

# *The challenge of publishing your most important work*

Randy Schekman

Dept of Molecular and Cell Biology

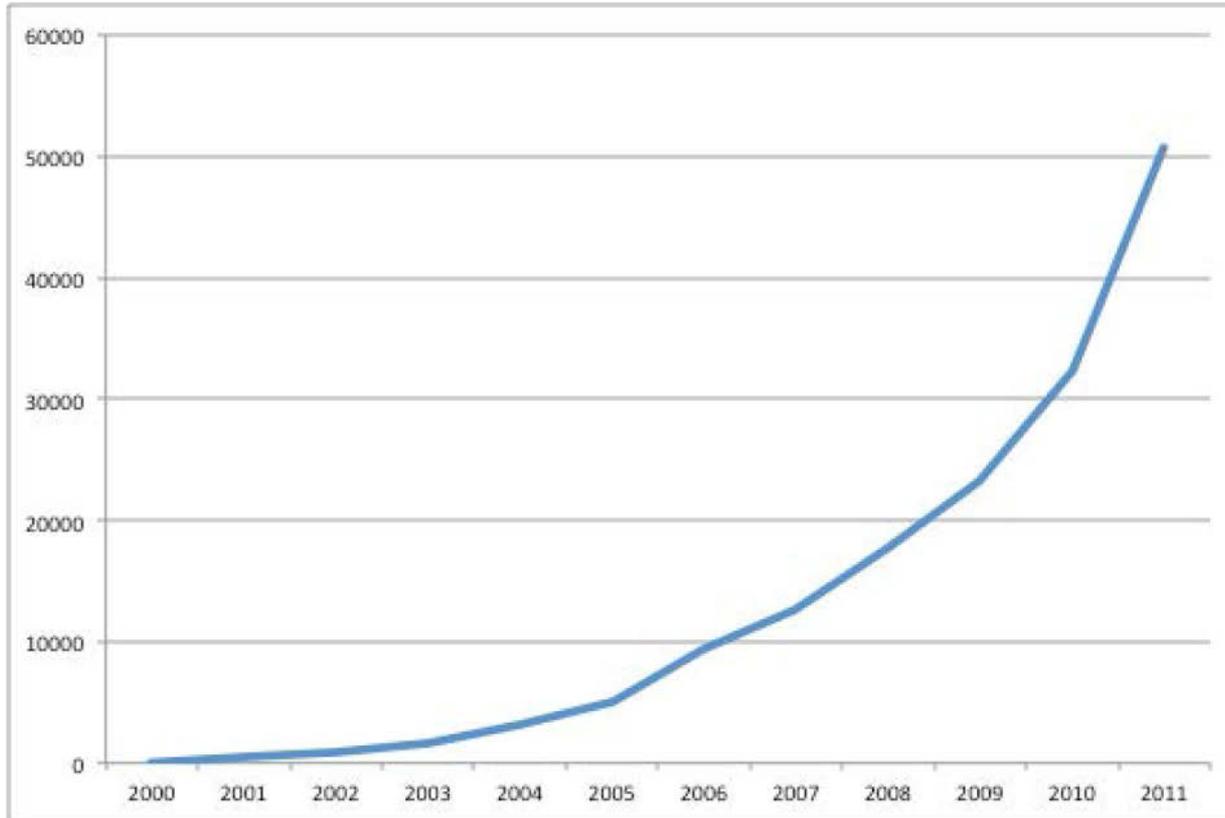
Howard Hughes Medical Institute

University of California, Berkeley

# *Journal categories*

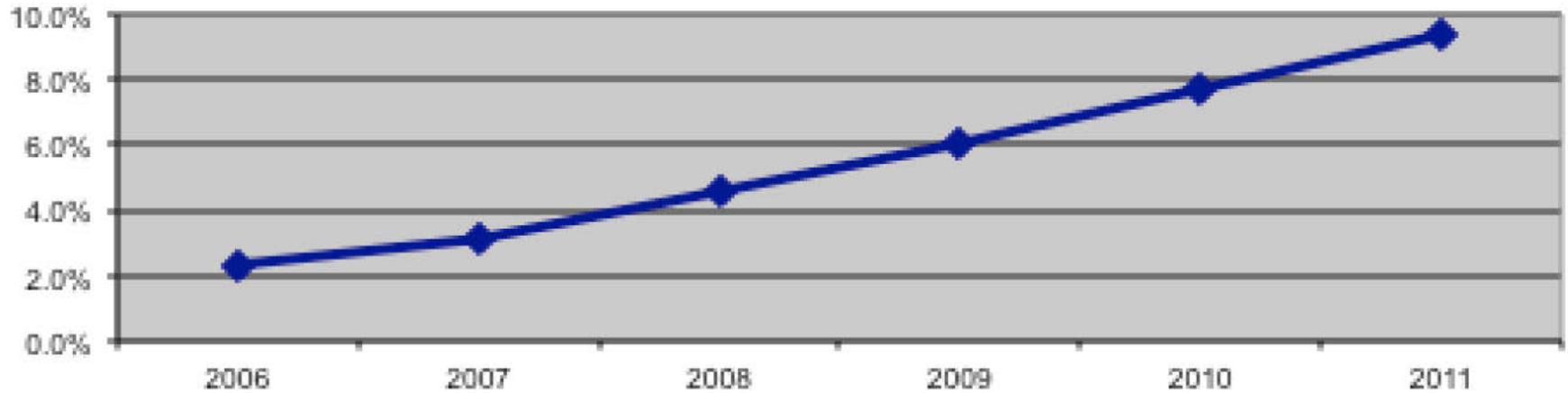
- Subscription, open access or hybrid
- Print format with online access or online only
- Private commercial, public profit-generating or not-for-profit
- Professional editors, academic editors or both

