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CONTENTS

Improving the visibility of the institution, researchers and publications by introducing specific identifiers (PIDs)

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Abstract
In the course of 2021, the Belgian Health Care Knowledge Centre (KCE) has decided to give further thought to improving the visibility of the KCE publications. This has led it to develop a project to set up three types of persistent identifiers (PIDs): one for the institution, another for researchers and the third for the publications themselves. The purpose of this text is to retrace the various stages in the project's implementation and to share the initial findings.

Key words: *personally identifiable information; reference standards; publishing; persistent identifier.*

Introduction

The Belgian Health Care Knowledge Center (KCE) is a type B parastatal funded by the Belgian federal authorities. Its mission is to provide scientific advice on subjects relating to healthcare and it is not involved in the ensuing political choices.

It works in five areas of expertise: the organization and financing of healthcare in the broad sense (HSR), the evaluation of medical technologies (HTA), the production of clinical practice guidelines (GCP), the production of methodological manuals aimed at establishing valid working methods (Methods), and the coordination of the Belgian non-commercial clinical research program (KCE Trials).

The KCE produces publications in the form of reports, summaries, supplements, COVID contributions, etc. Reports and associated documents must be legally distributed within 30 working days of approval by the Board of Directors. The library service, in collaboration with the researchers and the communications service, makes these documents available via the institution's website, the library catalogue, the institutional repository and the legal deposit of the Royal Library of Belgium.

Objectives

The objectives of this project are multiple and are intended to respond to a series of needs and/or problems that are sometimes less obvious. We aim to facilitate the identification of the institution as a research organization, improve the identification of authors and their scientific output, facilitate the dissemination of documents produced as part of studies carried out within the KCE and improve the management of access to documents over time.

Project

The library has developed a project structured around three types of persistent identifier (PID):

- setting up a specific PID for the institution (to be implemented in 2021);
- the introduction of PIDs for authors of the institution's publications (to be introduced from 2022);
- the implementation of PIDs for the institution's publications (to be introduced during 2022).

It was decided to work in three phases to spread the workload across the many other tasks already carried out by the department.

In practice, these phases are part of a cross-functional dynamic that is not limited to the library, but also covers human resources, communication, layout, the research program and knowledge management.

Setting up

Phase 1: the persistent identifier for the institution

The persistent identifier (PID) (1) for a scientific insti-

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tution has become a key element of identification and recognition in recent years. More than 17 organizations offer this type of identifier, whether commercial, non-commercial, national, or international.
It allows the unique identification of the institution's name and, by extension, the association of its members. It provides a permanent link between researchers, projects, and publications, while adding value in terms of recognition, evaluation, and monitoring of research results.
In our context and in addition to pre-existing PIDs such as ISNI (2), ISIL (3), Crossref Funder ID (4), the first step was to choose the PID corresponding to the specificities of the institution. Among the selection criteria identified, we determined that the non-commercial aspect and the scientific and/or research field were the reference points to be considered.
The Research Organization Registry (ROR) (5), which is defined as an open directory of permanent identifiers for research organizations, was therefore a logical choice following the transition of the work carried out by the GRID (6) to the ROR in Q4 2021.
In 2023, it had over 102,000 entries for more than fifty integrations with different systems. It is also the default identifier supported by Crossref DOI, DataCite (7) DOI metadata and ORCID.
This directory is managed centrally. New registrations are created using a web form and go through a committee that checks the information provided, the scope and the metadata before validating them. This information is made available within a maximum of 6 weeks.

Phase 2: the persistent identifier for researchers/ authors

Researchers have a myriad of solutions for making their Academic profile web site available (8). Due to the pre-existing use of the Open Researcher and Contributor ID (ORCID) (9) for some of our researchers, we focused on this one which meets our objectives.
ORCID is a PID that is widely known and disseminated in the world of research and scientific publications. It has many advantages (10), such as identifying and tracking an author by eliminating the risk of ambiguity with homonyms, and tracking collaborations in which the author may have participated. It also helps authors to have their work recognized (11) within a specific institution and is increasingly integrated into the workflows of publishers and funding agencies.
Two main approaches were considered, creation by researchers or centralized creation of ORCIDs. This second approach was not considered realistic due to the library's limited human resources and the risk of duplication for researchers who already have an account.
It should be noted that it has been decided not to make it compulsory for researchers to create an ORCID ID.
An internal presentation was made on (2021/04/19) to ask researchers who already have this PID to send it to the library service and to invite researchers who do not yet have an account to create one.
It included a presentation of the ORCID ID, an explanation of how to create and populate a new account, and a description of the possible benefits for the various stakeholders involved:

- for the library, the addition of this information in the library catalogue at the level of the descriptive author record. This allows customers to uniquely identify the author and his other internal or external publications;
- for human resources, which, once it has been integrated into the researcher's personal file, can use it to identify publications to be considered when promotions are made, or new posts opened;
- for the researchers themselves, by establishing a link between them, their publications and, by extension, the institution. A proposal for specific support from the library service for the creation of the account and the automated addition of these references from the information available in the catalogue was communicated internally. A specific document explaining this procedure has also been created and made available on the institution's intranet to serve as a guideline in the process.

This phase, which began in 2021, has become one of the tasks of the library to support the institution's new employees. A communication plan has been drawn up, with regular reminders to researchers to create their accounts and update their content by email and/or at weekly team meetings.
Currently, 55% of the institution's researchers have responded positively and have an active account.

Phase 3: the persistent identifier for documents

The concept of persistent identifiers in the web world is relatively old and has produced many emanations. Without going into detail, we can already think of the

Uniform Resource identifier (URI) put forward at the end of the 90s, the Persistent Uniform Resource Locator in 1995 and the Archival Resource key (ARK) in 2001. Each of these has its advantages and disadvantages (12).
20 years after the launch of the International DOI Foundation (IDF) (13), and the emergence of the Digital Object identifier (DOI), it is possible to consider it as a mature PID that is prominent in the world of research and scientific publication.
Its creation to provide a unique identifier for an object separate from its location and its characteristics of flexibility, actionability, resolvability and interoperability meets the FAIR Principles (13). It makes it possible to link an object to its metadata on a digital network. This object can take many forms such as books, periodicals, and journal articles.
It originally consisted of 4 parts: a schema (doi:), a prefix (designating the naming agency), a separator (/) and a suffix (alphanumeric value from the naming authority).
Nowadays, practice has modified its composition by replacing the scheme with the link resolver (server name). More specifically, for this project, it allows us to make the link between the object and the author, and then from the object to the institution.
The DOI services pyramid is made up of 5 roles (14). The first two correspond to the Registration Authority (RA) and the Registration Agency (RA). The KCE fulfils 2 other roles. It is the registrant, managing and maintaining the data and URLs and providing the suffixes. And as customers, through contacts with researchers, quality control of publications by our Board of Directors and management of the infrastructure needed to preserve and share documents.
The final role is that of users.

