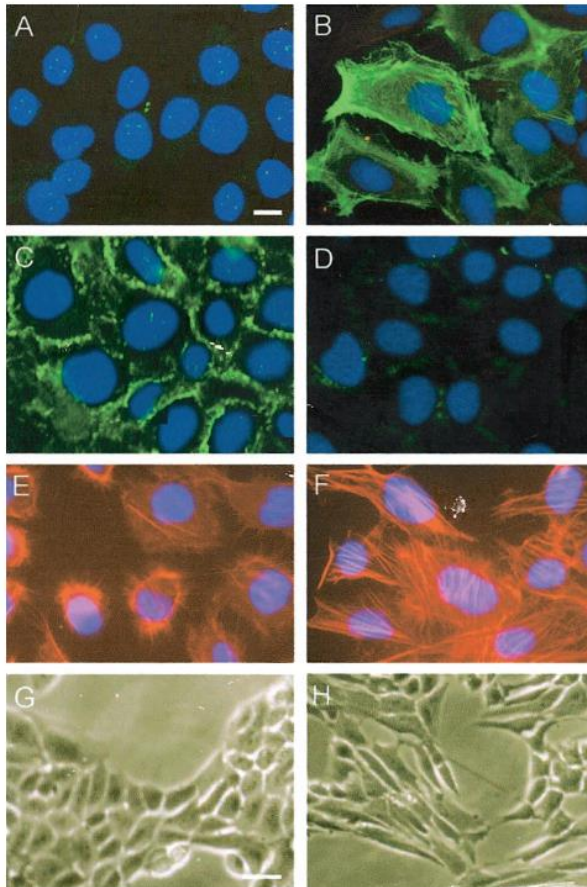
## Figure Manipulation – some things are allowed



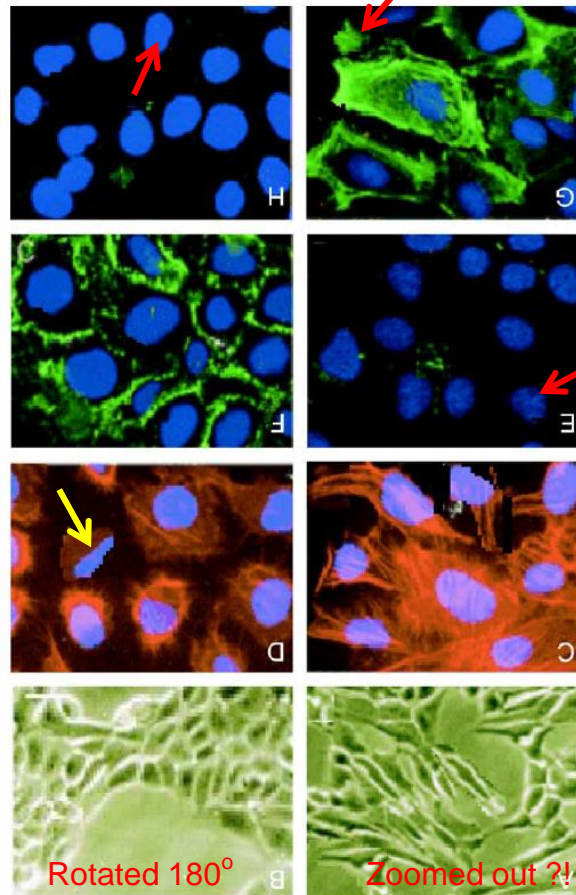
# Figure Manipulation:

Example - Different authors and reported experiments

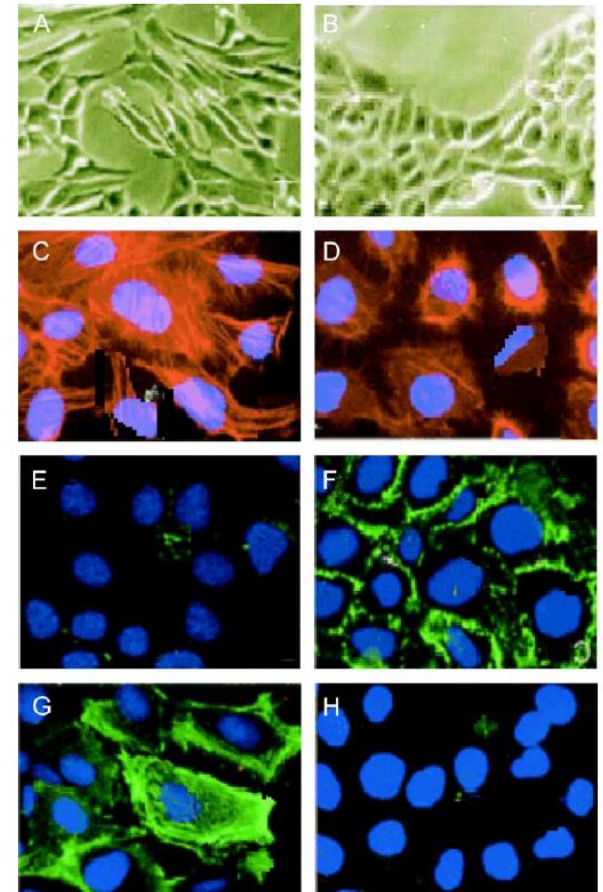
Am J Pathol, 2001



Images worked on, added  
to, rotated 180°, to  
become:



Life Sci, 2004





# Elsevier Connect article

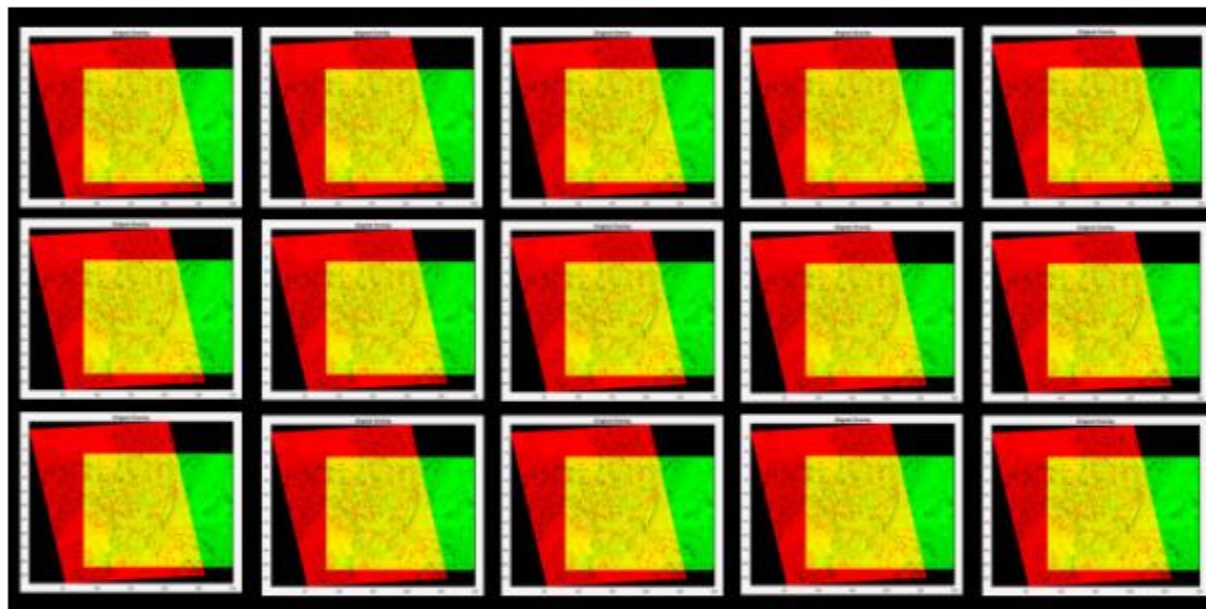
Home > Elsevier Connect > At Harvard, developin...