# Growth of OA



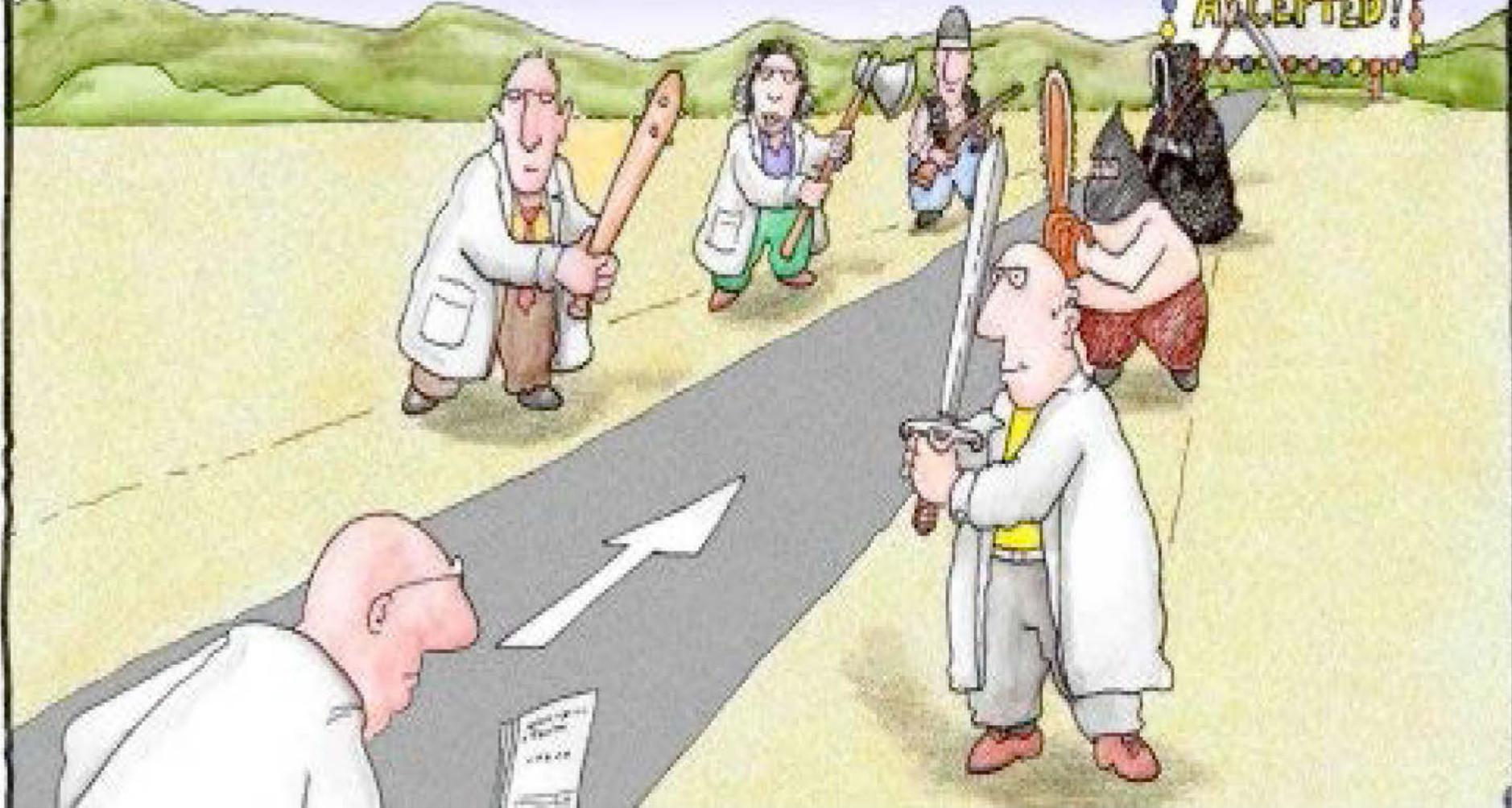
Publications  
BMC  
PLoS  
Hindawi

# *% OA in the life science literature*



%PubMed available as open access in PMC

# How does peer review work?



Is peer  
review  
broken?