Approach

Identification of the documents concerned

An analysis of the KCE's situation has identified more than 1,438 documents produced by the 370 studies and collaborations carried out over the last 20 years. These documents are subdivided into collections (KCE Reports, KCE collaboration, etc.) and sub-collections defined based on 4 of the institution's 5 areas of expertise (HSR, HTA, GCP, Methods). Each study produces different types of documents, the scientific report (from 1 to 9 documents), the synthesis (from 1 to 3 documents), the supplement (from 1 to 4 documents) in three languages (Dutch, French, English).
This gives us 1345 documents for this project, which focuses solely on the products of studies requiring a DOI.

Selection of the registration agency (RA)

In order to have DOIs, it is necessary to work with a registration agency (RA). This provides the DOI prefix, registers the DOI and provides access to the infrastructure needed to declare and manage document metadata. A total of 12 (15), of them, are located all over the world, offering different types of services on a paid or free subscription basis. The KCE selected a RA based on two key criteria for us.
The correspondence between the scope of the RA and that of the KCE. Two agencies were identified on this basis: Crossref and mEDRA (16).
The second criterion was the geographical location of the agency and its servers. The servers must be in Europe for the primary storage of metadata, in order to guarantee compliance with the GDPR rules. The mEDRA agency was chosen after contacts with us confirmed that the data supplied by the KCE was indeed stored on servers within the borders of the European Union.
After several discussions with this agency, we have selected a DOI Bracket "2" subscription which includes 170 new DOIs per year and a subscription for the 1338 catalogue DOIs which correspond to documents prior to 2022.

Implementation

Once we had received the identification codes and the prefix to be used, we carried out a more in-depth analysis of the metadata needed to create new PIDs based on the documentation (17) available on the agency's website and the "ONIX for DOI metadata schema" set up by mEDRA. The necessary information was already centralized in our institution's catalogue (18) (a Content Management System open access PMB) and managed by the library service. This catalogue also includes the institutional repository.

Test phase

mEDRA offers two types of registration interface. An XML upload accompanied by a code validation service or a Web editor.

This editor allows you to choose the type of publication to be registered (monograph, book chapter, journal, series, etc.) and a web form containing the various fields to be filled in to collect the document's descriptive metadata.

We decided to test the web editing interface to manually add the publications concerned. This simple interface consists of 7 parts: Message (identification of the institution), DOI (Suffix and URL of the document), Monograph Data (Meta-data describing the document); Additional Data (abstract, keywords, audience, etc.), Relations (Work, Product) Citations Data and Confirmation (sending the information to mEDRA).

In practice, the workflow was divided into 6 stages:

1. checking and validating the data available in the library service catalogue;
2. introduction of metadata via the Web editing interface;
3. verification of document access via the link provided;
4. modification of the document record in the library service catalogue by adding the DOI link;
5. addition of the DOI link to the web page describing the publication on the institution's website;
6. addition of the DOI to the KCE's internal publications database, which only includes the "Scientific reports" publication type in English.

Our approach was to reverse-encode from the most recent publication to the oldest to give priority to the latest publications. However, following internal discussions, we modified this option by working directly on a specific sub-collection (HTA) to facilitate its integration for updating an external database.

This test phase showed that creating these DOIs was relatively simple, but time-consuming. The time taken to create DOIs for all the publications concerned was estimated at between 18 and 24 months, considering ongoing projects and recurring tasks.

Adapting the process

Because of this relatively long lead time, it was decided to work directly on the XML upload. As all the metadata is already available in the institution's catalogue, we contacted our service provider (19) to have an export file developed using the ONIX for DOI metadata schema provided by mEDRA.

After two months of development, we had a stable export model. In line with our internal policy, this development has been made available to the CMS user community so that other libraries can use it.

The workflow has been adapted as follows:

1. checking and validating the data available in the library service catalogue;
2. export of the XML file of references to be processed;
3. validation of the file using the verification tool provided by the service provider;
4. upload of the validated XML file;
5. verification of document access using the link resolver https://doi.org/;
6. modification of the document record in the library service catalogue by adding the DOI link;
7. the DOI link is added to the citation block generated on the page describing the publication on the institution's website;
8. addition of the DOI to the KCE's internal publications database, which only includes the "Scientific reports" publication type in English.

Although apparently longer, it enabled us to finalize the processing of all the publications concerned in three months.

Experience feedback

Several observations can already be made about this project, which has been integrated into the library service's missions. First, the involvement of everyone within the institution is necessary in order to be able to adapt the process for welcoming new researchers to the institution, to make them aware of the importance of PIDs, to inform them of the impact that these can have in their professional contexts and to integrate the DOI link into the various models of documents relating to KCE studies.

These new tasks can be time-consuming at many levels, such as communicating about PIDs, helping researchers to manage the ORCID ID and creating DOIs for studies producing documents. These tasks need to be monitored and integrated into day-to-day work.

Setting up DOIs for scientific publications produced by the institution's studies has an impact on the structure of these collections. For example, when a study is updated and a new report published, we must give a new unique number in the collection to generate the DOI. Previously, for this type of situation, the original number was simply retained.

There are questions about DOIs (what happens to them if the institution disappears, what is the impact of "obsolete" DOIs (no longer corresponding to an object accessible online), etc. which will need to be answered in the future.

Conclusion and prospects

This work has taken a relatively long time to complete due to the difficult health circumstances of recent years. Despite some positive feedback from researchers outside the KCE, from students and from visitors to our website, it is still too early to be able to measure the impact of the combination of these three PIDs.

It should also be considered that this is in-depth work which does not end with the closure of a project, but which leads to further reflections to refine and improve it. The possibility of integrating these references into Crossref with the help of mEDRA as a service provider, with the aim of increasing the impact of the work already carried out, or of setting up specific DOIs for the results of clinical trials funded by the KCE, remains open. These are just the first steps in an adventure that should continue over time.