## At Harvard, developing software to spot misused images in science

With support from Elsevier, a team is developing a tool to detect manipulated and misused images en route to publication

By Lucy Goodchild van Hilten January 23, 2018

Elsevier Connect



Design based on an overlay of sample images (one in red, one in green, overlap in yellow) used in Dr. Mary Walsh's study.

## Recap

When in doubt, **cite!**

**Never cut & paste**  
(even to save time in  
drafts)

If you suspect:  
**REPORT**

Responsibility

# Open access publishing

## What is open access?

- **Free and permanent access to scholarly research *combined with* clear guidelines (user licenses) for users to re-use the content.**

### Gold open access

- After submission and peer review, an article publishing charge (APC) is **payable**
- Upon publication everyone can immediately and permanently access the article online

### Green open access

- After submission and peer review in a subscription journal, the article is published online
- Subscribers have immediate access and the article is made open access either through author self-archiving, publisher deposit or linking.

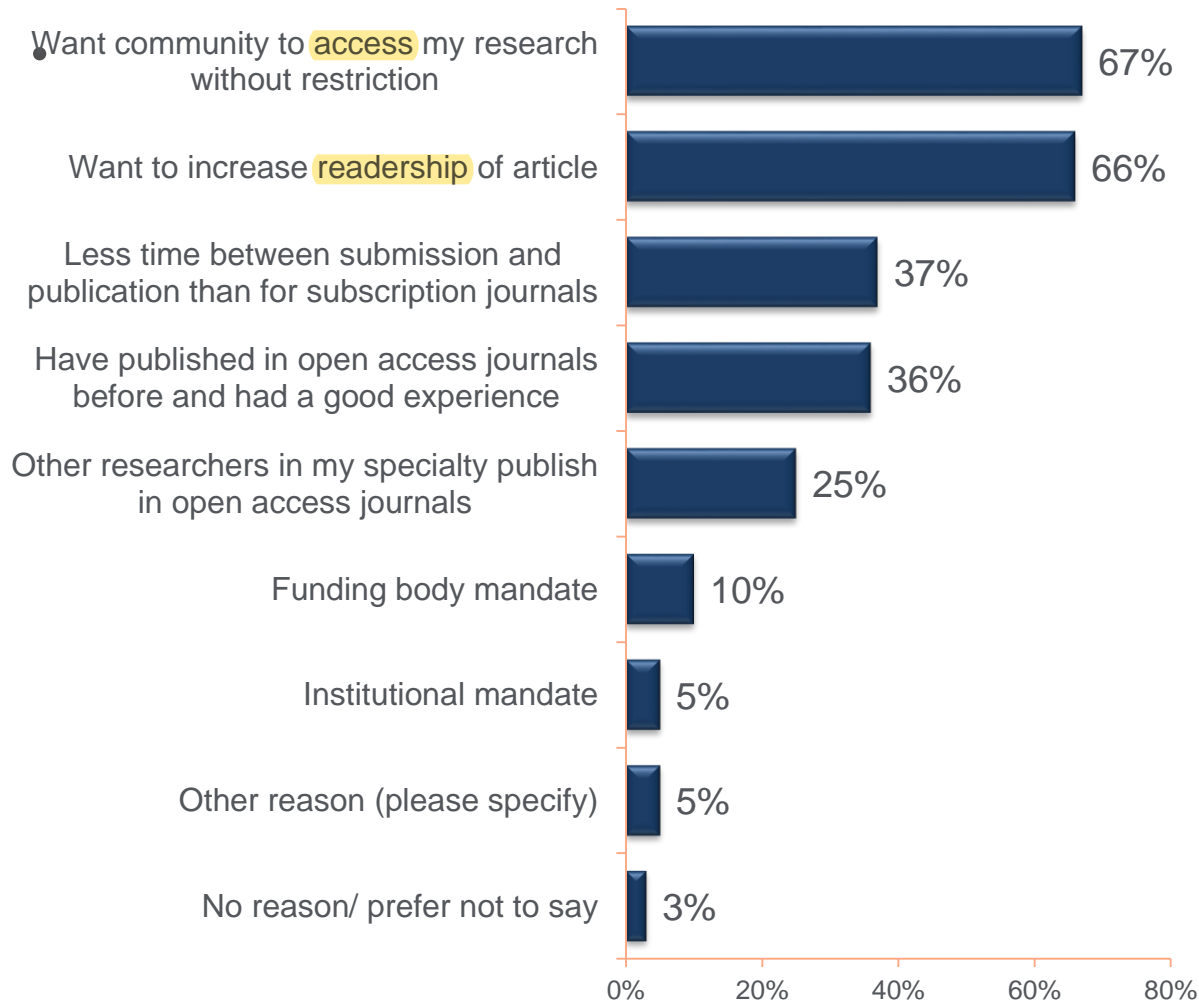
## Tips for publishing gold open access

- **Find the right journal:** Look for **reputable journals**
- **Collect key info:** Check your funding body and institution's policies
- **Make your article OA:** Select a license and pay an OA fee
- **Publish OA:** Share the **final version** of your article!

# What is the difference?

	Gold Open Access		Green Open Access
<b>Access</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Free public access to the final published article</li> <li>Access is immediate and permanent</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Free public access to a version of your article</li> <li>Time delay may apply (embargo period)</li> </ul>
<b>Fee</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Open access fee is paid by the author, or on their behalf (for example by a funding body)</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No fee is payable by the author, as costs are covered by library subscriptions</li> </ul>
<b>Use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determined by your user licence</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Authors retain the right to use their articles for a wide range of purposes</li> <li>Open versions of your article should have a user license attached</li> </ul>