# *Reform peer review!*

## **End the wasteful tyranny of reviewer experiments**

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**Peer review of scientific papers in top journals is bogged down by unnecessary demands for extra lab work, argues Hidde Ploegh.**

**nature**

Martin Raff, Alexander Johnson  
and Peter Walter

**Science**

*"The stress associated with publishing experimental results... can drain much of the joy from practicing science."*

# *The evil referee #3*



<http://youtu.be/-VRBWLpYCPY>

# *Limitations of the print model*



- Presentation of new research often limited by the print edition
- Time to put digital first

[http://www.fybridphotos.com/objects\\_stock\\_photo\\_1130183.html](http://www.fybridphotos.com/objects_stock_photo_1130183.html)

nature

42351\*

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## Greek scientists lose access to digital journals

The country's economic crisis is hitting researchers hard.

Alison Abbott

02 July 2015

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The Internet portals that provide access to electronic journals are being blocked because the government...

Greece's stormy economic situation (HEAL-Link) has been exacerbated with the threat of state bankruptcy, scientists are not expecting research funds to become available this time around.

Impact Factor score 41.456\*

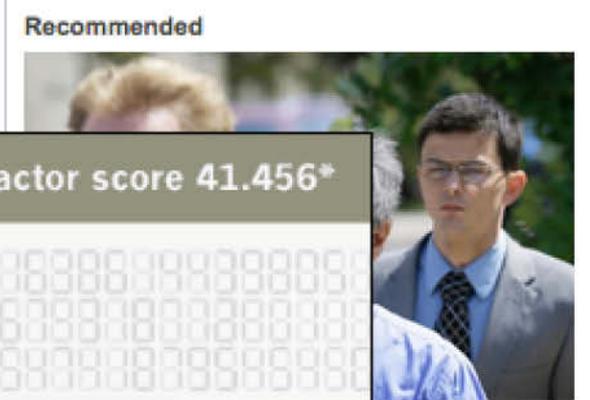


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\*2014 Journal citation report (Thomson Reuters, 2015)  
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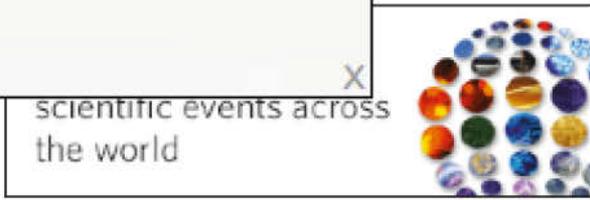


