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Ninth international congress on peer review and scientific publication—call for abstracts

Share your important work on peer review, publication, and the conduct of scientific research

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In 2019, before the covid-19 pandemic, we highlighted the unprecedented promise and peril surrounding the quantity, quality, and integrity of scientific research.¹ The pandemic has been a crash test for scientific publishing, emphasising the great successes and failures, and the promise and perils of current systems. In 2020 because of the pandemic, we announced a postponement of the ninth international congress on peer review and scientific publication. We now confirm plans to hold the meeting on 8-10 September 2022 and announce the official call for abstracts.

The aim of the congress is to encourage research into the quality and credibility of peer review and scientific publication and to further the evidence base on which scientists can improve the conduct, reporting, and dissemination of scientific research. As with the previous eight congresses,² the ninth will feature three days of presentations of original research about processes, policies, problems, and innovations related to peer review, scientific publication, and research dissemination. Participants will include editors and publishers of scientific peer reviewed journals, researchers, funders, bibliometric and informatics experts, information innovators, librarians, journalists, policy makers, ethicists, scientific information producers and disseminators, and anyone interested in the progress of the scientific information enterprise and the quality of scientific evidence. The congress embraces a wide range of disciplines, including (but not limited to) biomedicine, health and life sciences, applied sciences, basic sciences, physical and chemical sciences, mathematics, computer sciences, engineering, economics, and social sciences. New and emerging disciplines are also welcome.

The congress programme will be determined by the abstracts submitted by researchers, representing the interests and work of their scientific communities, with priority given to novel, data driven studies. As noted in the call for research two years ago,¹ we are interested in studies that evaluate and test the processes and policies used by researchers, authors, editors, peer reviewers, publishers, funders, universities, and any other stakeholders to improve the conduct, reporting, quality, integrity, and dissemination of scientific research. We encourage new ideas and rigorous evaluations of both old and new processes. We have a continued special interest in studies of bias and how biases can be identified and managed. As the world is emerging from a lethal pandemic that created a stimulating, contentious, and challenging interface between science, society, and policy, this is an opportune time to test,

challenge, and improve the standards of peer review and scientific publication. Meaningful improvements are more likely to happen in the current volatile environment, which is hopefully more receptive to change.

Abstracts summarising original, high quality research on any aspect of peer review and publication and the conduct, reporting, assessment, and dissemination of scientific research are welcome. Box 1 gives illustrative examples and suggested topics of interest, but we will consider any novel research relevant to the conduct, peer review, reporting, and dissemination of research. A broad range of study designs will be considered, with preference given to well developed studies with more generalisable results (eg, prospective, multiyear trials and controlled studies from collaborative researchers, journals, publishers, funders, and information disseminators). Retrospective studies, systematic reviews, meta-analyses, bibliometric and other data analyses, surveys, modelling studies, and other types of studies will also be considered. Abstracts that report new research and findings will be given priority, and we also encourage studies that build on previous related research. We particularly encourage research that crosses disciplines and work that aims to provide valuable insights across disciplines. Abstracts of research previously published are not permitted unless they include new unpublished analyses. Abstracts describing narrative reviews, recommendations, and opinion will not be considered.

The abstract submission site will open on 1 December 2021, and the deadline for abstract submission is 31 January 2022. Instructions for preparing and submitting abstracts³ and programmes and abstracts of research presented at the previous eight congresses⁴ are available on the peer review congress website. Additional information and future announcements will be available on the website and through email alerts that can be signed up for on the site.

The peer review congress is organised by us with support from *JAMA* and the JAMA Network, *The BMJ*, and the Meta-Research Innovation Center at Stanford (METRICS) and is supported by associate directors and an advisory board of leaders in research and publication who represent a wide variety of scientific disciplines.⁵ We look forward with excitement to receiving abstracts for consideration for the ninth international congress on peer review and scientific publication.