<b>Options</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publish in an open access journal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publish in a journal that supports open access (also known as a hybrid journal)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Link to your article.</li> <li>Selected journals feature open archives</li> <li>Self-archive a version of your article</li> </ul>

# Why publish in an open access journal?



# 14%

have been asked by their departmental head or funding organization to publish open access

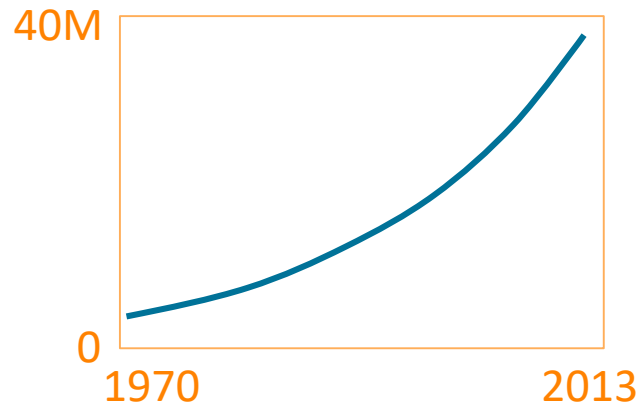
# Get noticed

Promoting your researcher for maximum **impact**



# You want to make sure your research gets the attention it deserves

- The volume of research articles is growing at an accelerated pace
- For most researchers, it's a real challenge to keep up with the literature
- Your job: make sure your research doesn't fall through the cracks!



**7 hrs/week**  
average time  
spent on literature



1. Preparing your article



2. Promoting your published article



3. Monitoring your article

# Preparing your article

- **Writing your article**
  - Spend time on **abstract** and **conclusion** & references
  - Use easy to understand charts and **professional illustrations**
  - Use clear and correct manuscript **language**



# Preparing your article

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Highlights  
Abstract  
Keywords  
1. Introduction  
2. Materials and Methods  
3. Results  
4. Discussion  
Acknowledgments  
References

Figures and tables

EBioMedicine  
Volume 1, Issues 2-3, December 2014, Pages 107-116

Original Article

**Human Kidney Disease-causing INF2 Mutations Perturb Rho/Dia Signaling in the Glomerulus**

Hua Sun<sup>a, b, \*</sup>, Khaldoun I. Al-Romaih<sup>b, c</sup>, Calum A. MacRae<sup>b, c, d</sup>, Martin R. Pollak<sup>a, b, c, d</sup>

doi:10.1016/j.ebiom.2014.11.009

Under a Creative Commons license

Highlights

- Dose dependent knockdown of zebrafish INF2 defines an overt glomerular phenotype.
- This phenotype is rescued by human wild-type INF2 but not by disease causing INF2 mutants.
- The developmental phenotype correlates with disinhibited diaphanous formin activity
- The INF2 knockdown phenotype is rescued by knockdown of either RhoA or Dia2
- INF2 mutations lead to uncontrolled Rho/Dia signaling and perturbed actin dynamics.

