

Younger researchers are embracing change in scholarly communication

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As another successful Open Access Week passes, analysis released today reveals younger researchers are embracing change in scholarly communication. Just under 8,000 researchers from around the world responded to the 2014 Taylor & Francis Open Access Survey, giving their views on everything from the benefits of open access to licence preferences, peer review to the future of academic publishing. The overall results showed that whilst positivity was growing, uncertainty remained. But among the youngest respondents this uncertainty seems to be diminishing, as they embrace open access and the different options that are now available to them when they publish their research.

Those in the 20-29 year old [age](#) group were most likely to agree that open access journals have a larger readership than subscription journals (58% either strongly agreed or agreed with this statement) and that open access journals are more heavily cited. Across all other age groups agreement with these statements decreased with age, with just 15% of those who were 70 or over expressing the same level of agreement on citations. Authors in their sixties and seventies offered the opposite opinion to those in their twenties, being the least likely to agree that open access publication increased readership and citations, and most likely to agree with the statement that there is 'no fundamental benefit to open access'.

Researchers were also asked to state their preference on different types of peer review, from rigorous peer review to post-publication review. Those in their twenties were least inclined to say 'a rigorous assessment

of the merit and novelty of their article' is 'always' a suitable form of peer review for their research, and showed the most support for 'accelerated peer review with fewer rounds of revision', with 48% saying this would be always, or nearly always, acceptable for their work. Authors in their sixties showed the highest preference for rigorous [peer review](#), although the number selecting 'always' (39%) was only 5% above the average for all age groups.

And what of their future intentions on publishing gold or green open access? Younger authors are consistently the highest proportion of any age group saying they would choose to publish their work open access, whether gold (37%) or green (51%). When it comes to being mandated to publish open access though, those in their twenties were the most unsure, with 61% unclear on whether they would be mandated to publish gold open access in the future.

But challenging current forms of scholarly communication only went so far for those who responded, with just one in ten believing that academic papers would no longer be the main output of research in ten years' time. This remained static across all age groups. Of those who thought there might be a future alternative, the respondents suggested everything from interactive multimedia to blogging, greater use of repositories to more applied research, social media to the continued rise of [open access](#). It seems the future is very much up for debate.

The full analysis by age is now available on Taylor & Francis Online, including an infographic of the key findings.

More information: The analysis is available online:
www.tandfonline.com/page/openaccess/opensurvey/2014

Provided by Taylor & Francis

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