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PubMed, ClinicalTrials.gov: a critical analysis of new features after three years from the launch of the new release. Results from an interactive training course

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Abstract
Three years after the launch of the new release of the PubMed database and the new platform for searching clinical trials "ClinicalTrials.gov", GIDIF Academy organized an interactive course aimed at biomedical documentarians and librarians. These portals, with free access, are known to the scientific community as the reference for bibliographic resources of information in scientific literature.
In the classroom, the high motivation of the participants was further powered by the careful analysis of the modernization innovations proposed by the NLM for the two platforms.
The speakers, interacting lively with the learners, highlighted the strengths and analysed the fragilities of the two systems, with the aim of finding possible solutions to obtain effective and safe queries; finally, the collection of opinions offered ideas and room for improvement in the performance of the platforms themselves.

Key words: *clinicaltrials.gov; interactive course; search filters; MeSH.*

Introduction

The GIDIF-RBM (Italian Association of Documentalists and Librarians of the Pharmaceutical Industry and Biomedical Research Institutes) Group was set up informally in 1973 after a meeting of biomedical information professionals and became a non-profit association in 1985. Its aims, as stated in its bylaws, are as follows:

- to promote and protect the image of the information professional;
- to foster schemes for training and updating information professionals in the biomedical and allied fields;
- to contribute to the study of materials and methods helpful to the profession.

The Association under the "GIDIF Academy" project, three years after the announcement of the new release of the PubMed database and the very recent launch of the new platform for searching clinical trials "ClinicalTrials.gov", organized a course aimed at biomedical documentarians and librarians. These portals, with free access, are known to the scientific community as milestone resources for bibliographic research of information in scientific literature.

The "Umberto Veronesi" Library of the National Cancer Institute of Milan hosted the in-person course on September 29, 2023.

The Faculty Members were experienced documentalists who have long held positions in scientific libraries and National Networks.

In the classroom we tried to discover the performance of the algorithms behind the search queries of the two databases, which are offering simple and user-friendly interfaces to the end-user rather than to researchers or information professionals. The speakers, interacting lively with the learners, highlighted the strengths and analysed the fragilities of the two systems with the aim of finding practical solutions to obtaining effective and safe queries.

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Methods and Materials

The training course was organized into two sessions: the morning dedicated to reports that analysed the main changes made to the NLM platform accompanied by interactive interventions with considerable involvement of the learners; the afternoon focused on the analysis of the changes in the construction of search strategies and in the extraction of citations starting from specific research cases.

29 participants, divided in 5 groups, worked to test some search queries and discussed different results (*Figure 1*).

Fig. 1. *Programme of the GIDIF-RBM training course (in Italian).*

Applying proximity indicators

It was explained how bibliographic research works by applying proximity indicators. This type of technique allows you to find two words that are close, in proximity, within a sentence or concept by specifying the distance between the words within a document. Words can occur in any syntactic order within a given range; she considered, as a search example: "colorectal cancer" [field: ~N] where "field" is the search field tag for the fields [title/abstract], N represents the maximum number of words that can appear among the search terms search and "tilde" indicates approximation.

The limitations highlighted using proximity operators are the lack of application of automatic mapping terms simultaneously with the use of proximity operators and the impossibility of specifying that an exact phrase appears within a certain distance from other terms.

New search filters

It was illustrated how the NLM presents all available news items on the results page after a google-like search, showing the ability to sort the results by clicking on the "display options" drop-down menu, which keeps the sorting criteria unchanged. The list of authors is fully listed by the options "cite", "save", and "e-mail", exploding the "see abstract for full author list" field; this functionality was obtained thanks to the reports that expert users forwarded to the NLM through the Help Desk dialog box. In fact, one of the purposes of this meeting was also to point out needs and corrections to establish a dialogue with the NLM. The functionality of new search filters was also illustrated, including "other" (includes the possibility of excluding preprints [pt] and adding the check for Medline subset [sb]) and the one that allows you to filter in the "article type" category" the "systematic reviews"; the old filters are still available in special queries section.

Clinical query

A different scenario arises when users query PubMed through the "Clinical Query" option.

It was pointed out how the change linked to the mapping and indexing with MeSH performed automatically by artificial intelligence, is substantial when querying the database with this functionality.

The growth of MeSH items and the increase in publications have led the NLM to argue that automated indexing can provide users with timely access to metadata by speeding up the query response process to the growing volume of published biomedical literature.

The selection of indexers by experts has been and will continue to be involved in the refinement of automated indexing algorithms, significantly ensuring the quality required in the indexing process itself. In fact, at NLM, automated indexing has been under development for many years, and the most significant achievement was the development of the Medical Text Indexer (MTI).

MTI has been used to provide suggestions to "human" indexers since 2002 and has been integrated with subsequent care by experts from journals' editorial board since 2011. With this automation, the period for associating MeSH with Medline records, has been reduced from around 30 days to just 24 hours.

ClinicalTrials.gov

Finally, the new features of the ClinicalTrials.gov database, also offered by the NLM, were presented. The platform launch in August 2023, after a three-year modernisation period that started in 2020 and will end with the retirement of the old platform by June 2024.

ClinicalTrials.gov (CTs.gov) is a large library designed to hold information from registered clinical trials of new molecules or existing drugs, for which possible new therapeutic indications are being investigated. The NLM offers limited reviews of the information provided by investigators and sponsors, who remain solely responsible for and owners of the accuracy of the safety data. The search explosion for clinical trial publications, access to the study protocol and the statistical analysis plan is accurate, as is the geolocation of clinical trials, which on the one hand loses the geographic map view of the previous version, and on the other hand becomes more sensitive when queried via the API (Application Programming Interface).

ClinicalTrials.gov is a valuable tool for searching registered clinical studies whose results have not yet been published. Some examples of clinical trial records were analysed, and some exercises were performed during the afternoon section to test results.

Discussion

The interactive in-person mode, and the afternoon exercises to test the various solutions in querying and searching, allowed a high level of analysis of the content covered, as well as the pros and cons offered by the main new releases of the two NLM platforms. The most critical issues exposed in the classroom were also the result of expert use and professional analysis of the two databases. Amongst the trainees, considerable satisfaction with the training day emerged, and the comparison between, and with experts (peers), made them appreciate the added value of attendance.

On the substance, the participants greatly appreciated the reconstruction of the evolution of the ATM (Automatic Term Mapping) algorithm in PubMed and the possibility that remains, in this transitional phase, to deactivate the automatism and compare the results between the search with and without ATM.

What emerged, in the end, is the recognition of the enormous importance of the NIH/NLM platform that continues to make valuable products and services available, free of charge, to different audiences by taking care of their evolution. ClinicalTrials.gov accessible to researchers, health professionals, sponsors, patients, and citizens, is only the most recent example; the accuracy of this database makes it extremely competitive with other paid-for ones. Such products/services entail a considerable financial investment on the part of the US government, and it is obvious that it is also seeking sustainability using artificial intelligence.