Abstract

Mutations in Inverted Formin 2 (INF2), a diaphanous formin family protein that regulates actin cytoskeleton dynamics, cause focal segmental glomerulosclerosis (FSGS) and Charcot-Marie-Tooth Disease (CMT) in humans. In addition to directly remodeling actin filaments in vitro, we have shown that INF2 regulates intracellular actin dynamics and actin dependent cellular behavior by opposing RhoA/Dia signaling. As a step towards a better understanding of the human kidney disease, we wanted to explore the relevance of these findings to the in vivo situation. We used dose dependent knockdown of INF2 to first define an in vivo model and establish an overt glomerular phenotype in zebrafish. This simple assay was validated by rescue with wild type INF2 confirming the specificity of the findings. The edema, podocyte dysfunction, and an altered glomerular filtration barrier observed in the zebrafish pronephros correlate with mistrafficking of glomerular slit diaphragm proteins, defective slit-diaphragm signaling, and disinhibited diaphanous formin

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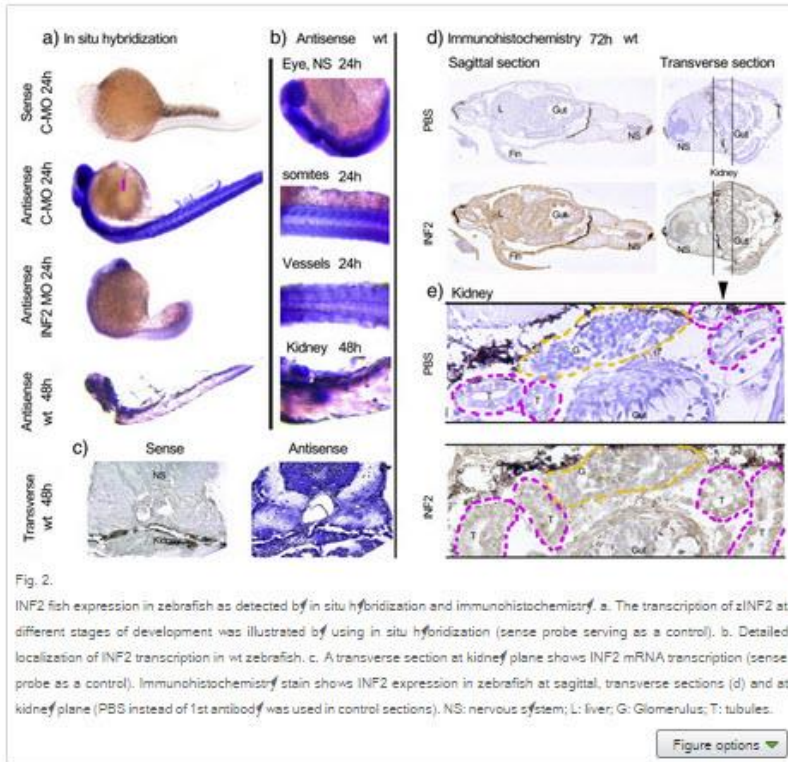


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**Animal Behaviour**  
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Thanh-Lan Gluckman, Nicholas I. Mundy

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DOI: 10.1016/j.anbehav.2013.09.020

**Highlights**

- We quantified barred plumage in Old World parasitic cuckoos and sympatric raptors.
- We test whether distribution overlap predicts similarity in barred plumage.
- Cuckoos match sympatric raptors and similarity is rarely influenced by habitat.
- There is no match for any aspect of patterning in cuckoos and allopatric raptors.
- This conforms to Batesian mimicry and cuckoo-hawk mimicry may be widespread.


