



www.eahil.eu

Journal of EAHIL

European Association for
Health Information and Libraries

Vol. 21 no.4
December 2025
ISSN L-1841-0715

The production of this journal
was made possible by the generous support of:

ACS Publications
Elsevier
TDNet
Thieme Verlag

Journal of the European Association for Health Information and Libraries

Vol. 21 No. 4 December 2025

CONTENTS

FEATURE ARTICLES

Teaching Anatomy in 3D: a comparison of available digital anatomy applications
E. Verraedt, C. Claessens, K. Bellis, T. Vandendriessche **3**

Navigating the publishing trap: safeguarding researchers from predatory practices
A. D'Hont, K. Cortebeek, N. Poels, W. Vandeveldel and T. Vandendriessche **9**

Making the Medical Library of the University of Bern a caring and safe space
M. Wa Baile **14**

Human vs machine in medical search strategy development: a comparative evaluation of ChatGPT-4.1
J. Walz **18**

BRIEF NOTE

Exploring the impact of scientific research through citation analysis tools in policies and guidelines
V. Scotti, A. De Silvestri, M. Piva, F. Topuz, M. Curti and L. Scudeller **22**

NEWS FROM EAHL

Letter from the President
F. Gualtieri **25**

PUBLICATIONS AND NEW PRODUCTS

A. Barbaro **26**

OBITUARY

Remembering Dr. Beatrice Doran
A. Lawton **30**

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Teaching Anatomy in 3D: a comparison of available digital anatomy applications

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Abstract

Selecting the most appropriate anatomical application for a university library collection presents a complex challenge, particularly when balancing pedagogical needs, technical functionality, licensing constraints, and budgetary limitations. This article presents a structured six-step methodology developed and applied at our library to support decision-making in the acquisition of an anatomical application. The process includes market exploration, functional evaluation, financial viability assessment, user trials, contract negotiation, and communication strategies. By involving both academic staff and students, and by integrating financial considerations early in the process, the methodology ensures that the selected resource aligns with curricular needs and budget constraints. The approach is designed to be adaptable and reusable, offering a practical framework for other academic libraries facing similar decisions.

Key words: *anatomy; education, medical; models, anatomic; software.*

Background

Digital anatomy applications have become integral to anatomy education. Lecturers frequently incorporate these tools into their teaching, while students rely on them as supplementary resources alongside textbooks and course materials. Three-dimensional visualisation technology has been proven to increase the factual knowledge, enhance spatial knowledge acquisition and improve the user's satisfaction and their perception of the effectiveness of the learning tools in comparison to other teaching methods (1, 2). The widespread availability of these platforms means that students quickly discover and begin using anatomy websites and apps independently (3). However, many of these applications operate on a subscription-based model, which can lead to unequal access among students. Moreover, students prioritise usability over accuracy and level of detail, which is valued more by teaching staff (3). By providing institutional licenses through the university library, all students gain equal access to high-quality

anatomical resources, ensuring consistency in available educational materials.

While university libraries typically oversee contracts for journals and databases, librarians may have limited or no expertise in anatomy education, making it challenging to assess the content and pedagogical value of these tools. Conversely, teaching staff and students, who are well-versed in the educational utility of anatomy applications, are usually not involved in licensing negotiations. Their primary concerns for these applications are content quality and consistent access, especially when these resources are embedded into curricula.

When selecting or evaluating an anatomical application, several questions arise. Which platforms offer the required content and quality? What are the specific needs of educators and students? What budgetary constraints exist? And how can changes be implemented effectively, considering the interests of all stakeholders? Drawing on our experience, we present a methodology (Figure 1) that can be followed or adapted by other aca-

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academic libraries seeking to make informed decisions about anatomical application acquisition.



Fig. 1. 6-step methodology for decision making about anatomical applications

Methodology

Explore the market

As a first step, we aimed to identify the available anatomical application options on the market. Zilver schoon et al. (4) suggest searching for anatomy applications in scientific literature. We expanded this approach by conducting online searches and reviewing offerings from major biomedical publishers. This broader strategy allowed us to include applications that may not yet be referenced in academic publications, such as newly launched platforms or tools not widely known within the scientific community. For example, in our case, this led to the inclusion of AnatomyTOOL, an open platform under supervision of the Dutch Association of Anatomists (Nederlandse Anatomen Vereniging) (5). We found ten applications that initially appeared to align with our requirements.

While this step did not involve formal selection, we excluded applications that clearly lacked the type of anatomical models relevant to our needs, such as tools that had no 3D visualization, contained only partial anatomy models or needed specific hardware to run.