Recommended

...ed to prison for

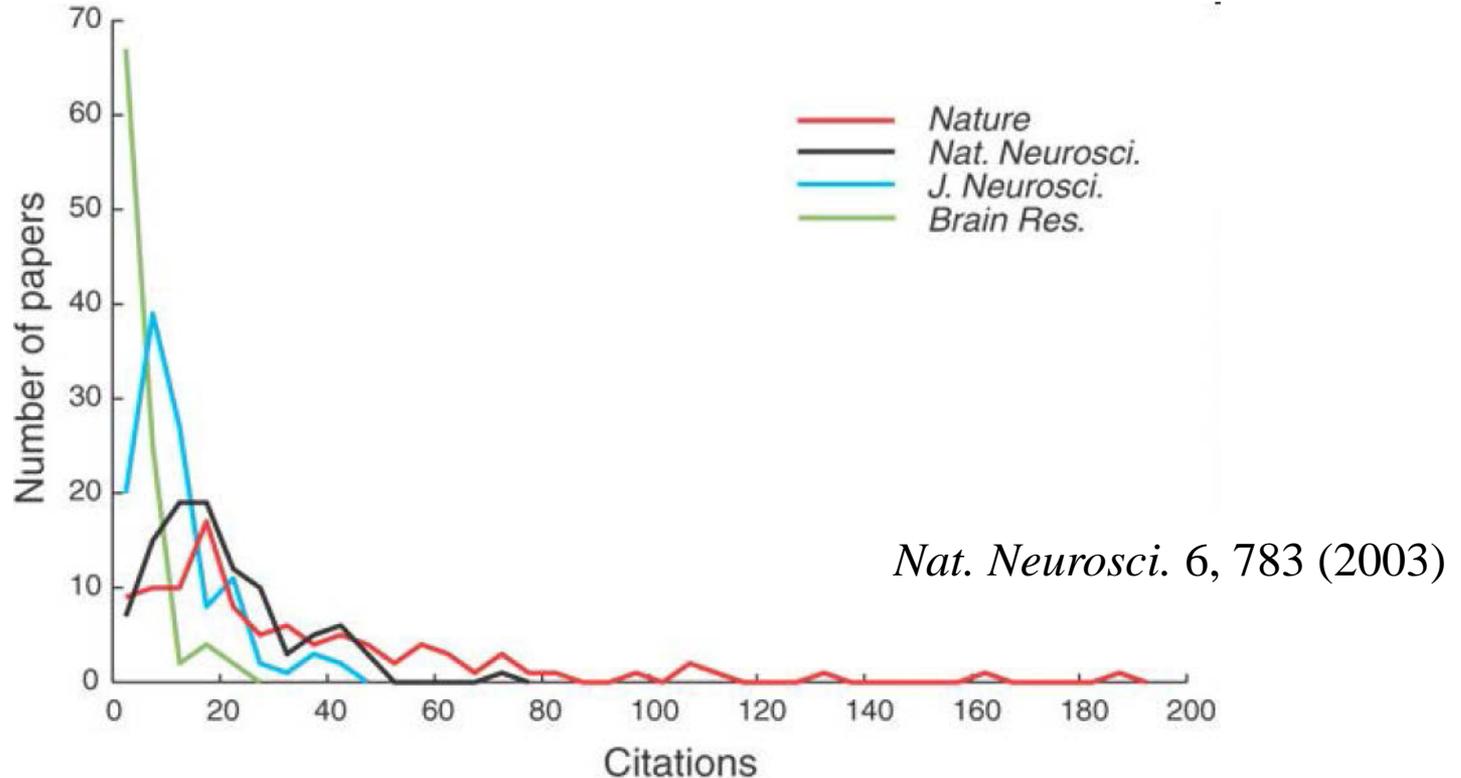
...erates the uneven

...isconduct.



scientific events across the world

# Citation data are a blunt instrument, at best



In every case, the medians are far lower than the means, reinforcing the point that JIF is almost useless as a predictor of likely citations for an individual paper

# 中国科学院生物物理研究所

## 关于调整研究所科技绩效奖励方案的通知

所属研究组：

经所学术委员会研究，第九届所长第 15 次所务会讨论通过，决定对我所“科技绩效奖励”方案进行如下调整：

1、研究论文奖励等级分为：一等奖、二等奖和鼓励奖。奖励范围和金额如下：

奖励等级	奖励范围	单篇奖金
一等奖	《Cell》，《Nature》，《Science》	20 万元
二等奖	《PNAS》以上及相当	5 万元
鼓励奖	《生物化学与生物物理进展》、《生物物理学报》、《Protein Cell》	500 元

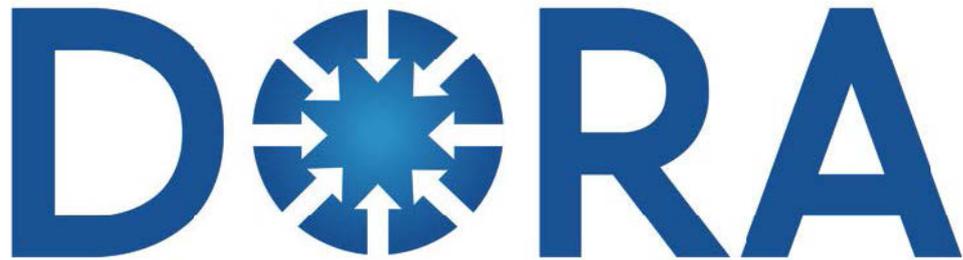
“PNAS 以上及相当”：原则上为当年  $IF \geq PNAS$  的期刊。特殊情况需重点实验室提交所学术委员会审议。

2、增加对联合培养学生发表论文的奖励。对于联合培养的研究生，科研工作在我所完成，以我所为共同的第一作者单位和通讯作者单位的研究成果（其中学生资格以单位签订的联合培养学生协议为依据）。

3、此方案从 2013 年起实施，2011 年发布的《研究所科技绩效奖励办法》（科生发科字[2011]46 号）中与此不一致部分同时废止，不再另行发文，科学与技术处负责解释。



**San Francisco**



**Declaration on Research Assessment**

- General recommendations
  - Move away from impact factors
  - Assess outputs on their own merits
  - Exploit new tools and approaches
- And specific recommendations for publishers, funders, institutions, metrics suppliers, and **researchers**
- >6000 signatories



NIH Director Trump @NIH\_Trump · Sep 4

Huge news. We won negotiations with Macmillan. All #Nature journals to be re-branded TRUMP. All will be IF > 50 in 2016! Suck it, Schekman!