A fundamental principle of Batesian mimicry is that it pays to look like a local harmful species that is recognizable to other local species (receivers). Mimicking an allopatric species confers no benefit, as it is

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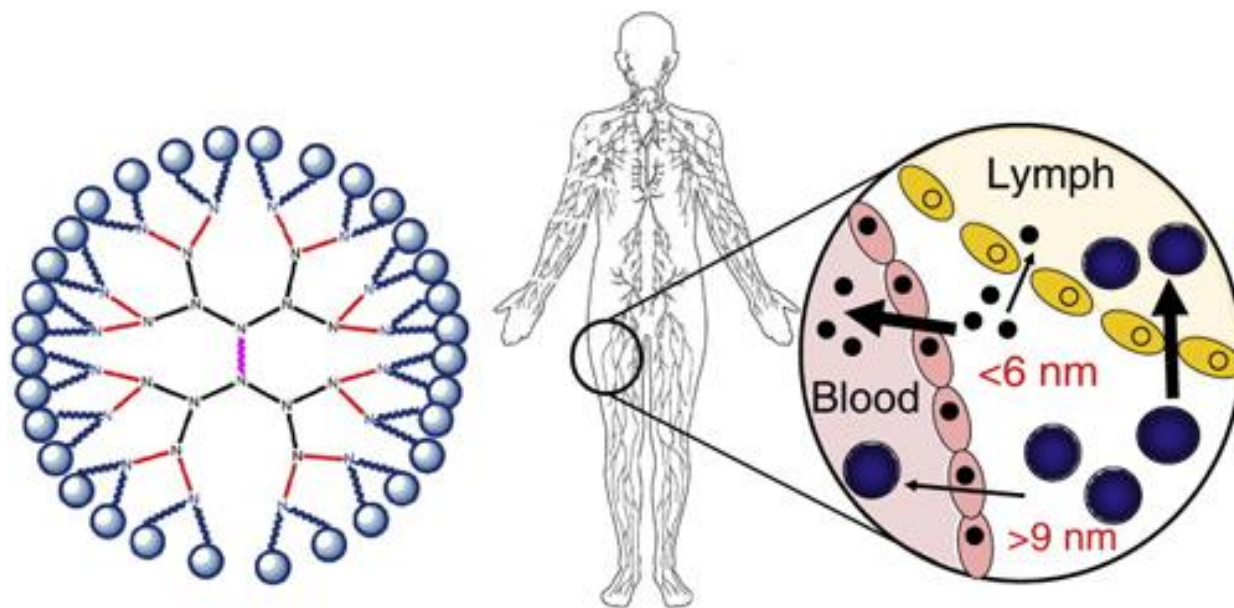