Selection based on functionality

In the second phase, we requested trial access (where applicable) to conduct a functional evaluation of all selected applications. This initial selection was carried out by library staff. While no specific anatomical expertise was required, having a scientific or biomedical

background among the testers proved beneficial to easily understand and navigate the content of the applications.

We began by applying the evaluation criteria proposed by Zilver schoon et al. (4). Unlike their comparative approach, we chose to retain only those applications that fulfilled the highest requirements for each criterion. These requirements included:

- model rotation: no limitations in rotation and usable vantage points;
- model displacement: no limitations in movement of the models;
- zooming: able to zoom in and out of models and structures without limitations;
- clickable structures: all structures are selectable;
- transparency: The transparency of structures can be adjusted;
- anatomical information: anatomical descriptions are available for all structures;
- virtual dissection: all structures can be individually removed to enable a complete virtual dissection.

To further differentiate between the applications that passed this initial screening, we introduced additional criteria tailored to the specific needs of our institution. These can be adapted by other libraries depending on their user base:

- dynamic biomechanical models: essential for physiotherapy students, these models demonstrate joint and muscle movements;
- medical imaging integration: the availability and diversity of medical imaging features accompanying the 3D models;
- model complexity: applications with overly simplified anatomical structures were excluded in favour of those offering detailed subdivisions;
- general ease of use: platforms that were unintuitive or did not run smoothly were discarded;
- app-availability: we prioritised applications that offered a mobile app with equivalent content and usability to the desktop or web version.

On the basis of these criteria, three applications were selected for further evaluation.

Financial viability

In the next step, we assessed the financial viability of the three shortlisted anatomical applications. This was not a formal negotiation process, but rather an ex-

ploratory inquiry to gain a general understanding of the pricing landscape. We contacted publishers to request indicative pricing for institutional licenses, focusing on subscription models that would cover access for all students and staff.

This preliminary cost analysis helped us identify which applications were within our budget. One of the three selected platforms, despite meeting all functional and pedagogical criteria, was excluded at this stage due to its pricing exceeding the available financial resources. This emphasises the importance of *integrating* budgetary considerations early in the selection process, as high-quality content alone does not guarantee feasibility. While pricing structures varied – some offering tiered access models or discounts for academic institutions – this step provided valuable insight into the cost-benefit balance of each option. It also laid the groundwork for future negotiations in later stages of this methodology.

Trial and survey

With the remaining two applications shortlisted, we organized an extended trial involving professors, lecturers, and students. One of these applications was already licensed by the library, while trial access was arranged for the other, allowing participants to explore its content in depth. To gather feedback, we designed and distributed a survey (Appendix 1) tailored to each user group.

Academic staff were asked to evaluate the applications from the perspective of their subject expertise. Their feedback focused on the accuracy, completeness, and pedagogical relevance of the anatomical models. We also documented their current use of anatomical applications, both in teaching and in clinical practice, to better understand how these tools integrate into their workflows.

Students were invited to assess the usefulness of the content in relation to their studies. They were asked to reflect on what they needed or would have found useful during the past academic year. This approach allowed us to capture insights across different stages of the curriculum and to identify which anatomical features are most relevant at various points in their academic career. Additionally, we gathered data on their current usage patterns, which revealed that many students were independently purchasing licenses for applications not provided by the library. This revealed a discrepancy between the anatomical application licenses

provided by the library and the students' awareness of these resources, indicating a need for improved communication and outreach.

The trial provided essential content-related input for the Campus Library Council. By combining expert evaluation with student perspectives, we ensured that the selected applications met both educational and practical needs across disciplines and study levels.

Financial and legal details

Once the preferred application was identified based on functional, pedagogical, and financial criteria, we resumed price negotiations with the publisher. At this stage, the focus shifted from general pricing to the specifics of the licensing agreement.

Special attention was given to the terms of use, particularly regarding the reuse of visual content from the application. Since anatomical images and models are often integrated into course materials, presentations, publications, and outreach activities, it was essential to clarify whether such uses were permitted under the license. Clear and permissive terms in these areas were considered crucial to ensure the resource could be fully embedded into the educational ecosystem without legal or logistical barriers.

In parallel, we finalized the financial terms, confirming the scope of access (e.g. number of users and contract duration) and any additional services included, such as training for students and staff or technical support. With this information in hand, and all stakeholder feedback considered, the final decision was made by the Campus Library Council.

