

Leading physics journal – the European Physical Journal – representing 25 European Physical Societies, issues findings from working group on peer review

Paris France, 15 June 2015. EDP Sciences have today released information on the findings and recommendations of a working group into the peer review process. The meeting involved a committee of experts linked to the *European Physical Journal* (EPJ) including Editors-in-Chief, Associate-Editors, members of the Steering Committee and researchers involved in Scientific and Technical Information. EPJ itself, represents 25 European Physical Societies through its Scientific Advisory Committee.

The aim of the workshop held in Paris in May was to consider whether peer review is adapting to present day demands and constraints, and to consider and make recommendations to *EPJ* and their partners regarding new practices and improvements that could be made to their procedures.

The workshop firstly confirmed the value of in-depth, quality peer review as an essential part of maintaining the highest possible scientific standards. The huge improvements in availability of information online, only serves to further emphasize the need for this vital filtration service, managed by publishers.

There was consensus that the role of Learned Societies is critical, in not only ensuring transparent evaluation criteria, based on scientific quality and originality, but also in developing broader cultural, economic, technological, and social impact. They called upon Learned Societies to advocate The San Francisco Declaration of Research Assessment (DORA)*, within their relevant scientific communities.

Their findings also showed that the quality of refereeing was seen as an important factor in attracting authors to publish in EPJ. The workshop recommended that publication of significant reviewer reports alongside articles - once approval is received from the reviewer and author – would promote transparency of the process, give referees more recognition for their work, and provide a useful service to readers.

Finally, the workshop concluded that the concept of portable peer review – whereby previous referee reports are shared when an article is rejected and submitted to another journal – could represent significant improvements in service to the research community, by shortening processing times, and relieving workload pressures on reviewers.

Jean-Marc Quilbé President of EDP Sciences said “We are happy to be supporting *EPJ* with this initiative. Innovations around Peer Review generate a variety of models, and EDP Sciences will be implementing a number of the working group’s recommendations, including the publication of peer review reports.”

The editors of EPJ stated; “The quality check by the peer review process is indispensable and our reviewers are invaluable. EPJ reviewers receive recognition

through a certificate, inclusion in the journal's annual list of reviewers, and a complimentary book. We are constantly reviewing ways to acknowledge their contribution.

The findings of this workshop are likely to capture the attention of many editorial boards, and perhaps even encourage some of them to change their editorial procedures".

For more information about this release, please contact **Solange Guéhot**, Editorial Office, solange.guehot@edpsciences.org

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About EDP Sciences (www.edpsciences.org)

EDP Sciences is a not-for-profit publisher, established in 1920, belonging to learned societies with a mission to participate in the dissemination of important research that accelerates scientific progress and cross-fertilisation of ideas of the society in general. EDP Sciences is located in Paris and London and publishes over 55 scientific journals in the physical sciences, mathematics, life and environmental sciences, energy, materials and engineering, health and biomedical sciences. It also publishes 20 professional magazines, conference proceedings (www.webofconferences.org) and books.



About EPJ (www.epj.org)

The *European Physical Journal (EPJ)* is a series of peer-reviewed journals indexed in all major citation databases, and covering the whole spectrum of pure and applied physics, including related interdisciplinary subjects. EPJ aims to offer to the international scientific community a unified platform for the global dissemination of physics and related sciences. The editorial boards of the EPJ journals consist of distinguished scholars from around the globe who are committed to the highest standards of scientific quality. The boards administer the peer-review process and are responsible for the editorial policies of the journals. The journal is co-published by EDP Sciences, Springer and *Società Italiana di Fisica*.



* The San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA), initiated by the American Society for Cell Biology (ASCB) together with a group of editors and publishers of scholarly journals, recognizes the need to improve the ways in which the outputs of scientific research are evaluated. The group met in December 2012 during the ASCB Annual Meeting in San Francisco and subsequently circulated a draft declaration among various stakeholders.

<http://am.ascb.org/dora/>