

## The Royal Society of Biology **Research Communications Newsletter**

*A collection of online information and opinion pieces.*

**June 2024**

This newsletter provides links to published news articles. Views or opinions presented are those of the original author(s) and do not necessarily represent the views of the Royal Society of Biology.

### Royal Society of Biology news

#### [Royal Society of Biology priorities for the first year of a new Parliament](#)

In this briefing for candidates standing at the General Election on 4th July, The Royal Society of Biology calls on the next government to invest in the biosciences for a sustainable and prosperous future, and to promote STEM teaching, learning and expertise in schools, colleges, university, training and government.

#### [Introducing the Biorisk Professional Registration Scheme \(BPRS\)](#)

RSB, in collaboration with the Biorisk Strategic Leadership Group (BSLG), is proud to launch the Biorisk Professional Registration Scheme (BPRS). This new initiative provides a robust mechanism for individuals involved in the management, control, or containment of biological risks to develop and demonstrate their professional skills. BPRS not only grants recognised professional status to practitioners but also offers a clear career development pathway, and establishes a benchmark of professional competence for duty-holders.

### Spotlight on open access

#### [Opinion: Open access: remove open access burden from REF](#)

In this Higher Education Policy Institute (HEPI) blog, the University of Oxford's Patrick Grant, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research; Tanita Casci, Director of the Research Strategy & Policy Unit; and Stephen Conway, Executive Director of Research Services, argue that the latest Research Excellence Framework proposals for open access risk being unaffordable and excessively bureaucratic.

#### [Coalition S calls for stronger open access policy for REF 2029](#)

Funders' group Coalition S says proposed Research Excellence Framework requirements lag behind policies in EU and US, and has called for the open access requirements in the Research Excellence Framework 2029 to be strengthened, reports Research Professional News.

#### [Opinion: Judge open science by its outcomes, not its outputs](#)

Counting publications does not build equity, integrity and value, write Leiden University's Ismael Rafols and Louise Bezuidenhout in Research Professional News. They argue that open science is not just about changing the practices of research, but also its motivations and values.

## Publication policy and debate

### [Putting research publications to work in tackling the SDGs – three challenges to publishers](#)

Writing in The Scholarly Kitchen, Charlie Rapple, co-founder of Kudos and Vice Chair of UKSG, an international non-profit which connects the information community, highlights three challenges that scholarly publishers could face on the journey to address the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

### [Biomedical paper retractions have quadrupled in 20 years – why?](#)

Unreliable data, falsification and other issues related to misconduct are driving a growing proportion of retractions, which have quadrupled since 2000, writes Nature News.

### [Latest Elsevier gender equality study reveals 20 years of progress, but challenges remain](#)

Elsevier has released its latest report analysing gender equality in research. 'Progress Towards Gender Equality in Research & Innovation – 2024 Review' reveals that women now represent 41% of researchers globally, but also that serious challenges persist in gender equality in research and innovation.

### [Embracing the role of undergraduate students as engaged researchers](#)

The teaching of undergraduate research can suffer from being overly mechanical. Writing in Wonkhe, Robert Gordon University's Erica Cargill and James Cunningham call for deeper engagement.

## International publishing

### [Journalists at Springer Nature titles set to strike over pay](#)

Staff at Nature and dozens of other leading science journals walked out on 20th June, after NUJ members overwhelmingly voted in favour of industrial action over a pay dispute. In their ballot, which saw a 90% turnout, 93% of staff supported strike action. The planned action will include a number of strike days as well as working to rule, scheduled throughout June and July.

### [Japan's push to make all research open access is taking shape](#)

Japan will start allocating the ¥10 billion it promised to spend on institutional repositories to make the nation's science free to read, reports Nature News.

### [Has war in Ukraine isolated Russian science?](#)

Drawing on new data, the authors of this post on the LSE Impact blog explore how the conflict in Ukraine has changed Russian science, and how international sanctions have played a minor role compared to domestic politics in isolating Russian scientists.

## And finally...

### [Can parents in academia “have it all”?](#)

The Scholarly Kitchen's Roohi Ghosh reflects on the much-deserved support that parents, both mothers and fathers, need from academic institutions.

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