

# Giving credit to the right Dr. Wong: Seeking a unique ID for scientists

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Which D. K. Wong gets credit for the next miracle cure? Is it Daniel Keith Wong, Danny Karl Wong, or Danellia Kay Wong? Scientists and publishers are trying to develop a new identity system — similar to a social security number — that would eliminate the alphabet soup of uncertainty that exists among authors of scientific papers with easily-confused names. That's the topic of an article in Chemical & Engineering News (C&EN), ACS' weekly newsmagazine.

C&EN Senior Editor Sophie Rovner notes that [scientists](#) rightly want credit for their research discoveries without being confused with individuals with the same name or initials. However, there's no universal system for attributing research discoveries to the correct scientist among many with the same name. As a result, researchers, [publishers](#), and scientific and government organizations are seeking a "unique author identifier."

One possible approach to such unique identifiers involves setting up a central registry where every scientist could obtain an ID upon publication of their first paper and use it throughout a lifetime of publishing papers, applying for grants, and conducting other scientific business. The article describes a number of such projects currently being developed.

**More information:** "A Question of Identity", Chemical & Engineering News, [pubs.acs.org/cen/science/88/8821sci2.html](http://pubs.acs.org/cen/science/88/8821sci2.html)

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