

COMMENTARY

Open Access Week 2015 survey: results and conclusions

Roland J.W. Meesters

*Inholland University of Applied Sciences, Department of Life Sciences and Chemistry, Amsterdam, the Netherlands[‡]
and Universidad de los Andes, Department of Chemistry, Bogotá D.C., Colombia.*

(Received: 10 March 2016, Revised 21 March 2016, Accepted 25 March 2016)

Keywords: open access week 2015, Journal of Applied Bioanalysis survey, open access publishing, bioanalysis

Recently, the Journal of Applied Bioanalysis carried out an online survey among readers and authors. The aim of the online survey was to learn about the readers views on the use of the open access publishing model. The online survey was conducted during the International Open Access Week 2015 (19-25 October 2015). The International Open Access Week is a global event, and was held in 2015 for the eighth year. The International Open Access Week is an opportunity event for the academic and research community to learn about open access publishing, share experiences, and participate in establishing and promoting the open access publishing model as future publishing model for academic and scholarly publications.

Methodology

The online survey was conducted by means of an online questionnaire containing twenty multiple choice survey questions. The online survey was send out to randomly selected subscribers ($n=281$) of the Journal of Applied Bioanalysis e-newsletter. The survey questions were divided into two different parts with each part having some specific survey questions on the respondent's professional profile and his/her views on open access publishing. The first part of the survey dealt with the professional status, job title and publication experiences of the respondent.

The second part was concerned with survey questions on open access publishing, among the survey questions

were questions on the respondent's views on open access article quality, article processing fees and advantages of open access publishing. The survey obtained a response rate among the invitees of 10.7% ($n=30$). From the collected survey data, the most significant obtained results are presented.

Survey section on professional status/job title

Survey results on the respondents professional status and job title were published in this journal recently [1]. In short, 16.1% of the respondents indicated to have a faculty (non-tenured) or other professional position while 32.3%, 35.5% and 16.1% of the respondents had a faculty (tenured), industry position or other professional status, respectively. Concerning the job description of the respondents, 62.5% had a job description as chemist/scientist, 15.6%, 9.4%, and 12.6% as director/CEO/VP, manager/group head, and other job title, respectively. About 63.3% of the respondents indicated to publish at least 1-2 papers annually while 30% of the respondents publishes more (3-5 papers) and only 6.7% of the respondents publishes 5 or more papers annually.

On the survey question on which factor(s) the respondent selects a journal for manuscript submission, the position of the journal in the field and the journal's impact factor were the most and second most selected answers with 27.0% and 24.7%, respectively. Other answers were publishing experience with journal (15.7%), turn-around time (from submission to final decision, 14.6%), peer-review process (5.6%) and other options (all less than 5%). On the survey question what respondents would do in case he/she requires a pay-walled full text of article, 50% of respondents indicated contacting the corresponding

Correspondence:

Present address: Inholland University of Applied Sciences, department of Life Sciences and Chemistry, De Boelelaan 1109, 1081 HV Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Phone: +31 681585826. E-mail: roland.meesters@inholland.nl

author for a copy, 20% agreed to purchase the article, and 15% of the respondents would search for a copy of the article on the internet (knowing it could possible violate the publisher's copyright), while remaining 15% of the respondents would choose other action to obtain the full text of the article.

Survey section on open access publishing

In the second part of the online survey, views of the respondents on open access publishing in the field of bioanalysis were evaluated. A total of 73.3% of the respondents indicated that having no or limited access to published scientific articles had a potential negative influence on the respondent's research activities or on scientific research, in general. On this issue, 6.7% of the respondents indicated to have a different point of view, they indicated that accessibility to articles probably has no influence while remaining 20% of the respondents indicated to have a neutral view on this issue. A small majority of the respondents had already previously published in an open access journal (56.7%), this in comparison to remaining 43.3% of the respondents which haven't yet published in an open access journal. That the open access publishing model could increase the visibility of scientific articles indicated three-out-of-four respondents (73.3%), remaining 26.7% were not convinced about this matter and said to have a neutral point of view.

On the survey question if the respondent could indicate his/hers view on if open access publishing might become the future of scientific publishing, the majority of the respondents (63.3%) thinks that open access publishing could be the future of scientific publishing, only 3.3% of the respondents had an opposite point of view while 33.3% of the respondents had no or not yet a defined vision on this matter.

Concerning, point of view on that research funded by governments should be available to the general public is was not surprisingly that 83.3% of the respondents indicated that research funded from tax-payers money should give tax-payers the right to learn how their tax-money is used for scientific research. Only 10% of the respondents had no conclusive view on this issue that governmental funded research should be available to tax-payers by accessible scientific articles in open access journals.

Conclusions

Conclusions that can be drawn from the collected survey data, are as follows. The overall job description of the respondent was chemist/scientist. Impact factor and the position of the journal in the field are still the most important parameters in the selection of a journal for

manuscript submission but they were not the most leading factors. The importance of availability of scientific papers was indicated to be important as was concluded from the fact that 50% of the respondents were willing to invest extra time in obtaining a copy of the full text of a pay-walled article. Options selected by respondents were mailing the corresponding author (50%) or by searching for an (illegal) copy of the article on the internet (15%). Obviously, access to scientific papers has a great influence on how research is being done and the majority (73.3%) of the respondents indicated that having no or limited access to the full text of scientific papers would limit their quality of research or quality of scientific research in general. Moreover, a great majority (73.3%) of the respondents indicated that open access publishing could increase the accessibility of published research and that opinion was confirmed by 83.3% of the respondents by indicating that research funded by governmental institutions should be freely available to the science community as well to the general public.

In conclusion, the results from the respondent's group show that open access publishing is getting more attention by the scientific community. The support for the open access publishing model is growing although scientist still have some (minor) concerns about this publication model. Nevertheless, the presence of these concerns, the respondents indicated that the open access publishing model could develop be the future publication model for academic and scholarly publications. During the next open access week this year (24-30 October, 2016) the Journal of Applied Bioanalysis will conduct a new online survey on open access publishing and we hope that many more invitees will accept the invitation and give us their point of view on open access publishing in the area of bioanalysis.

Reference

1. Meesters RJ. First anniversary of the Journal of Applied Bioanalysis. *J Appl Bioanal* 2(1), 1-5 (2016).

Citation:

Meesters RJ. Open Access Week 2015 survey: results and conclusions. *J Appl Bioanal* 2(2), 46-48 (2016).

Open Access and Copyright:

©2016 Meesters RJ. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC-BY) which permits any use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author(s) and source are credited.

Funding/Manuscript writing assistance:

The author has no financial support or funding to report and the author also declares that no writing assistance was utilized in the production of this article.

Competing interest:

The author has declared that no competing interest exist.