



Description

[ORCID](#) is gradually making deeper inroads into the scholarly publishing industry. Recently, to enable author identification and improve the transparency of scientific research, ORCID IDs have been made mandatory for all authors by a number of major publishers and funding bodies. Thus, ORCID is now growing to become an important resource that is as useful as CrossRef, H-index, and journal impact factor in the shift towards open science. ORCID aims to facilitate the shift to open science to make research visible, searchable and interconnected. Similar to h-Index and CrossRef, ORCID has the potential to revolutionize the publishing landscape and help increase the recognition of researchers around the world.

The Challenge of Authenticity

In the ever growing, globalized world of academia, differentiating journal citations from those of researchers with the same names (in a study conducted by *Nature* in 2011, there were 3.926 publication by various authors named Y. Wang) and attributing them to the right researchers is increasingly difficult. As open access publishing models continue to grow, the issue of appropriate credit for journal citations may become even tougher. To help mitigate this situation, in January 2016, eight major journal publishers have made the use of ORCID IDs mandatory for authors. Also, with the integration of auto-update functionality with CrossRef, it seems that ORCID may be the transformational fix for researchers.

Although it has been in existence since 2010, 2016 seems to be a tipping point for ORCID becoming mainstream. The [open letter](#) signed by major publishers such as PLOS, Science, and the Royal Society announcing that the use of ORCID IDs would be mandatory for all journal submissions will only lead to an increase in the number of users having ORCID IDs.

How ORCID Works

ORCID stands for Open Researchers and Contributor ID. First, it assigns each researcher a unique alphanumeric identifier that is published alongside their name, and it maintains a registry of the research activities associated with each identifier. Second, it provides APIs that allow automatic integration into publishing systems, indicating that publishers and funding bodies can easily embed ORCID into their workflow. Since 2015, ORCID has been auto-updated by both CrossRef and DataCite.

This means that each time a researcher receives a journal citation, publishes a data-set, or is awarded funding, this research activity is both automatically identified as uniquely produced by them by their ID, and is automatically added to their individual ORCID record. This record contains not just their ORCID activities, but can be personalized by the researcher to include contact details, faculty pages and other information. All that the researcher is required to do is register and obtain a unique ORCID ID.

Recognition for Researchers

To increase the visibility of their researchers over the internet, universities/research institutes are creating disparate profiles and pages: university pages, journal profiles, funding body accounts, personal websites to name but a few. This has had many benefits for science in general, but for researchers this is not the case as their profiles are distributed across multiple platforms, which dilutes the recognition and attention they should be receiving in their field. While journal impact factor and h-Index have given some guidance on the importance of scientific research, they have received [strong criticism](#). Moreover, they do little for early-stage researchers. Thus, ORCID aims to offer every researcher a chance to consolidate disparate research activities into one record, and thereby improve their visibility and recognition.

ORCID offers researchers better recognition in two ways: it allows them to take credit for their work, even if their name is very common, identical to another researcher in the same field or if they ever change their name for any reason. In this manner, they can, attribute their work to themselves and collectively demonstrate their research output, funding success, and affiliations in one location, leading to better visibility for researchers. In future, ORCID may also collate researchers' online activities such as Wikipedia edits, unpublished contributions to papers and blog comments. Thus, ORCID has the potential to be a single dynamic, automatically updated online repository of all scientific research activities.

Category

1. Career Corner
2. Product & Service Reviews

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