What, in the opinion of the Italian biomedical librarians' community, should not happen is that PubMed, ClinicaTrial.gov, MedlinePlus, MeSH, as well as all the rest of the tools of the NIH/NLM platform, lose their added value in the effort to be "Google-like", i.e., easily accessible to all. Today, the loss of some options/filters and the AI algorithm, which sometimes produces results that are difficult to understand, generate some perplexity.

Concluding remarks

It is precisely these perplexities that GIDIF-RBM wants to turn into an opportunity; to collect comments and suggestions to get the message across to the NIH/NLM staff that PubMed and other products must be easily accessible to different audiences (to each his own product!), but without losing accuracy, relevance, and quality. This is the challenge we would like to help achieve.

Biomedical librarians and documentalists are a significant help desk in the test of functionality immediately after launch. Associations such as GIDIF-RBM in the field of bibliographic research represent an authoritative reference and an opportunity for mediated and reasoned dialogue between the producer (NLM) and the ultimate user (researcher and public).

The Association will act as a guarantor in the collection of the technical wishes of the bibliographic search operators and, through the comments made in the room, will try to open a working table and active dialogue with the National Library of Medicine.

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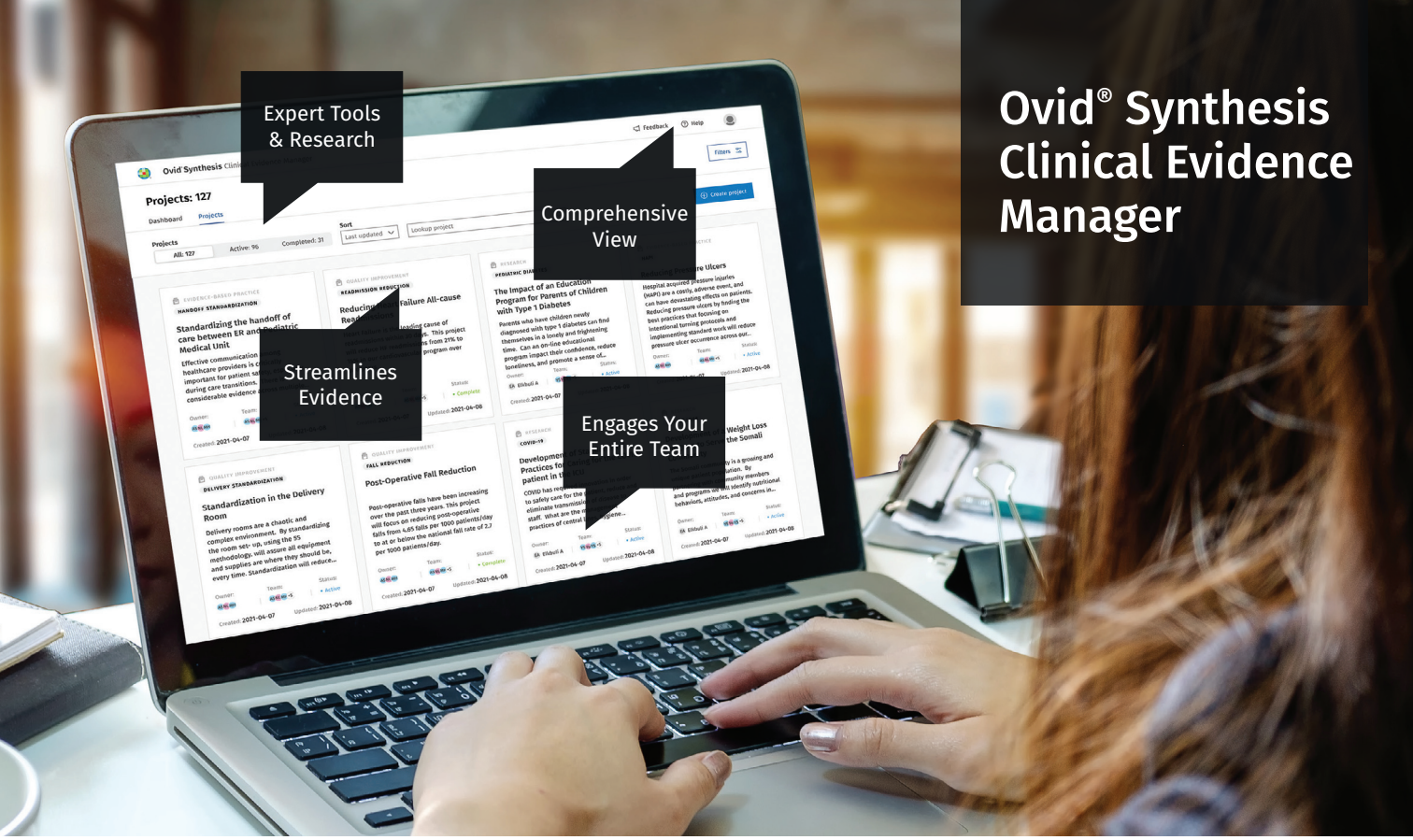

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Letter from the President

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Dear EAHIL Colleagues,

This is the time of year when you look back on what happened during the year and try to look ahead at what the new year might bring. The very successful Trondheim event was one of my professional highlights of 2023. Among the things you'd instead not remember, I'd put our recurring website problems. For unknown reasons, the web goes down repeatedly, and our hosting company has not been able to solve it. In addition, the company has informed us that they will change their offer – and price – "in the near future". The EAHIL Executive Board has been looking at an alternative solution. At the time of writing, we have ongoing discussions with a web provider. We will hopefully be able to migrate the website and additional services from the old hosting company shortly.

This year, the EAHIL mentoring program has been launched. We are delighted that the program has attracted much interest, and it will be interesting to follow how it develops.

Looking into the future, we have an exciting 2024 ahead of us, with the event in Riga in June. The IPC and the LOC are working hard to make it a successful event. The conference's theme is "Small Step and a Giant Leap: Reorienting Towards a New Environment" and builds on the inspiring ideas of EAHIL 2023 in Trondheim. Please visit https://eahil2024.rsu.lv/ for more information. I would also like to remind you to apply for a scholarship to attend the conference. The scholarships will be announced in our usual channels.

Next year is also an election year. During spring, we will elect the President and Board members, and in the autumn, we will elect Council members. Information about the election process will be forthcoming, but it's not too early to start thinking about who you'd like to see on the Board for the coming 2-4 years. Perhaps it is your contribution we need!

Last but not least, I'm delighted to announce that we now have a host for the 2025 event, which will be held in Lodz, Poland.

