## Preprints

opportunity or challenge?

Presenter: Dr. Juliane Kant (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft - DFG) e: juliane.kant@dfg.de

> Knowledge Exchange Task and Finish Group on Preprints

Andrea Chiarelli, Rob Johnson, Emma Richens (Research Consulting)

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Grant

applications

Researcher

recruitment,

review and

promotion

assessment

frameworks

Knowledge Exchange has been investigating the preprints landscape since 2018. Our recent research, which included an extensive literature review (60+ sources), 38 stakeholder interviews and qualitative coding, led to the development of this flowchart depicting the evolving role of preprints within the scholarly communication process.

Researchers Academic write up their findings in the research is form of a research carried out output

Preprint

posting

The research output is submitted for peer-review

Feedback

from peers

output is revised and updated

The research The research

Preprint

update

output is accepted for publication

Self-archiving

of accepted

manuscript

The accepted

output is typeset and formally published

OA route

(OA content

on publisher

platforms)

4

of OA article

**National** research

## Legend

Scholarly communication workflow

Preprint-related infrastructure, services and initiatives Research funding, impact and assessment

Academic publishers

Overlay journals

Journal/ preprint clubs

Text and data mining Preprint server

repository

overlap?

Self-archiving Possible

Subject or

institutional

Free access to the research

output

Non-OA route (subscription content on publisher

platforms

Possible future impact of preprints

Key findings



Early and fast dissemination, increased opportunities for feedback and openness are seen as the main benefits of preprints.



The main concerns over preprints are the lack of quality assurance, media potentially reporting inaccurate research and journals rejecting articles if a preprint has been posted.



Trust is a key enabler of preprint uptake, but behaviours vary based on disciplines and norms: a one-size-fits-all solution is not feasible, neither technically nor in terms of policy.



It is not clear who will be responsible for posting preprints in the long-term - researchers or publishers? This will partly be affected by the availability of sustainable business models.



Twitter is playing a key enabling role in the diffusion of preprints. Twitter also appears to be the main way researchers are exposed to preprints in the first place.

**Further reading** 



Practices, drivers and impediments in the use of preprints: http://bit.ly/KEpreprintslides

Blog post: http://bit.ly/KEpreprintsblog DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.3238500 CC-BY Licence

