

Scientist registry unveils plan to recognize efforts of peer-reviewers

Movement to publicly record peer-reviewing activity gains momentum.

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A service developed to track the work of researchers will soon be extended to include records of peer review.

More than 1.2 million people have signed up to use [ORCID \(Open Researcher and Contributor ID\)](#), a registry or 'science passport' that allocates users a unique 16-digit identifier and webpage that they can use to record their publications and grants. And on 18 May, ORCID [announced](#) that users would soon be able to record on their profile the many different types of peer review they do. ORCID's executive director, Laure Haak, hopes that the initiative will give researchers greater incentive to take part in the peer-review process.

Working with an international non-profit group called the Consortia Advancing Standards in Research Administration Information (CASRAI), ORCID and the open-access publisher Faculty of 1000 (F1000) in London worked to create a standard format in which to record multiple kinds of peer review. Within the format, researchers could record their reviews of manuscripts and grant applications, as well as online comments on papers and even work done for organizations (such as recommendations for faculty hiring), if they are allowed to publicly disclose their involvement. The format provides a way for records of reviews to be cited, and defines tags to label different parts of the record so that computer programs can read the data.

Allowing for anonymity

F1000, which uses open, signed peer reviews, says it will adopt the forthcoming ORCID standard, and will send reviewers a link that allows them to automatically add their reviewers' report on their ORCID record (if they have one). Haak says that national funders are also interested in using the standard to record grant-review activity.

But many journals do not disclose the text of reviews or the identity of their peer reviewers. In such cases, Haak says, an ORCID record might list the number of articles that an academic has reviewed for a journal in a given time period, without going into specifics.

The American Geophysical Union (AGU) in Washington DC will adopt this approach, says its director of publications, Brooks Hanson. AGU journals protect reviewers' identities by default, unless the scientists involved opt to reveal their names, he says. The organization plans to collect the identifiers of its reviewers and then post validated review activity to ORCID records; researchers can even document reviews of rejected papers and multiple re-reviews of the same paper, Hanson adds.

ORCID's standard is not the only attempt to recognize academics' peer-review efforts. The start-up firm [Publons](#) gives out awards to the scientists who post the largest number of verified reviews on its website, and publishers are increasingly adopting systems to [reward their most assiduous reviewers](#).

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