RETWEETS

35

FAVORITES

28



9:15 AM - 4 Sep 2015 · Details





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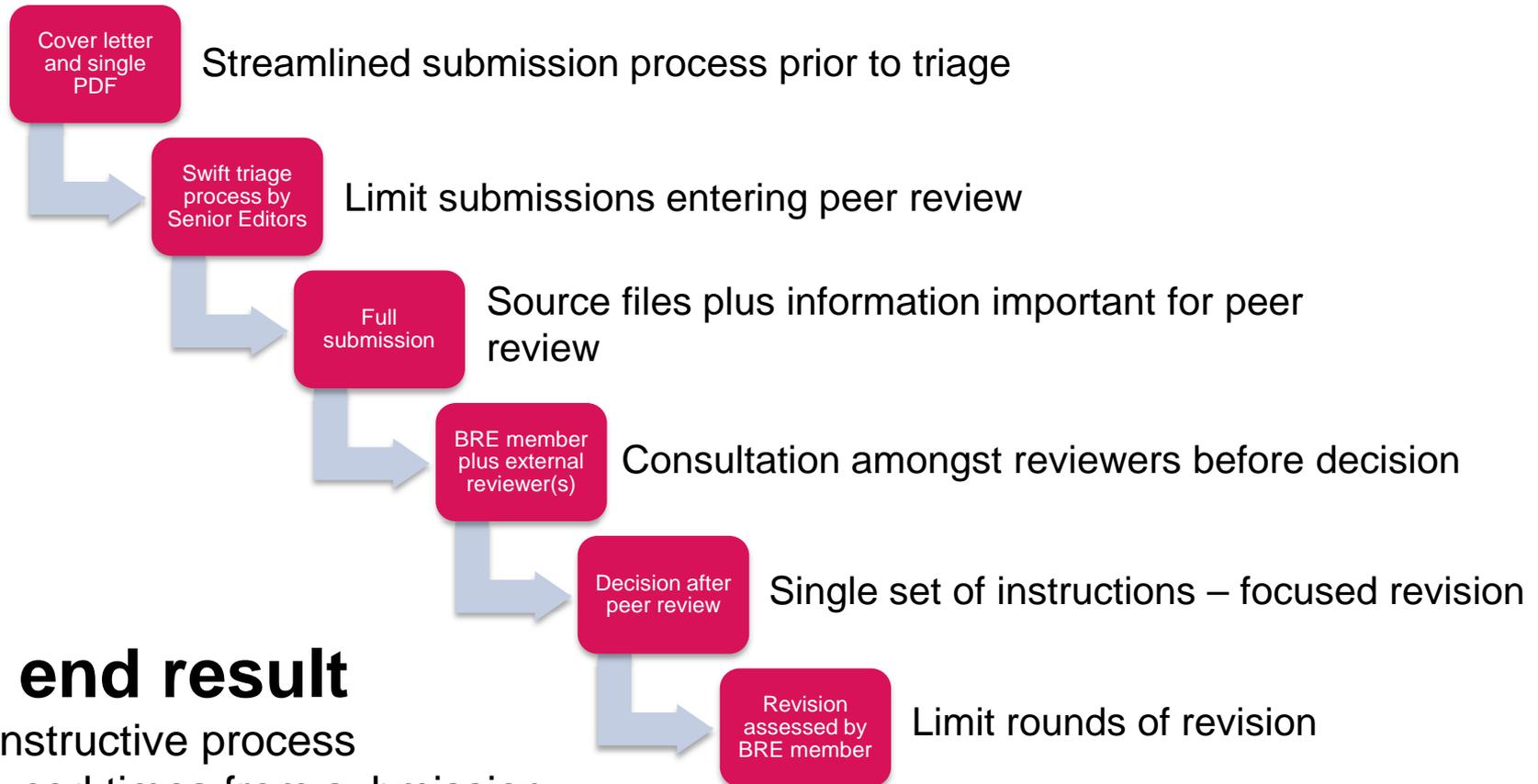
HHMI



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# Consultative review process



