
WHAT IF I TOLD YOU
WE CAN DO PEER REVIEW WITHOUT JOURNALS?

E-BIOMED

Dear Colleagues:

I am continuing to think about more effective use of electronic methods for disseminating the results of biomedical research, and am actively seeking additional views and hoping to stimulate wider discourse on the matter. I hope you will read this latest draft of a proposal for a new system for electronic publishing and send me any comments at the e-mail address given above. We will be posting the responses for others to read as well. The draft below was written by me, with active assistance from David Lipman, Director of the National Center for Biotechnology Information (NLM/NIH) and Pat Brown, Stanford University, and with the assistance of several others. -- Harold Varmus

May 5, 1999 (DRAFT)
and June 20, 1999 (ADDENDUM)

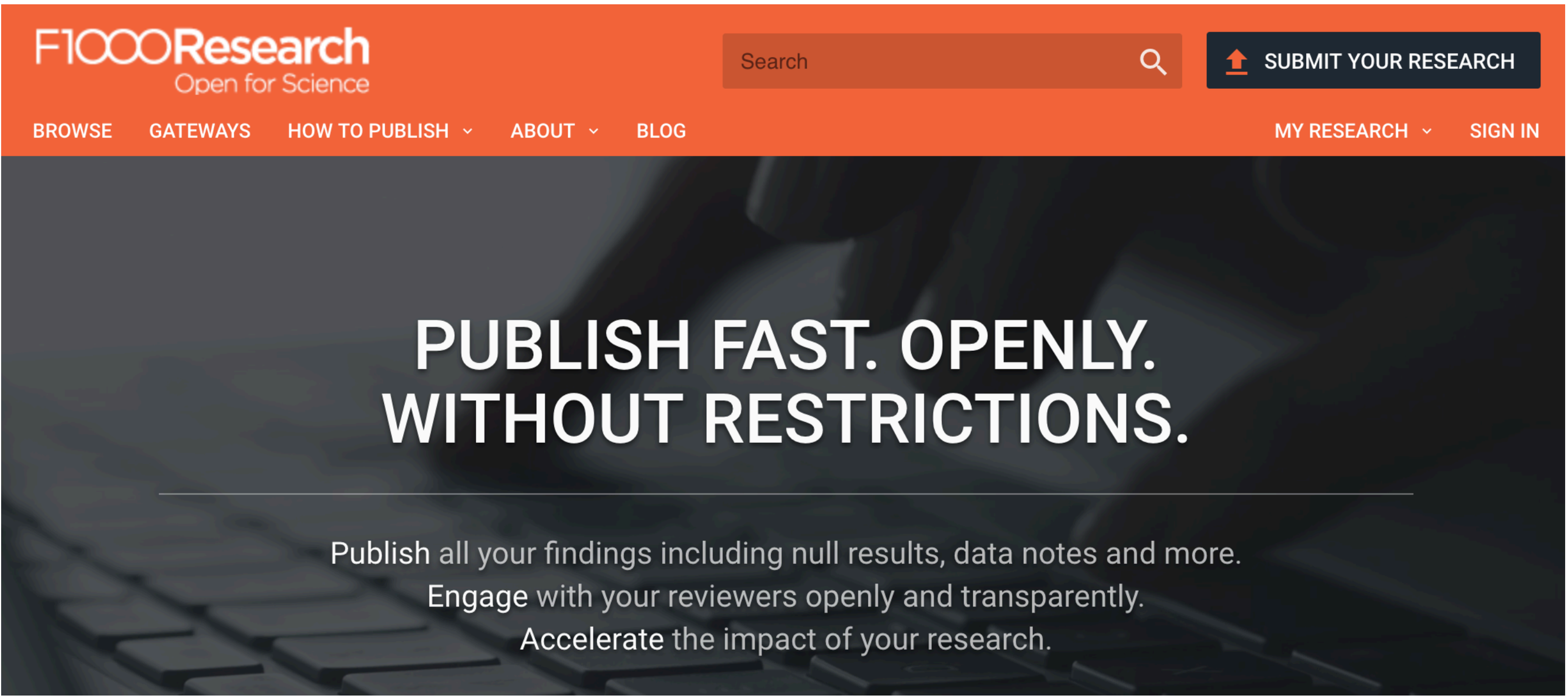
E-BIOMED:

A Proposal for Electronic Publications in the Biomedical Sciences

A
Post
Publication
Review &
Assessment
In
Science
Experiment

Our mission is to to accelerate research and promote its effective use build a robust reader and community driven system of post publication peer review

Post-publication review already exists



- All reviews are open, citable and linked to paper on bioRxiv
- As an appraiser you review papers you choose to read rather than those someone else asked you to review
- Appraisals are not just technical reviews, but are focused on providing information for audiences of readers, potential readers and others
- Appraisals are part full text, part quantitative and intended to be used in multiple ways

The different audiences and uses of peer review

Potential readers (people who are looking for papers to read)

want to find articles that are interesting, useful and important to them and know how to prioritize them

Readers (people who have chosen to read the article)

want to know what parts of the work are valid/flawed, and they want context to help them interpret and use the data, methods and ideas

Never readers (people evaluating the scientists, public)

want to know if the work is innovative, well executed and impactful

Authors

care about all of these things and want constructive feedback that makes the paper being reviewed and their future research better

- Appraisers can concur with or dissent from other appraisals to help recognize and convey consensus and disagreements
- Default is to identify appraiser, but option for certified anonymity
- Appraisals are part full text, part quantitative and intended to be used in multiple ways

- Develop software for appraising bioRxiv papers in collaboration with openreview.net
- Work with bioRxiv, PLOS and others to develop standards for production and display of badges/tags (aka Polka Dots)

- Launching small scale tests in Structural Biology, Neuroscience and Evolutionary Genomics with appraisers primarily consisting of ECRs in the next few months
- Expand and open system for all to form groups and submit appraisals

PLEASE APPRAISE

Please let me know what you think about the ideas and if you'd like to participate in any way.

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