

EDITORIALS

Seventh International Congress on Peer Review and Biomedical Publication, September 2013

Call for research

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The primary aims of biomedical peer review are to select and improve research and other academic work for funding and publication by identifying and reducing bias and increasing the validity, quality, credibility, and worth of scientific reports. This remains a difficult balance.¹ Widespread advances in technology and communications have improved the speed, efficiency, and reach of scientific publication and have transformed the ways scientists, authors, reviewers, editors, clinicians, and the public interact with information and with each other. But these same advances also threaten the very nature of peer review and scientific publication. The need to critically evaluate the purpose, foundations, developments, and future prospects of this entire enterprise—from research proposal through and beyond publication—has never been stronger.

Since the first announcement in 1986, we have held six peer review congresses at four yearly intervals, with the aim of placing peer review and scientific publication under the same evaluation that science undergoes. The success of these congresses is clear from the stimulus they have given to new research into the processes whereby scientific work is funded, presented and disseminated, peer reviewed, edited, published, enhanced, accessed, and used by others to change practice, influence funding and policy decisions, inspire discourse and debate, and stimulate new research.²⁻⁹ This progress has been measured in the increase in the number of abstracts submitted to each congress (from 50 for the first to more than 200 for each of the last two) and in Medline citations to peer review research (from 109 in 1994 to 382 in 2010).

We now announce the Seventh International Congress on Peer Review and Biomedical Publication to be held in Chicago, Illinois, 8-10 September 2013. This congress, organised by *JAMA* and the *BMJ*, will feature three days of presentations of original research. As with the previous congresses, the aims of the 2013 congress are to improve the quality and credibility of peer review and selection processes used by journals and funders; to help advance the quality, efficiency, effectiveness,

and equity of biomedical publication; and to increase the dissemination of scientific information throughout the world. As before, we urge scientists, editors, publishers, funders, readers, and all who are interested in the processes by which science is funded and published to get going on their research. In addition to the topics traditionally dealt with during the peer review congresses, such as the effects of peer review and editorial processes on the quality of scientific reporting,¹⁰ abstracts summarising original high quality research on any aspect of scientific peer review, publication, and information exchange are welcome. The box provides examples of suggested topics. We also are eager to see new research on the technological advances and innovations that continue to influence all aspects of biomedical publication and the dissemination of scientific information. The increasing sophistication of research into these issues means that preference will be given to well developed studies with generalisable results (such as multijournal, prospective, multiyear trials and controlled studies). Retrospective studies, systematic reviews, bibliometric and other data analyses, surveys, and other types of studies will also be considered. Abstracts that report new research and findings will be given priority.

The deadline for submission of abstracts is 1 March 2013. Additional announcements and instructions for preparing and submitting abstracts will be available soon on the Peer Review Congress website (www.jama-peer.org).

Competing interests: All authors have completed the ICMJE uniform disclosure form at www.icmje.org/coi_disclosure.pdf (available on request from the corresponding author) and declare: the Peer Review Congress receives unrestricted grants from various charitable organisations and not for profit and commercial publishers. A list of sponsors of the Sixth International Congress on Peer Review and Biomedical Publication is available at http://www.ama-assn.org/public/peer/program_2009.pdf; no other relationships or activities that could appear to have influenced the submitted work.

Topics of interest for the Seventh International Congress on Peer Review and Biomedical Publication*Editorial and peer review decision making and responsibilities*

- Mechanisms of peer review and editorial decision making used by journals and funders
- Evaluations of the quality, validity, and practicality of peer review and editorial decision making
- Quality assurance for reviewers and editors
- Editorial policies and responsibilities
- Editorial freedom and integrity
- Peer review of grant proposals

Research and publication ethics

- Ethical concerns for researchers, authors, reviewers, editors, publishers, and funders
- Authorship, contributorship, and responsibility for published material
- Conflicts of interest
- Research and publication misconduct
- Confidentiality
- Effects of funding and sponsorship on research and publication
- Influence of external stakeholders: funders, journal owners, advertisers and sponsors, policy makers, legal representatives, and the news media

Evaluations of and mechanisms for improving the quality of reporting

- Effectiveness of guidelines and standards designed to improve the quality of scientific publication
- Evaluations of the quality of print and online information
- Quality and reliability of data presentation and scientific images
- Quality and use of online supplemental content
- Quality and effectiveness of new forms of scientific articles

Models for peer review and scientific publication

- Online publication
- Open access
- Open peer review
- Data sharing and access
- Prepublication posting and release of information
- Postpublication review, communications, and influence
- Changes in readership and usage of peer reviewed published content
- Presentation, enhancement, and quality of scientific information in multimedia and new media
- Quality, use, and effects of publication metrics and usage statistics
- Quality and influence of sponsored supplements and related media, grey literature, and other forms of publication
- Quality and effectiveness of content tagging, mark-up, and structures
- The future of scientific publication

Dissemination of scientific and scholarly information

- Methods for improving the quality, efficiency, and equitable distribution of biomedical information
- New technologies that affect the quality, integrity, and dissemination of and access to biomedical information
- The impact of social networking and new media on science critique and dissemination

Provenance and peer review: Commissioned; not externally peer reviewed.

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- 2 Rennie D. Guarding the guardians: a conference on editorial peer review. *JAMA* 1986;256:2391-2.
- 3 Guarding the guardians: research on editorial peer review; selected proceedings from the First International Congress on Peer Review in Biomedical Publication. May 10-12, 1989, Chicago, Ill. *JAMA* 1990;263:1317-441.
- 4 Rennie D, Flanagan A. The Second International Congress on Peer Review in Biomedical Publication. *JAMA* 1994;272:91.
- 5 Third International Congress on Peer Review and Biomedical Publication. *JAMA* 1998;280(3, theme issue):203-306.
- 6 Fourth International Congress on Peer Review and Biomedical Publication. *JAMA* 2002;287(21, theme issue):2759-871.
- 7 Rennie D, Flanagan A, Smith R, Smith J. Fifth International Congress on Peer Review and Biomedical Publication: call for research. *JAMA* 2003;289:1438.
- 8 Rennie D, Flanagan A, Godlee F, Smith J. Sixth International Congress on Peer Review and Biomedical Publication, September 2009: call for research. *JAMA* 2007;298:2420-1.
- 9 Jefferson T, Rudin M, Brodny Folse S, Davidoff F. Editorial peer review for improving the quality of reports of biomedical studies. *Cochrane Database Syst Rev* 2007;2:MR000016.
- 10 Seventh International Congress on Peer Review and Biomedical Publication. www.ama-assn.org/public/peer/peerhome.htm.

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