Box 1: Examples of topics of interest for the ninth international congress on peer review and scientific publication**Bias**

- Efforts to manage or eliminate bias in research methods, conduct and reporting of research, and interpretation of evidence
- Publication and reporting bias
- Bias on the part of researchers, authors, reviewers, editors, funders, commentators, and consumers of scientific information
- Interventions to address gender, race and ethnicity, geographical location, career stage, and discipline biases in peer review, publication, and research dissemination
- Improving and measuring diversity and inclusion of authors, reviewers, editors, and editorial board members

Editorial and peer review decision making

- Assessment and testing of models of peer review and editorial decision making and workflows used by journals, publishers, funders, and research disseminators
- Evaluations of the quality, validity, and practicality of peer review and editorial decision making
- Quality assurance for reviewers, editors, and funders
- Editorial policies and responsibilities
- Editorial freedom and integrity
- Peer review of grant proposals
- Peer review of content submitted and selected for presentation at meetings
- Effects of and adaption to the covid-19 pandemic on reporting quality, dissemination, quality control, equity, peer review, and editorial workflows among journals, publishers, funders, news media, and social media

Research and publication ethics

- Ethical concerns for researchers, authors, reviewers, editors, publishers, and funders
- Authorship, contributorship, accountability, and responsibility for published material
- Conflicts of interest
- Research and publication misconduct
- Ethical review and approval of studies
- Confidentiality considerations
- Rights of research participants in scientific publication
- Effects of funding and sponsorship on research and publication
- Influence of external stakeholders: funders, journal owners, advertisers/sponsors, policy makers, libraries, legal representatives, news media, social media, fact checkers, technology companies, and other influencers
- Tools and software to detect wrongdoing, such as duplication, fraudulent manuscripts and reviewers, and image manipulation
- Corrections and retractions

Improving the quality of reporting

- Effectiveness of guidelines and standards designed to improve the quality of scientific reporting and publication
- Evaluations of the quality of published information
- Data sharing, transparency, reliability, and access
- Research reproducibility and replicability
- Approaches for efficient and effective correction of errors and limiting the spread of retracted science
- Innovations to improve appropriate use of methods and statistics

- Assessment of artificial intelligence and other tools to improve the quality of research reporting
- Innovations to improve data and scientific display
- Quality and reliability of data presentation and scientific images
- Standards for multimedia and new content models for dissemination of science
- Quality and effectiveness of new formats for scientific articles

Models for peer review and scientific publication

- Single blind, double blind, collaborative, and open peer review
- Open and public access
- Embargoes
- Preprints and prepublication posting and release of information
- Reanalyses
- Reproducibility checks
- Prospective registration of research
- Postpublication review, communications, and influence
- Evaluations of reward systems for authors, reviewers, and editors
- Approaches to improve diversity and inclusion in peer review and publication
- Innovations to address reviewer fatigue
- Use and effects of social media
- Quality and effects of scientific information in multimedia and new media
- Quality, use, and effects of publication and performance metrics and usage statistics
- Assessment of financial and economic models of peer reviewed publication
- Quality and influence of advertising and sponsored publication
- Quality and effectiveness of content tagging, markup, and linking
- Use of assisted artificial intelligence and software to improve peer review, decision making, and dissemination of science
- Effects of opportunistic, predatory, and pirate operators
- Threats to scientific publication
- The future of scientific publication

Dissemination of scientific and scholarly information

- Methods for improving the quality, efficiency, and equitable distribution of scientific information
- Use of novel mechanisms, formats, and platforms to disseminate science
- New technologies that affect the quality, integrity, evaluation, dissemination, and access of scientific information
- Funding and reward systems as they relate to science and scientific publication
- Use of bibliometrics and alternative metrics to evaluate the quality and equitable dissemination of published science
- Comparisons of and lessons from various scientific disciplines
- Mapping of scientific methods and reporting practices and of meta-research across disciplines
- Effect of the covid-19 pandemic on scientific information, misinformation, and disinformation
- Reporting of science, publishing, dissemination, and access during emergency situations (pandemics, natural disasters, political turmoil)

This editorial is being published simultaneously in *The BMJ* and *JAMA*.

Competing interests: JPAI and MB are directors, AF executive director, FG European director, and TB European coordinator for the ninth international congress on peer review and scientific publication. AF serves as an unpaid board member for STM: International Association of Scientific, Technical, and Medical Publishers. TB is a founder of medRxiv.

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- 2 Rennie D, Flanagan A. Three decades of peer review congresses. *JAMA* 2018;319:350-3. doi: 10.1001/jama.2017.20606. pmid: 29362775
- 3 International Congress on Peer Review and Scientific Publication. Preparing and submitting abstracts. <https://peerreviewcongress.org/preparing-and-submitting-abstracts/>
- 4 International Congress on Peer Review and Scientific Publication. Past congresses. <https://peerreviewcongress.org/past-congresses/>
- 5 International Congress on Peer Review and Scientific Publication. Organizers and advisory board. <https://peerreviewcongress.org/organizers-and-advisory-board/>