## The end result

- > A constructive process
- > Reduced times from submission to acceptance

[BRE; Reviewer 1]	I don't think the incremental part was a uniform view. I was not in a position to judge, but I am not sure that [Reviewer 2] would agree. Maybe he would. [Reviewer 2] if you concur, I will reject. I would like your input on my difficulties following the paper. You both have interests that overlap the contents of the paper.
[Reviewer 3]	[BRE/Reviewer 1], I suggest that you re-read [a previously published] paper before making any decisions on this paper.
[BRE; Reviewer 1]	Actually, I will have to read it for the first time, not re-read it. I have not taken any position on the derivative nature of the paper yet. I had other problems with the manuscript – problems of the naive reader. I am waiting to see if [Reviewer 2] wants to defend the paper from either of our (yours or my) concerns.
[Reviewer 2]	I thought the paper was well written and was able to follow it. As I mentioned in my review, I do think it mirrors much of [previously published] work, but in my opinion, the work presented here is cleaner and even more compelling. However, one thing that was not clearly articulated in this paper is how this work advances (and distinguishes itself from) [previously published] work. My instinct would be to accept it: the movies themselves are absolutely wonderful and the paper will be highly cited. One idea is to let the authors respond to the reviews, with the understanding that there were some concerns about the novelty of the work.
[BRE; Reviewer 1]	I was just about to commence with rejecting the manuscript. And then I paused. I want to raise the issue of the “synapses”, which I think might carry the manuscript over the hump. Showing these connections is very important for a couple of reasons. It provides mechanism for cell-cell transfer. Is this a new finding and is it of general interest?
[Reviewer 2]	I favor acceptance after looking at the paper again last night. I do think the “bells and whistles” make this a significant contribution. In addition, providing the images to support the model is important and challenging. Again, the movies are simply fantastic.
[Reviewer 3]	I have no objection to accepting the paper as I feel that the quality is high. I think this is more of an editorial decision rather than a scientific one.
[BRE; Reviewer 1]	It is a close call. My thinking now is that if they can be more clear about their advances that this can be accepted. I will try to make it clear to them that contributions vs confirmations and speculations should be clear.
[Reviewer 2]	Thanks [all]. [This] is a great review process.

Display Review Summary

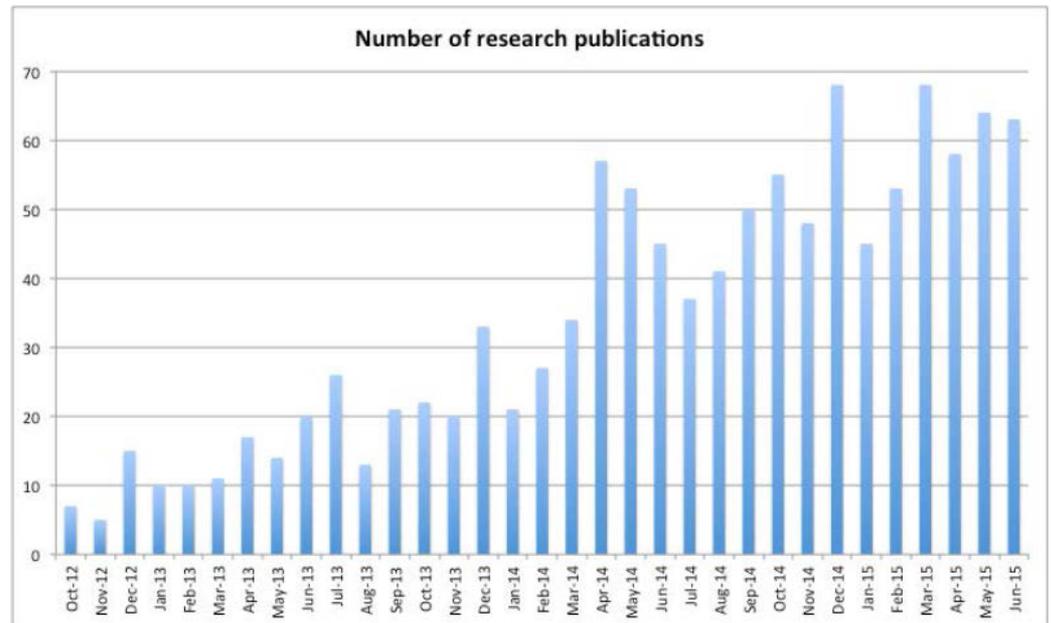
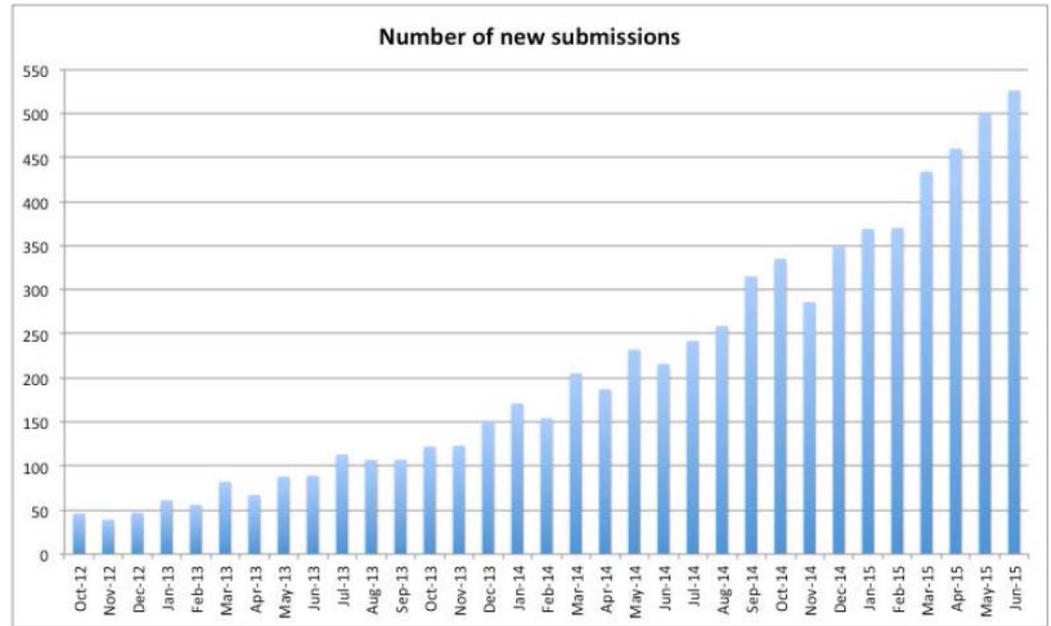
Add consultation comments to session

