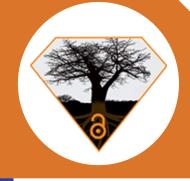


Research assessment within a diamond OA framework



Perspective on assessment and how it can contribute to bolstering diamond

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Introduction



- Research assessment reform key to shaping the research landscape
- Consensus that research evaluation needs to be reformed
- Consensus that the research enterprise manage tension while
 - maintaining research quality
 - upholding research integrity
 - being inclusive and diverse and
 - safeguarding both basic and applied research
- Narrow and simplistic set of evaluative metrics not satisfactory
- Distorted incentives of achievements

Brief overview of Research Assessment in South Africa



- 26 public universities
- Primary contributors to the nation's research output
- Accounting for less than 1% of global research output
- Government plays central role in funding research
- Primarily by subsidizing publications in journals and conference proceedings
- Beyond direct subsidies, the National Research Foundation tasked with "promoting and supporting research through funding, human resource development and the provision of necessary research facilities"
- To further enhance research quality, the NRF employs a rating system that categorises researchers based on the impact of their recent work

Brief overview of Research Assessment in South Africa



There seems to be a disconnect between aligning research assessment practices with open access priorities and policies

Brief overview of Open Access/Diamond Open Access in South Africa



- Growth of Open Access in South Africa in recent years
- Remains obstacles
- Range of open science initiatives over the last 20 years
 - 2009 South Africa joined the SciELO program
 - 2012 The Berlin 10 Open Access Conference is held by Stellenbosch University. The conference focused on removing financial barriers that limit access
 - 2015 The NRF mandated that authors receiving funding should deposit their work in an institutional repository with an embargo period of 12 months
 - 2017 The African Open Science Platform is launched
 - 2019 The Dept of Science and Innovation publish a White Paper that places science, technology, and innovation at the top of the country's agenda. Open Access represents a small but very important part of this.
 - 2024 Open Science in the South 2024 is co-hosted by the NRF in Cape Town
 - 2024 2nd Global Summit on DOA hosted at UCT

Rebutting the misperceptions of prestige or lack thereof



- Persistent perception amongst researchers that Open Access journals are inferior
- Especially pronounces with DOA, which often lack inclusion in mainstream indices
- Research-performing and funding organisations continue to rely heavily on metrics
- Reliance on JIF or Wos indexing often favours subscription-based journals
- Must develop alternative approaches to research evaluation that go beyond Impact Factors
- Recognising the value of DOA in research assessments lies in addressing and challenging this perception of inferiority

Challenges



- Benefits of diamond not crystal clear
- Neither gold nor hybrid has broken the dominance of the major commercial publishers
- Lost faith in the so-called transformative agreements
- Diamond OA now seen as the next big thing
- Misconceptions needs to be addressed:

 understanding of publishing model's costs
 assessment of sustainability business model
- Equity remains vague
- The risk is another cycle of high hope

Strategies for recognizing DOA in research evaluation



- Relationship between OA and assessment is complicated
- Integration into research policies of funding agencies, governments, and institutions
- Promotion of quality in Diamond OA
- Inclusion in university incentive and reward structures
- Promote and monitor the progress of OA/DOA policies and quality standards
- Including OA publications in the assessment and excluding closed publications
- Follow international responsible assessment guidelines, e.g. DOAR declaration
- OA should be part of research assessment
- Researchers should also be rewarded for open science practices

Conclusion



- Recognise that both peer review and OA contribute to the quality of research
- Incentives should be aimed at encouraging researchers and institutions to publish in open access journals and books
- Both qualitative and quantitative assessments are important to ensure diversity of research output
- Maximizing inclusion and diversity
- Optimizing research as a public good
- Responding to a fast-changing world, including the application of artificial intelligence and machine learning