We still need to secure locations for the EAHIL events from 2026 onwards. Since our yearly events are our Association's main activities, and the planning timeline for an event is approximately two years, it's time to start considering submitting an expression of interest. It should be sent to EAHIL-SECR@LIST.ECOMPASS.NL. Please refer to http://eahil.eu/events/arrange-conference/ for event guidelines, and feel free to contact other Board members or me for discussion and support.

I am looking forward to hearing from you.

With wishes for a happy and healthy 2024!

Journal of the European Association for Health Information and Libraries (JEAHIL)

Call for Papers for issue 1 vol. 20 (2024): Evolving types of evidence synthesis

Editor: Maria-Inti Metzendorf

JEAHIL is the official Journal of the European Association for Health Information and Libraries (EAHIL). It publishes original articles, reviews, theme issues and brief communications in the field of health information and libraries. It also publishes news from EAHIL and from other medical library associations, meeting reports, product reviews, opinion and discussion papers and news items. The aim of the European Association for Health Information and Libraries is to unite and motivate librarians and information officers working in medical and health science libraries in Europe. EAHIL encourages professional development, improves cooperation and enables exchanges of experience amongst its members

We invite you to submit articles for publication in the first issue of JEAHIL in 2024 which will be a themed issue titled **"Evidence syntheses and Medical Librarians - an evolving duo"** (deadline for submissions: 5th of February2024).

Editor of the issue is **Maria-Inti Metzendorf**, Heinrich-Heine-University Düsseldorf, Germany.

Please contact Maria-Inti with any article proposals at: maria-inti.metzendorf@hhu.de.

Guidance for authors can be found at http://ojs.eahil.eu/ojs/index.php/JEAHIL/information/authors.

Save the date!
June 11-14, 2024

19th EAHIL / European Association for Health Information and Libraries Conference

We are pleased to announce

Welcome to the EAHIL 2024 Conference at **the National Library of Latvia!**

The main theme

Small step and a giant leap:
Re-orienting towards new environment

- Shaping the Educational Environment
- Research & Open Science
- Libraries as Change Agents
- Visibility & Strategic presence
- Technology & Tools

See you in Riga!

Stay updated at:
eahil2024.rsu.lv

RĪGA STRADIŅŠ UNIVERSITY

Evidence-Based Information Group: year report 2023

Jane Falconer (a), Thomas Vandendriessche (b), Shona Kirtley (c), Krizia Tuand (d), Maria Björklund (e), Marshall Dozier (f), Andra Fry (g), Mark Mueller (h), Nele S. Pauwels (i)

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(b) KU Leuven Libraries – 2Bergen, Leuven, Belgium
(c) UK EQUATOR Centre, Centre for Statistics in Medicine, Nuffield Department of Orthopaedics, Rheumatology & Musculoskeletal Sciences, University of Oxford, Oxford, UK
(d) KU Leuven Libraries – 2Bergen – Learning Centre Désiré Collen, Leuven, Belgium
(e) Library & ICT, Faculty of Medicine, Lund University, Lund, Sweden
(f)Library, University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh, UK
(g) LSE Library, London School of Economics and Political Science, London, UK
(h) Clinical Librarian, Saskatchewan Health Authority, Canada
(i) Knowledge Centre for Health Ghent, Ghent University, Ghent University Hospital, Ghent, Belgium

Introduction

2023 has been another busy year for the Evidence-Based Information Special Interest group (EBI-SIG). We had our annual meeting at the 2023 EAHIL Conference in Trondheim where we presented results from many of our projects. In addition, we also ran our second journal club meeting.

SIG meeting, 22 June 2023 at the 2023 EAHIL Conference, Trondheim (held online via Zoom)

Approximately 25 SIG members attended our annual SIG meeting. After an update from the SIG committee, each project team provided an update on their project, inviting questions from attendees.
Meeting minutes and copies of the project presentations are available in the SIG GoogleDrive folder (https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1uxWrkLU0fqDkYPpIRReeFUaJ8luzGBzL).

Updates from SIG projects

Project 1: Mapping journal requirements for systematic reviews

This study aims to evaluate and propose enhancements to the guidance outlined in the author instructions of biomedical and health journals concerning the conduct and reporting of systematic reviews. The project plan has been made available on the Open Science Framework Registries (1) and the scientific report is currently undergoing peer review for publication in a scientific journal. Once the results are published, it will be intriguing to observe how the findings are disseminated and the potential impact of the recommendations on the conduct and reporting practices of systematic reviews in the field of biomedical and health research.

Project 2: Reference database on articles about systematic search methods

This project team runs our journal clubs. Our second journal club was run in April 2023 (see below) and a third is planned in December 2023. We also published a paper in the JEAHIL June 2023 issue discussing how invitation of authors and users can bring useful perspectives to journal clubs and our profession (2).

Project 3: Peer-reviewing search strategies post-submission

This project focusses on the peer-review process of search strategies upon submission to a journal. More specifically it wants to provide hands-on support to our network of professionals, by focussing on building/expanding a community of practice, developing strategies to get library professionals involved in this journal peer-review process and providing training material on this topic.

Since this is a big endeavour we started out with writing a project outline, which will help us to tackle each pillar of this project in a structured way.

One of the first steps within this project is to look out for supporting material, tools and information that already exists and to promote this within our network. That's why we started with a call via an e-mail to the EBI-SIG. Should you still have any tips on useful existing training material or communication channels that are also focussing on post-submission peer-review of search strategies, you can still contact our project member Shona Kirtley for this. If you have a lot of experience with post-submission peer-review and would like to share tips, or even be open to participate in a webinar/discussion panel, we would be very happy for you to contact us.

Project 4: Library of search-strategy resources

This project has a main goal of creating a central hub of free resources for individuals involved in searching for and developing healthcare-related search strategies. In June 2023, we proudly launched the current version of the Library of Search Strategy Resources (LSSR) (3). Over the past year, the website has evolved from a simple list of links to a more user-friendly platform with an appealing design and the addition of images. In this first phase, the main focus was on creating a Collections section, organised by themes to make it easier for users to access. Users can now enjoy these features:

- browsing: explore our collections to quickly find search strategies organised by theme;
- searching: use the search feature to discover relevant resources using specific keywords.

Since the site's initial launch in 2022, it has welcomed 4,200 visitors from 70 countries. Since the relaunch in June 2023, is has so far received 2,700 visitors from 61 countries.

Future work will focus on revamping the tools and guidance sections, as well as introducing new sections dedicated to educational resources and a glossary.