Add Comment

Cancel

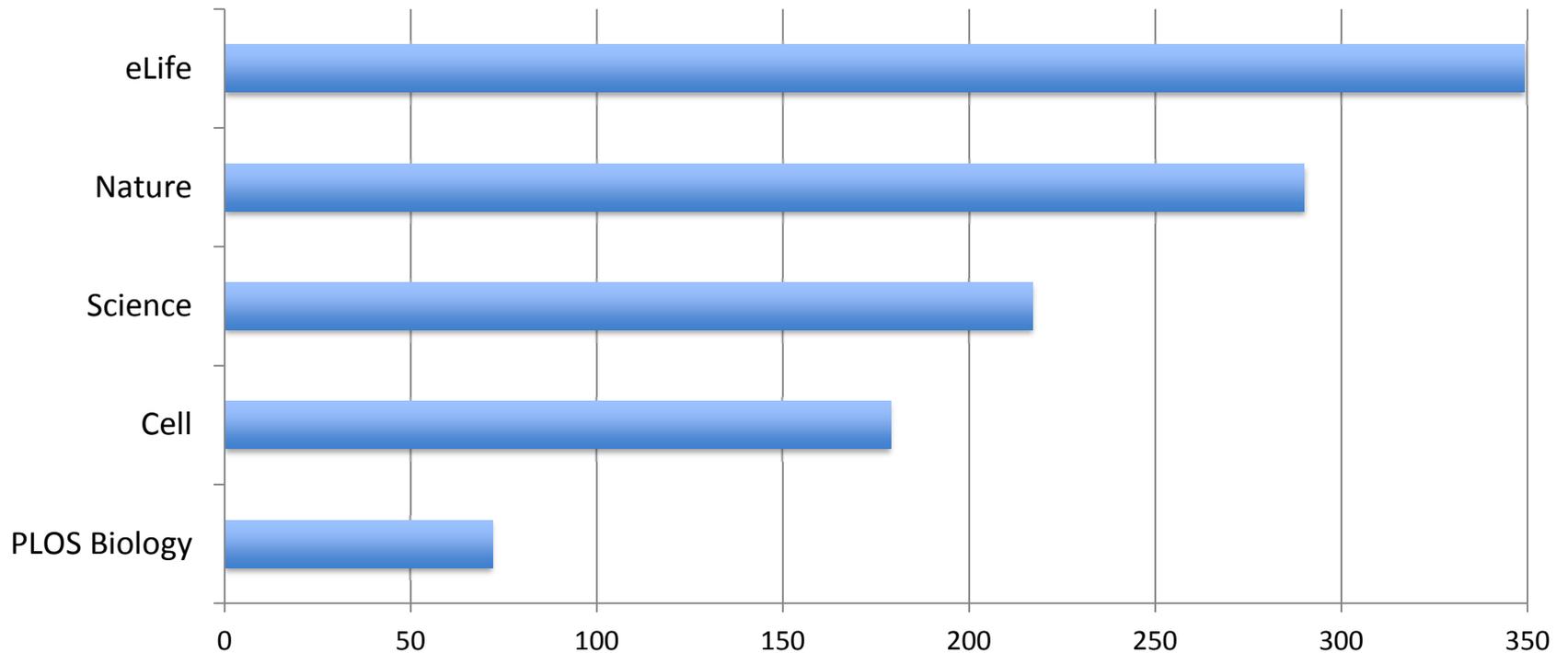
# Submissions and publications

Earlier this year eLife published our 1000<sup>th</sup> research article and is now receiving more than 500 submissions per month.

