Wellcome Open Research launches with first articles

Wellcome Open Research, Wellcome’s publishing platform, launches today. Its first articles are published and freely available to view, and will shortly undergo open peer review. They span a range of formats—from more traditional research articles to data notes, software tools and study protocols, and are from academics across a range of career levels.

Using publishing services developed by F1000, the Wellcome Open Research platform enables Wellcome grantees to make their research outputs available faster and in ways that support reproducibility and transparency.

Using a model of immediate publication followed by transparent invited peer review, the platform allows for publication of any type of findings that authors wish to publish—from more traditional narrative-based articles to incremental findings, methods, protocols, datasets and negative/null results.

Professor Jim Smith, Director of Research at the Francis Crick Institute and Wellcome Open Research Advisory Board member, said:

“Open research drives innovation and discovery, promotes transparency, and improves trust and reproducibility. This platform provides a ready opportunity for all Wellcome grantees to share their research.”

The transparent peer review process encourages constructive feedback from experts focussed on helping the authors improve their work, rather than on making an editorial decision to accept or reject an article behind closed doors.

Authors choose their referees, allowing them to suggest those most appropriate to their work and whose comments they can later cite to demonstrate the quality of their work. The subsequent referee reports are published openly with the reviewer’s identities for all to see. This model has been demonstrated by F1000Research.

Clara Grabitz, a Master’s student who was working in Wellcome Principal Research Fellow Professor Dorothy Bishop’s lab during her undergraduate degree at the University of Oxford, and has an article published today said:

“Having a platform like Wellcome Open Research to publish on is truly beneficial for early career researchers, as our work appears quickly, without the delays inherent in the closed peer review process. It’s important to me that my outputs are open access too, it means there are no barriers around my research.”

Robert Kiley, Head of Digital Services at Wellcome, said:

“Our long-held view is that researcher assessment should be based on actual outputs—supported by article-level metrics and transparent comments from referees—rather than using the journal’s name, or its impact factor, as a proxy of quality.

“As a funder-based platform, we hope Wellcome Open Research will spark a change in the way research and researchers are assessed.”

Rebecca Lawrence, Managing Director of F1000, said:
“With their tradition of leading innovation in the way research is communicated, Wellcome are leading in a profoundly different publishing approach to improve the way researchers share their findings. This innovative service is open to all their grantees and shifts the control of the process from research journals directly to researchers themselves. Platforms like these could trigger a seismic shift in how new findings of all types are transmitted, reducing bias, improving reproducibility and reducing research waste, while creating a fairer system for evaluating research and researchers for future jobs and grants.”

The following articles are among the first research to appear on Wellcome Open Research. They are all currently awaiting peer review.

An investigation into the mechanisms of developmental disorders. This shows for the first time in a large-scale study of such detail that deleting the same gene from mouse embryos that have virtually identical genomes can result in a wide range of different physical traits or abnormalities. ‘Highly variable penetrance of abnormal phenotypes in embryonic lethal knockout mice’ Robert Wilson et al. DOI: 10.12688/wellcomeopenres.9899.1

Research using ultrasound to investigate whether bilingual people use one side of the brain more than the other in their first and second languages. The work suggests that highly proficient bilinguals tend to use the same hemisphere for both first and second languages. ‘Cerebral lateralisation of first and second languages in bilinguals assessed using functional transcranial Doppler ultrasound’ Clara Grabitz et al. DOI: 10.12688/wellcomeopenres.9869.1

A data set for Hepatitis B epitopes. A truly open data set, which is not only an interactive resource but one which other researchers can add to. The authors will use article versioning to ensure this is a truly ‘living article’. ‘Hepitopes: A live interactive database of HLA class 1 epitopes in hepatitis B virus’ Philippa Matthews et al. DOI: 10.12688/wellcomeopenres.9952.1

A full description of a trial protocol has been published to show researchers how the analgesic efficacy of morphine is being tested in infants. ‘A blinded randomised placebo-controlled trial investigating the efficacy of morphine analgesia for procedural pain in infants’ Rebecca Slater et al. DOI: 10.12688/wellcomeopenres.10005.1

A data note describing a new reference sequence and draft assemblies for *Plasmodium vivax*, a human malaria parasite which causes substantial morbidity in Asia, South America and the Horn of Africa. As the new genomes were generated on parasites taken directly from patients, are far less fragmented than the current reference genome, and contain many more genes, the data should be helpful to study the subtelomeres, aiding the identification of new vaccine candidates. ‘A new *Plasmodium vivax* reference sequence with improved assembly of the subtelomeres reveals an abundance of pir genes’ Auburn et al. DOI: 10.12688/wellcomeopenres.9876.1

Articles will be openly available from November 15 at 12.00 GMT. Before then they are available on request, as is a full list of articles going live at that time.

Ends

1. For more information about Wellcome Open Research please go to [wellcomeopenresearch.org](http://wellcomeopenresearch.org)
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About F1000Research
F1000Research is an open science publishing platform for life scientists that offers immediate publication and transparent peer review, avoiding editorial bias and ensuring the inclusion of all source data. This process helps scientists to avoid the traditional, anonymous, pre-publication peer review process that can cause long delays before new results become visible.

Since its launch in January 2013, F1000Research has published around 1,500 articles across the life sciences, written by 6,000 authors. For more details on F1000Research go to www.f1000research.com