The resource has been presented at the 2023 EAHIL Conference in Trondheim, as well as other events.

Project 7: Tools in R for health libraries

Project 7 ran a workshop at EAHIL 2023 in Trondheim where the interim results were presented. We have found that traditional bibliographic databases are not the best places to search for details of R-tools, grey literature sources should be used instead. 62 R-tools have been found so far, the majority covering aspects of searching, connecting to specific databases or reference management. Future work will continue searching for R-tools in other databases with the aim of recommending search strategies to the wider community. The team will also identify gaps in coverage which can be shared with developers of R-tools.

Journal club, April 2023

Our second journal club was held on Zoom and was facilitated by Maria Björklund (Lund University, Sweden). We discussed a paper on grey literature by Landerdahl Stridsbert et al. (4) The lead author Sara Landerdahl-Stridsberg and her researcher colleague Matt Richardson were invited to the journal club which was much appreciated and led to interesting discussions on the role and contribution of information specialists from different professional perspectives.

Future events and activities

Webinar on PRESS (Peer Review of Electronic Search Strategies) Guidance, led by Robin Featherstone and colleagues from CADTH. This will be held on Zoom on 4 December, 16:00-17:00 European time.

Journal club, led by Maria Björklund with special guest Irma Klerings. We will be discussing Irma's paper on rapid reviews search methodology. (5) This will be held on Zoom on 12 December, 15:00-16:00 European time.

A new project is planned, utilizing the outcomes from project 1. This will be titled 'Improving Journal Requirements for Systematic Reviews' and will focus on implementing the research conducted in project 1.

Conclusion

2023 has been a fruitful year for the SIG. As well as our usual meetings, our projects are producing outputs. We would like to extend a large thank you to all of our project volunteers who have contributed their time and expertise to our projects. The SIG organisers are currently assessing potential topics for new projects, to be launched as current projects achieve their objectives and are wound-up.

Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge the EBI SIG project volunteers for their work on the SIG projects this year. A list of all project teams is available on the SIG website https://eahil.eu/sig-2/evidence-based-information-group/.

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Cultivating global connections: a journey through US medical libraries with the Cunningham Memorial International Fellowship

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Introduction

In the ever-evolving landscape of medical research, the role of libraries remains pivotal. In 2023, I embarked on a transformative journey through various medical libraries in the United States, courtesy of the prestigious Cunningham International Memorial Fellowship, generously funded by the US Medical Library Association. I had the privilege of crisscrossing the United States, immersing myself in the rich resources and unparalleled learning environments of various medical libraries. This fellowship not only provided me with the opportunity to explore the vast repositories of medical knowledge but also allowed me to delve into the heart of cutting-edge research and innovation.

This year, with my colleagues from Kazakhstan, Botswana, Zambia, and me from Turkey joined forces, embarking on a journey that transcended borders, fostering cultural understanding and facilitating the exchange of ideas in the field of medical librarianship. Our journey unfolded against the backdrop of the United States, a melting pot of cultures and a hub of innovation in the medical field. The fellowship allowed us to immerse ourselves in the vibrant tapestry of American medical libraries, each one offering a unique perspective on the intersection of healthcare and information management.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, none of our colleagues could travel within the scope of the fellowship for three years. Our mentor and the fellowship committee were always in contact with us for 3 years. They made a lot of effort to make the travel program in the best way. And in the end, the COVID-19 pandemic enabled us four friends and colleagues to meet and have the experience of traveling together.

Through the fellowship program we visited the following libraries, hospitals and university campuses:

- Johns Hopkins University, Welch Library, Baltmore, MD
- National Institutes of Health (NIH), Bethesda, MD
- George Washington University, Himmelfarb Health Sciences Library, Washington, DC
- Library of Congress, Washington, DC
- University of Chicago, Regenstein Library, Chicago, IL
- Northwestern University, Galter Health Sciences Library, Chicago, IL
- Rush University Medical Center Library, Chicago, IL
- University of Michigan, Taubman Health Sciences Library, Ann Arbor, MI.

In every institution we visited, all our colleagues welcomed us with interest. We are grateful to all of them!

Collaborative spaces
American medical libraries showcased a commitment to fostering collaboration. We observed collaborative spaces that encouraged interdisciplinary research and facilitated partnerships between healthcare professionals and information specialists. The collaborative ethos was palpable, sparking discussions on how to enhance collaborative efforts within our own countries.

Community engagement
Community engagement emerged as a central theme during our visits. From outreach programs to initiatives promoting health literacy, American medical libraries demonstrated a strong sense of social responsibility. These experiences prompted reflections on how we could strengthen community ties back home, tailoring our services to meet the specific needs of our diverse populations.

Diversity and inclusion
The diversity within American medical libraries mirrored the multicultural fabric of the nation. Libraries actively promoted inclusivity, embracing the unique contributions of individuals from various backgrounds. This emphasis on diversity challenged us to reconsider the inclusivity of our own institutions, sparking conversations on strategies to make our libraries more welcoming and accessible.

Shared challenges and solutions
As we traversed the landscape of American medical libraries, we discovered shared challenges and collectively brainstormed solutions. The fellowship facilitated an exchange of best practices, enabling us to learn from each other's experiences and adapt strategies to suit our distinct contexts.

Resource allocation
Discussions on resource allocation were particularly enlightening. We explored strategies for optimizing limited resources, whether through collaborative acquisitions or leveraging open-access initiatives. These conversations empowered us to rethink resource management in the context of our own institutions' challenges.

Professional development
The fellowship emphasized the importance of continuous professional development. We engaged in workshops, attended MLA/SLA 2023 conference, and networked with seasoned professionals. This exposure ignited a passion for ongoing learning, prompting us to consider novel ways to enhance professional development opportunities for medical librarians in our home countries. At the same time, we were invited by the scholarship committee to the session "Forging Ahead: Key Insights on Global Health & Equity from Around the World" and provided information about our country to the participants. I also had the experience of presenting a poster at the conference (Subject of my poster: Open Science and Wikimedia: what medical libraries can do with Wikipedia?). We experienced all these experiences with an effective program for about three weeks.

Conclusion: a mosaic of learning

The Cunningham Memorial Fellowship, funded by the US Medical Library Association, has not only broadened my understanding of the vast landscape of medical literature but has also connected me with a network of passionate individuals dedicated to advancing the frontiers of medical knowledge. As the Cunningham International Memorial Fellowship unfolded, each medical library etched a unique impression on my journey. The collective experience painted a mosaic of learning, where the pages of medical literature turned into a canvas of discovery.