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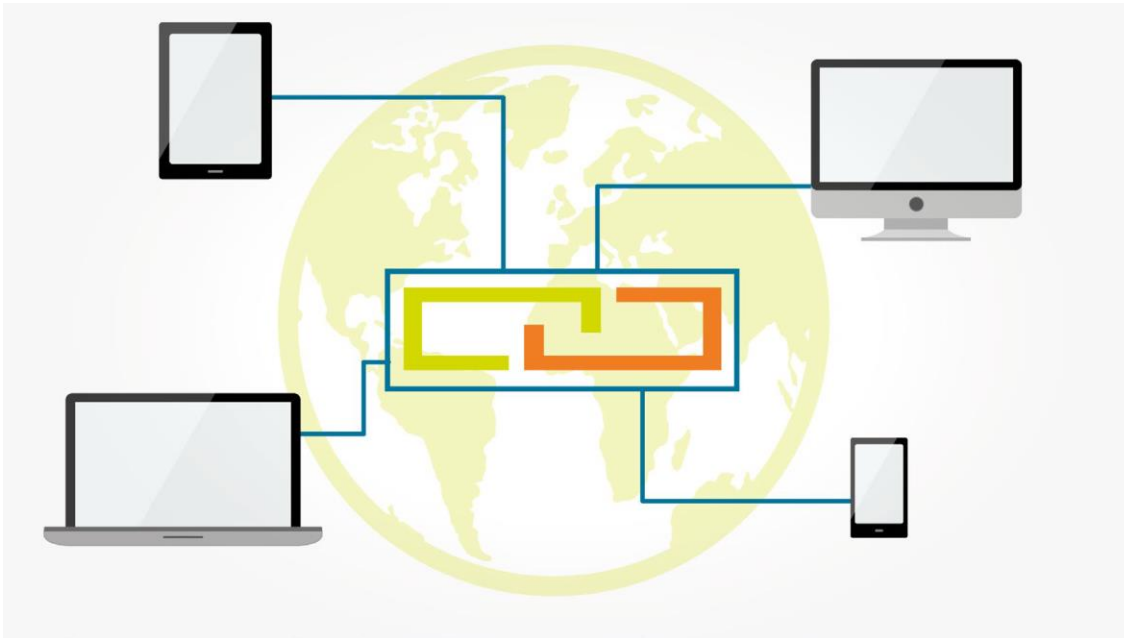
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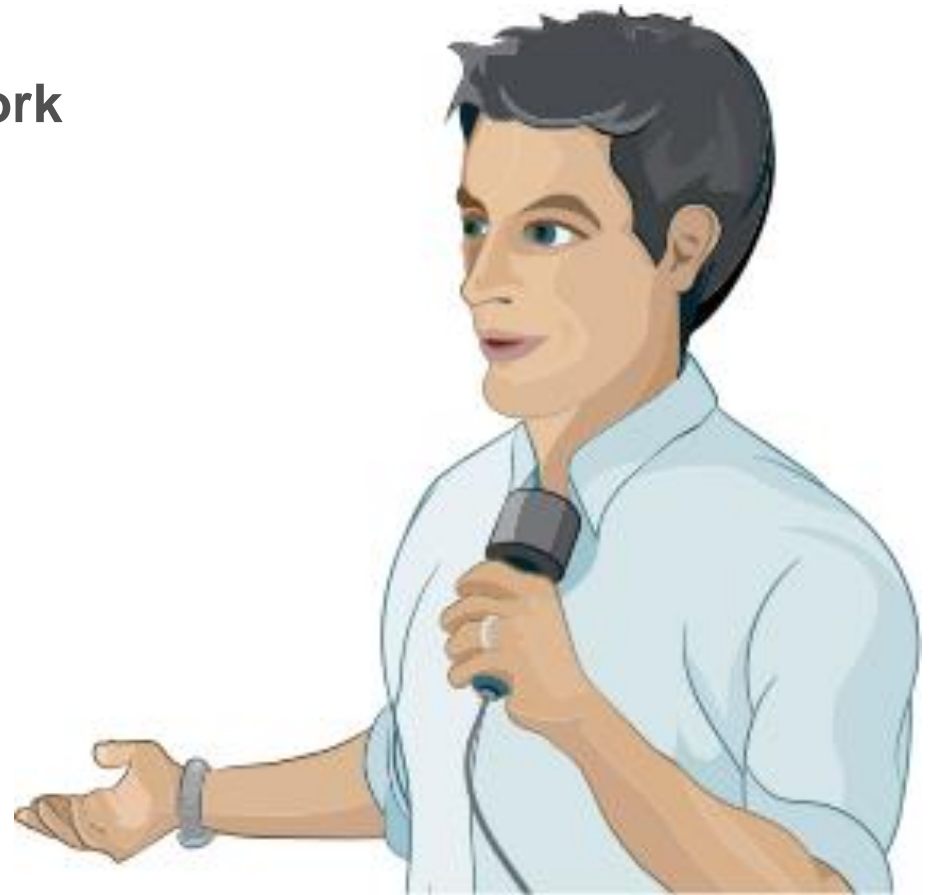
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Darren Sugrue  
[d.sugrue@elsevier.com](mailto:d.sugrue@elsevier.com)

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