

Description

The [peer review process](#) is a crucial part of scholarly communication, but without good referees, the system would not work. However, researchers barely get credit for this important job. To ensure that reviewers receive the appreciation they deserve, scientific publishers and [peer review](#) institutions have started an initiative to recognize peer review. You must have read [our recent article](#) on Publons, an online platform that helps researchers track, verify, and showcase their peer review activity across several journals. Publons also rewards top referees several times per year.

Using Publons

[Publons](#), which was launched in 2012, already has more than 80,000 registered members. Researchers who sign up to Publons can use their verified peer reviews and editorial records for funding and promotion applications. Also, using the service does not affect reviewer anonymity. By default, the content of the reports is not publicly displayed and only the year of the review and the name of the journal appear on a reviewer's profile. The content of the report can be made open access after a paper has been published only if both the reviewer and the journal agree.



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Tool for Peer Reviews**

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Growing Partnerships

Four years after its inception, Publons already has partnerships with several leading scientific publishers, such as BMJ, SAGE, Cambridge University Press, Springer Nature, IOP Publishing, and Wiley. It also works with [ORCID](#) such that scientists can easily [connect their reviewer activities](#) to their ORCID record. Following a six-month pilot program conducted in 2015, Wiley recently announced that [more than 750 of its journals](#) will be integrated with Publons. The 2015 trial showed an improvement in reviewer acceptance rates for the pilot journals—and faster review times among the reviewers that opted in—indicating that referee recognition can be an excellent way to speed up the peer review process and let reviewers know that their work is being valued.

Sentinels of Science

A survey [carried out in 2015 among nearly 3000 reviewers](#) showed that researchers spend a huge amount of time evaluating other scientists' work (they spent twenty-two million researcher hours reviewing papers for the top 12 publishers in 2013 alone). Most of the participants of the survey said that feedback from the journals they review for and acknowledgment are the best rewards for these efforts. In line with this, the first [Peer Review Week](#) was introduced last year to celebrate the fundamental role that peer review plays in ensuring scientific quality. The inaugural event was a success, and in September this year, more than 20 institutions gathered to organize the second annual Peer Review Week, which involved a number of activities, such as webinars, interviews, social media campaigns, and others. The highlight of this year's event was the introduction of the annual Sentinels of Science Awards program, where Publons teamed up with top publishers and industry leaders to honor the "highest achievers in peer review across the world's journals."

Category

1. Industry News
2. Publishing News

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