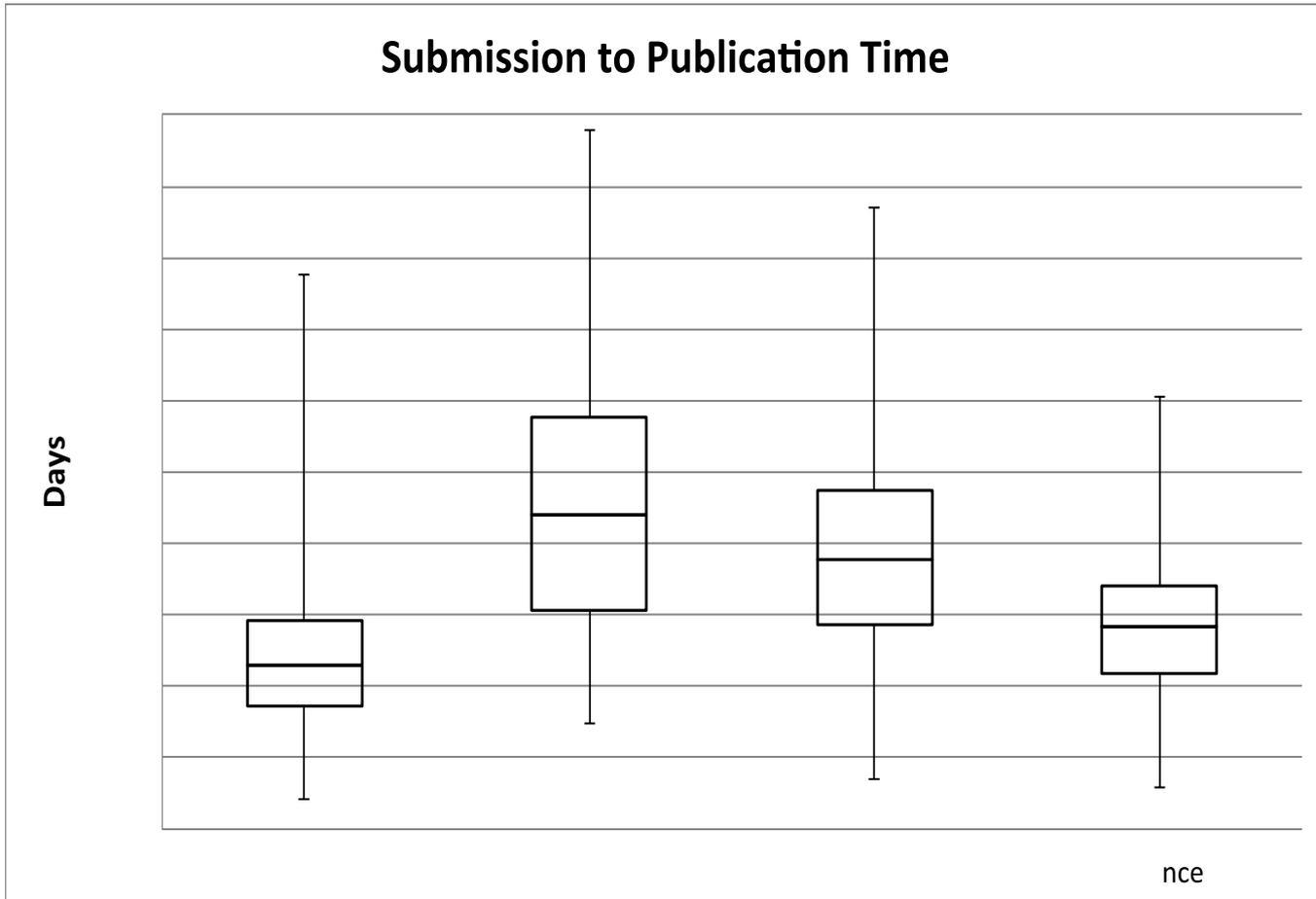


# Volume of publishing

**Number of research papers published in the life sciences, January to June 2015**



# Quality of service



## Institutions with the most papers accepted by *eLife*, up to March 2015

University of California, Berkeley	50
UT Southwestern	28
University of California, San Francisco	27
University of Oxford	24
Stanford University	23
Harvard University	19
Harvard Medical School	19
University of Cambridge	17
Yale University	17
Medical Research Council Laboratory of Molecular Biology	14

**I hate the editors of these journals more than  
I hate Republicans.**

**—James Watson**, of double-helix fame, speaking  
about recent rejections from several journals