In conclusion, this fellowship has been more than a series of visits to medical libraries; an expedition that has enriched my professional outlook and reaffirmed the profound impact that libraries have on the advancement of healthcare worldwide. This expedition reaffirmed the pivotal role that medical libraries play in shaping the future of healthcare. It was a journey into the heart of medical research, a communion with the past and present, and an exploration of the collaborative future of healthcare knowledge. As I reflect on this enriching experience, I am grateful for the opportunity to explore, learn, and contribute to the ever-evolving narrative of medical discovery.

I recommend the fellowship experience to all my colleagues!

Cunningham Fellows 2023, from left to right: Anar Kairatovna Dautova (Kazakhstan), Mercy Wamunyima Monde (Zambia), Khutsafalo Kadimo (Botswana) and Kubra Zayim Gedik (Turkiye).

Publications and new products

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Dear colleagues,

for this issue's "Publications and new products" column I've searched the web and selected news and articles regarding a number of current topics I hope would be of you interest. Especially the future of Open Access publishing is much debated now with different proposals such as the Diamond Open Access publishing model or the radical cOAlition S's proposal.

I would also like to take this occasion to wish you and your family all the best for the New Year.

JOURNAL ISSUES

Health Information and Libraries Journal: contents of December 2023 (40:4)

Editorial

- **COVID-19, health librarianship and the wider context.**
  Maria J Grant

Review

- **Key topics in social science research on COVID-19: An automated literature analysis.**
  Xian Cheng, Ying Zhao and Stephen Shaoyi Liao

Original Articles

- **COVID-19 information-seeking needs and behaviour among citizens in Isfahan, Iran: A qualitative study.**
  Mohammad Reza Soleymani, Hasan Ashrafi-Rizi, Maedeh Esmailzadeh and Faezeh Taghipour
- **An evaluation of the quality of COVID-19 websites in terms of HON principles and using DISCERN tool.**
  Reza Safdari, Marsa Gholamzadeh, Soheila Saeedi, Mozhgan Tanhapour and Sorayya Rezayi
- **Bibliometric analysis of COVID-19 publications shows the importance of telemedicine and equitable access to the internet during the pandemic and beyond.**
  Mahnaz Samadbeik, Peivand Bastani and Farhad Fatehi
- **General Practitioners' wellbeing during the COVID-19 Pandemic: novel methods with social media data.**
  Su Golder, Laura Jefferson, Elizabeth McHugh, Holly Essex, Claire Heathcote, Ana Castro Avila, Veronica Dale, Christina Van Der Feltz-Cornelis and Karen Bloor

- **Topics of questions and community interaction in social Q&A during the COVID-19 pandemic.**
  Sanghee Oh and Hengyi Fu

Regular Features

Dissertations into Practice

- **Quick links: Apprenticeship project.**
  Katy Greenfield

International Perspectives and Initiatives

- **Information technology and changing role models in German Libraries: the example of OPEN-CAM.**
  Christa K. Raak, Sebastian Unger, David D. Martin and Thomas Ostermann

Teaching and Learning in Action

- **An overview of the capabilities of ChatGPT for medical writing and its implications for academic integrity.**
  Salman Bin Naeem, Huihui Liu, Mehreen Azam and Anthony Faiola

FROM THE WEB

- **Principles of Diamond Open Access Publishing: a draft proposal**
  Diamond open access refers to a scholarly publication model in which journals or platforms don't charge fees either to readers nor to authors as they are funded, directly or indirectly, by non-profit organizations, research institutions, or government agencies. Various stakeholders of the Open Access community (among them cOAlition S, the Fair Open Access Alliance (FOAA), OPERAS, or SciELO) are jointly working on principles defining the ethos of Diamond OA publishing, the first draft of these Principles of Diamond Open Access Publishing can be read and commented here: https://thd.hypotheses.org/35

- **cOAlition S's new proposal: "Towards responsible publishing"**
  The funders forming cOAlition S are proposing a more radical revolution for science publishing based on a community-based scholarly communication that empowers scholars to share the full range of their research outputs and to participate in new quality control mechanisms and evaluation standards for these outputs. Read the blog post introducing the proposal: https://www.coalition-s.org/blog/introducing-the-towards-responsible-publishing-proposal-from-coalition-s/ The draft of their proposal is, at the moment, in a consultative process phase offering researchers the opportunity to voice their opinions and contribute to its development. The consultation will run from November 2023 until April 2024. Based on the feedback through this consultation, a revised proposal will be developed for the cOAlition S funders to consider in June 2024. To read the draft of the proposal click here: https://www.coalition-s.org/towards-responsible-publishing/

- **The state of Open Data 2023**
  The State of Open Data, now in its eighth year, is a global survey that sheds light on researchers' attitudes and experiences towards openly sharing their data. The publisher Springer Nature partnered with Digital Science and Figshare to publish this year's State of Open Data white paper, which offers interesting insights based on 6,091 survey responses. This white paper provides a detailed view on the current state of open data as well as recommendations on the actions that need to be taken to better support the research community as it moves towards an open data future. It can be read here:
  https://digitalscience.figshare.com/articles/report/The_State_of_Open_Data_2023/24428194

- **CrossRef acquired the Retraction Watch Database**
  The Retraction Watch database (http://retractiondatabase.org/RetractionSearch.aspx) has been acquired by Crossref and made a public resource. An agreement between the two organisations will allow Retraction Watch to keep the data populated on an ongoing basis and always open, alongside publishers registering their retraction notices directly with Crossref. The agreement with Crossref is confined to the database only. The Center for Scientific Integrity and the Retraction Watch blog (https://retractionwatch.com/) will remain separate from Crossref and will continue their journalistic work investigating retractions and related issues.
- **Using Altmetric Data Responsibly: A Guide to Interpretation and Good Practice**
  As a result of the growing interest in altmetrics, and in particular the interest in Altmetric as the leading provider of altmetrics data, the practitioner community of LIS-Bibliometrics created a new responsible use guide on Altmetric data. This guide is intended for use by librarians, practitioners, funders, and other users of Altmetric data or those who are interested in incorporating altmetrics into their bibliometric practice and/or research analytics. The Guide is available for download:
  https://vtechworks.lib.vt.edu/handle/10919/116448
- **OAI13 content is now available online**
  It is possible to download all the slides and watch the videos of all the sessions of the Geneva Workshop on Innovations in Scholarly Communication (OAI13) held virtually from 4-8 September 2023. All materials can be found at https://oai.events/
- **Peer review resources**
  The organizers of the Peer Review Week have collected a number of useful resources (videos, podcasts, online publications) about peer review on their website. To have a look click here:
  https://peerreviewweek.wordpress.com/peer-review-resources/

