# Wellcome Trust launches open-access publishing venture

**The charity hopes other funders will follow a similar model.**

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One of the world's largest biomedical charities, the Wellcome Trust in London, will launch an open-access publishing venture later this year. The idea behind *Wellcome Open Research* is to allow Wellcome grant recipients to publish their findings more quickly and to create a model that, according to the charity, other funders might adopt in future.

Management of the venture, which Wellcome announced on 6 July, will be contracted out to *F1000Research*, an open-access publishing platform. The platform publishes manuscripts and data sets within days of their submission, after a quick sanity check by its in-house editors, and then arranges post-publication peer review.

*F1000Research* charges for its service per article on the basis of word length, with a US$150 fee for articles of up to 1,000 words, $500 for 1,000–2,500 words and $1,000 for longer articles. Wellcome will pay these fees on behalf of its grantees. Articles that pass peer review will appear in abstract databases such as PubMed and in the PubMed Central and Europe PMC open-access repositories, with the citation *Wellcome Open Research*.

## Open review

Under the *F1000Research* system, authors choose the reviewers of their paper, whose names and reviews are published on the site alongside the article. These are advantages, says Robert Kiley, Wellcome's Head of Digital Services. "The transparent peer-review process provides authors with the ability to choose referees most appropriate to their subject, and whose comments they can subsequently use or cite to demonstrate the quality of their work," he says.

Will the arrangement foster a system in which researchers choose reviewers who are likely to go easy on their work? Kiley says that making the authors of the reviews public guards against this possibility.

Some have questioned the rigour of the *F1000Research* review process, noting that reviews tend to be short and positive. But Kiley, who calculates that reviews of research articles published using *F1000Research* are 400 words long on average, rebuts these criticisms: "It doesn't take very many words to explain that something is either seriously problematic or largely fine," he says. "Furthermore, the fact that the referees' name and referee report are public means the referees are more careful and conscientious to back up their comments because they know that they will be publicly judged."

Kiley hopes that other funders will follow suit, and over time, that the ventures could merge into one big, international platform. He says this would be in line with a desire from funders to shift away from individual journals and controversial metrics such as the impact factor. "The expectation is that this, and other similar funder platforms that are expected to emerge, will ultimately combine into one central platform that ensures that assessment can only be done at the article level," he says.

## 1 comment

Donald Forsdyke · 2016-07-07 02:26 PM

**F1000 AND SANITY** Thank you Declan Butler. The F1000 in-house editors have politely declined a recent submission from me, without publishing and consulting suggested reviewers. Now I learn the real reason. They doubt my sanity. I would appreciate it if some of your readers would visit the preprint versions that are available online (1,2) and reassure me on this issue. 1. Forsdyke DR (2014) William Bateson, slavery, eugenics and speciation. *PeerJ* . 2. Forsdyke DR (2016) William Bateson, slavery, eugenics and speciation: the relative roles of science and politics. *Social Sciences Research Network* .