



Exchanges: the Warwick Research Journal

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<http://exchanges.warwick.ac.uk>

FOREWORD

Now in its second issue, *Exchanges: the Warwick Research Journal* is adding to a number of online publishing initiatives that have responded to changes in attitude and opinion in the academic world.

As the founding editor of a new open access life science journal, *eLife*, I had a number of goals in mind. First and foremost was to accelerate the discovery process with an open access journal managed by contributing scholars for the benefit of the public and the academic community. We have established an open review system where active scholars confer to reach decisions about the merits of the work under consideration. We do so to speed the review process and to break the pattern of endless review and revision that characterizes the most selective journals. We strive to enhance the reviewing experience for all scholars but in particular to encourage early career life scientists who seek to establish their research programs.

With the advent of electronic communication, the old restrictions imposed by a print model of publication are rapidly fading away. Young scholars rarely if ever refer to print journals, and yet decisions that are made in the most selective publications continue to be based on the length of a print run. This legacy will surely fade away as the multimedia advantages of online publication become obvious to scholars in all disciplines.

Exchanges: the Warwick Research Journal, Vol. 1(2), April 2014

Furthermore, the open access model of publication will continue to challenge the subscription basis of commercial publishers who must now adapt to the expectations of scholars and public funding agencies to make the results of research work fully accessible to readers within and outside the academy.

Many of my colleagues at the University of California and on the editorial board of *eLife* share my view that scholarship should be evaluated on the merits of the published work and not on the basis of the perceived impact, or worse yet the “impact factor” of the journal in which the work is published. We welcome the launch of *Exchanges*, and encourage scholars in the disciplines represented in the journal to embrace the forum provided by an online, open access venue for outstanding research.

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