READING SUGGESTIONS

- Shen, C. and Shah, L. Predatory publishing practices: what researchers should know before submitting their manuscript. Insights: the UKSG journal. 2023;36(1):19. https://doi.org/10.1629/uksg.631
- Schlussel MM, Sharp MK, de Beyer JA, et al. Reporting guidelines used varying methodology to develop recommendations. J Clin Epidemiol. 2023;159:246-256. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclinepi.2023.03.018
- Maddi, A., Sapinho, D. On the culture of open access: the Sci-hub paradox. Scientometrics. 2023;128, 5647–5658. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11192-023-04792-5 (article behind a paywall, can be accessed as a preprint at: https://arxiv.org/ftp/arxiv/papers/2309/2309.12349.pdf). One of the authors published a blog post on the article on: https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2023/10/25/sci-hub-presents-a-paradox-for-open-access-publishing/

SOME FORTHCOMING EVENTS

UKSG (United Kingdom Serials Group) Annual Conference 2024
8-10 April, Glasgow, UK
More info at: https://www.uksg.org/event/conference24

Edinburgh Open Research Conference 2024
29 May, Edinburgh, UK
The focus of the conference will be on the role of Open Research in changing research culture for the better. The three central themes will be: next generation metrics, research Integrity, education and skills. The

organizers also welcome contributions addressing the other pillars of open science: FAIR data, scholarly communications, reward & recognition, and citizen science. More info at: https://www.ed.ac.uk/information-services/research-support/open-research/edinburgh-open-research-conference

Please feel free to contact me (annarita.barbaro@iss.it) if you have any further suggestion about initiatives or events you would like to promote.

Dieuwke L. Brand-de Heer (1947 - 2023)

It is not difficult to choose the key words to describe our colleague, friend and companion Dieuwke: very smart, fast thinking, assertive and trustworthy and at the same time modest, unobtrusive and "no nonsense".

Dieuwke entered the world of online biomedical information retrieval in 1974. Graduating with high marks in Biology at the University of Groningen it was obvious that she should take a PhD programme, but she and the professor didn't match in terms of intellectual level and critical thinking. Instead, she found the right job in a wonderful team of information specialists at the Department of Biomedical Information, University Library, Utrecht: Stien Verheijen-Voogd and Guus Mathijsen (1, 2).
Those were the early days of searching scientific data and literature by using computers. As the story goes, the USA government was surprised by the launch of the Sputnik by the USSR (Russia) and all military and research institutions run by the Federal Government were obliged to index, collect and retain ALL literature, worldwide, the National Library of Medicine (Bethesda, Md.) was also obliged to do so. In order to include European literature, the NLM cooperated with several institutes in Europe, such as the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm. This institute created one of the first medical information centres in Europe, that was tasked with collecting, indexing and uploading the bibliographic data of European biomedical journals. MEDLARS, Medical Literature Analysis and Retrieval System was born. Stien and Guus attended a three-week course in Stockholm (in winter!) to learn about the thesaurus, indexing rules and command language of the medical database system. They were both very much dedicated to the job and very professional searchers who unveiled the secrets of the system to Dieuwke.
Eager to learn, with a quick and analytical understanding, this was for her the ideal working environment. She loved the systematic and logical nature of the terminology, the hierarchy of terms and the syntax and grammar of the many command languages. Information specialists were not only intermediaries between the medical and research staff and the (very expensive!!) computer systems, but became experts in the field by comparing the performance and outcomes of the different literature databases (e.g. TOXline, Medlars, Embase and Biological Abstracts) and also of the different hosts or platforms (DIMDI, DataStar, Dialog, Pascal, to name a few) and their command languages.
Because the Dutch Library Association was not keen on taking on the digital revolution of information services, the pioneers of "online" founded a new group of information professionals, VOGIN (the Dutch online user's group) (3). The aim of the group was to provide critical analysis and comparison of databases and systems and the exchange of experiences as well as creating and organizing a full five-day course to provide fundamental knowledge in all aspects of online and to give hands-on practice in information retrieval. Dieuwke has been a teacher of these courses ever since the start in 1978. As a fundamental guide, JL Hall's book, On-Line Information Retrieval Sourcebook, used to be recommended as a supplement to the course, however in 1980 the lecturers, including Dieuwke, developed a Dutch language course book (4).
In 2008 Dieuwke was the second person in the Netherlands to be awarded the VOGIN silver pin.

Dieuwke started her career as an online literature searcher in Utrecht, and later in The Hague with the Ministry of Social Affairs. From 1997 till 2008 she was staff member and head of the Medical Library of the Leiden University Medical Center (LUMC). Over the years Dieuwke became very much involved in the biomedical information group (BMI) of the Dutch Library Association (NVB, KNVI). In the period 1991-2009 every issue of the group's newsletter Biomeditaties (I, Suzanne, was the chief editor) contained an interesting article written by Dieuwke about her "experiences with Medline/Pubmed". Working together for the newsletter we

developed and organized training courses in using Medline on CD-ROM, later Pubmed via Internet. Dieuwke was a remarkable teacher: well prepared, with a broad overview and thorough knowledge, a fast and creative thinker using well formulated and carefully articulated language. The EAHIL community awarded her for being the best oral presenter in Helsinki 2008. It was a presentation of the results of a study about the complexity of author addresses in biomedical databases (5).

With her analytical mind and perseverance to understand the bugs in the system she was in close contact with the helpdesk of OVID technologies, a Wolters-Kluwer company publishing the Medline database. No wonder this company offered her, after her early retirement, a job at the department to answer the most difficult and diverse questions of customers, but also to train OVID staff in the northern European countries. Only in 2018 did she decide it was time for her to step down. The last EAHIL conference Dieuwke attended was 2018 in Cardiff. I myself entered the biomedical library world in 1984, my first EAHIL conference was in 1988 (Bologna), my last one was in 2017. But I cannot remember any EAHIL conference or any BMI-meeting without Dieuwke being there as well. A strong companionship over many years; a well-respected colleague and close friend.

The cremation meeting was attended by many friends. from her student years in biology to colleagues in the biomedical information sciences. Dieuwke was a very loyal friend to many. Over decades she combined a fulltime job with being the key player and taking a pivotal role in the family of both her husband and two sons and in recent years including their wives and the three grandchildren. She will be much missed by many.

Suzanne Bakker

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November 2023

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In the photographs: 2014 Dieuwke in Norway; LUMC 2008 Suzanne and Dieuwke at her farewell reception.