

EDITORIAL

Neuroscience publishing is too important to leave to publishers

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Abstract

Almost every open access neuroscience journal is pay-to-publish. This leaves neuroscientists with a choice of submitting to journals that not all of our colleagues can legitimately access and choosing to pay large sums of money to publish open access. *Neuroanatomy and Behaviour* is a new platinum open access journal published by a non-profit association of scientists. Since we do not charge fees, we will focus entirely on the quality of submitted articles and encourage the adoption of reproducibility-enhancing practices, like open data, preregistration, and data quality checks. We hope that our colleagues will join us in this endeavour so that we can support good neuroscience no matter where it comes from.

Key words: Open access; Scholarly publishing; Neuroscience; Reproducibility; Open data; Preregistration

From the editor

Behavioural neuroscience needs another journal. When choosing a journal, we have previously had the choice of submitting to a subscription journal that not all of our colleagues can legitimately access and choosing to hand over a large sum of money to publish in a journal that is open access. But subscription limits our audience and the vanity press of pay-to-publish open access creates perverse incentives that undermine research quality [1–3].

The amount that libraries and authors are paying is rising much faster than inflation. While open access was proposed, in part, as a solution to the hyperinflation of journal subscription fees, also known as the serials crisis [4–6], article processing charges at open access journals are also rising much faster than inflation, underwritten by the price insensitivity of academics [7].

Changes to this system have not been forthcoming despite decades of advocacy [8]. It has become clear that we cannot and should not wait for academic, institutional, or funder leadership to implement a system of scholarly communication that is relatively free of perverse incentives and business models. Behavioural neuroscientists work on problems relevant to adolescence and childhood, addiction, trauma, ageing, and dementia. We cannot allow the communication of our findings to be hampered by archaic systems or high fees.

This is where *Neuroanatomy and Behaviour* steps in. Published by Episteme Health Inc., a non-profit association of sci-

entists, we are building a journal around a community of scientists for the benefit of our field and mental health. Our editorial board is composed primarily of emerging leaders, who studies have repeatedly shown are among the most capable and competent reviewers [9–12]. We believe a journal edited by scientists, free of the conflicts of interest inherent in commercial publishing, will enable the open sharing of quality research while keeping research funds doing research.

Neuroanatomy and Behaviour will encourage the use of reproducibility-enhancing practices, like open data, preregistration, and strong internal quality control or audit processes [13, 14]. We will ask reviewers to only give their highest methodology ratings to papers that use one or more of these practices, giving scientists that employ them an advantage in editorial selection.

Modern technology and software allow us to publish academic work at negligible cost. Web hosting, metadata registration, and digital preservation are quite affordable for a small journal. Free open source software, such as Open Journal Systems and LaTeX allow us to operate without needing to hire staff for journal management or typesetting. We can therefore focus on the substance of what we are offering – rigorous peer review and editorial selection in support of medical advances.

We hope that our colleagues will join us in supporting good science by participating in the journal as authors, reviewers, readers, and editors.

Declarations

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Conflict of Interest Declaration

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