Preprints from a researcher’s perspective

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Who am I?

• Cell biologist
• Group leader for 14 years in UK academia
• Research group ~10 members (students, post-docs)
• Pro preprint
  • First preprint in 2014
  • Lab policy is to preprint where possible
  • Affiliate of bioRxiv
  • Director, Company of Biologists (preLights, Journals, meetings)
Preprint consumers

- Cell biology is preprint-friendly
- Paper discovery (RSS, twitter, slack): preprints > papers
- Preprint journal club
- Using methods from preprints
- Preprints are “open access” papers

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<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Papers</th>
<th>Share (%)</th>
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Preprint producers

Why do we deposit preprints?

- Fast scientific communication
- Extension of what we have always done – talks/posters
- DOI + scoop protection
- Feedback
- ECR benefit
• All journal articles published in 2019
• 1,060,195 papers in 4,673 journals (3,847 with >9 papers)
• Median received to published time is 146 days (IQR = 94 - 216)
• Median time per journal is **165 days** (IQR = 125 - 219)

• Underestimate
  • “Reject and resubmit”
  • Does not include time spent at other journals
Publishing takes time...

Time from very first submission to final publication for our papers

Time spent at the journal that published the paper
Time spent at other journals

https://quantixed.org/2018/01/02/some-things-last-a-long-time-ii/
…a long time!

The journey that one of our papers took
Preprints and careers

• Tough for an ECR on a short contract to publish a paper

• Preprints allow ECRs to show productivity
  • Fellowship and job applications
  • No more “submitted” or “in preparation” papers

• PIs similarly use preprints
  • Grant applications – allowed/encouraged by funders
  • Tenure or promotion cases