Communication

The final step in the methodology involved communicating the decision to all relevant stakeholders and ensuring that the addition or replacement of the anatomical application was widely known and understood across the institution.

For academic staff, we initiated direct communication with all faculty members involved in anatomy education. We asked them to share this information within their research groups and educational teams to ensure broad dissemination. To further extend our reach, we published announcements on faculty intranet pages and included updates in departmental newsletters.

To support academic staff in adopting the new application, we organized training sessions prior to the start

of the academic year. These sessions provided hands-on guidance and addressed practical questions related to integrating the tool into teaching. For those unable to attend, a recording of the training was made available, ensuring that all staff had access to the necessary information and support.

To inform students, we presented and demonstrated the new application during anatomy courses across all relevant study programs. While we focused primarily on first-year students, we also provided presentation materials to lecturers of advanced anatomy courses. Additionally, we incorporated information about the new resource into our library sessions on information literacy. To support this outreach, we created promotional flyers that were distributed during our presentations and prominently displayed in libraries and learning centers on all campuses offering biomedical and health sciences programs.

We also utilized digital channels to reinforce the message. Slides announcing the new application were displayed on information screens in libraries and learning centers, and detailed information was added to the library's website.

These combined efforts ensured that both staff and students were aware of the new resource and could start exploring and using the application.

Lessons learned

Developing and applying this methodology for the first time allowed us to identify several key factors that contribute to a successful selection process for anatomical applications.

Internal collaboration is essential. Effective communication within the library team is crucial, especially given the involvement of multiple teams such as information specialists, the e-resources team, and legal services. Aligning expectations and responsibilities early in the process helps streamline decision-making and avoid delays.

Engaging academic staff and students requires strategy. Reaching out to teaching staff and students, and motivating them to participate in trials or surveys, can be challenging. A well-planned communication strategy is essential to ensure sufficient and meaningful feedback. Without adequate input from end users, it becomes difficult to make informed, user-centered decisions.

Time management is critical. The evaluation process,

particularly the trial phase, is time-intensive. Getting to know each application, organizing access, and collecting feedback all require careful planning. Moreover, the timing of the trial must align with the academic calendar, as staff and student availability fluctuates throughout the year. Trials conducted during exam periods or holidays are unlikely to yield sufficient engagement.

The methodology should be reusable and adaptable. This selection process should not be viewed as a one-time effort. As new tools emerge and institutional needs evolve, periodic reassessment is necessary. Thorough documentation of the methodology, criteria, and outcomes ensures that future evaluations can build on past work, saving time and maintaining consistency.

Conclusion

The selection of an anatomical application for institutional use requires more than a simple comparison of features or pricing. It demands a structured, collaborative approach that brings together library staff, teaching staff, and students. The methodology we developed and applied enabled us to make a well-informed, transparent, and pedagogically sound decision. We hope that this methodology can serve as a useful model for other libraries navigating similar decisions.

Acknowledgements

The lead author of this paper (Erik Verraedt) received the EAHIL award in the best 3-minute presentation category at the EAHIL 2025 workshop, "Imagine", Łódź, Poland, 11-13 June 2025.

Submitted on invitation.

Accepted on 14 November 2025.

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Appendix 1: Questionnaire

Use of anatomical applications (questions for lecturers)

- Which course(s) do you teach or support where anatomical applications may be relevant? Please provide the course code(s) and official title(s).
- How important is it for you to have access to anatomical applications for your teaching and/or course materials?
- Did you use anatomical applications in your teaching and/or course materials prior to this trial?
- In what ways do you use anatomical applications in your teaching and/or course materials?
- Which anatomical applications do you currently use for your courses?
- To what extent do you expect students to use an anatomical application for your courses?
- How does the use of an anatomical application compare to other supplementary learning resources, such as textbooks, anatomical atlases, or plastinated specimens?
- In what ways would you like to use an anatomical application in your teaching and/or course materials?
- Do you use anatomical applications outside of your teaching activities?
- Which anatomical applications do you use outside of your teaching activities?
- For what purposes do you use anatomical applications outside of your teaching activities?

Use of anatomical applications (questions for students)

- Which degree program are you currently enrolled in or have you completed?
- How important is it for you to have access to anatomical applications for your studies?
- Did you use anatomical applications in your studies prior to this trial?
- Which anatomical applications have you used for your courses up to the last academic year?
- To what extent were you expected to use an anatomical application for your courses?
- For which courses (name and course code) did you use anatomical applications during the past academic year?
- How did the use of an anatomical application in these courses compare to other supplementary learning resources, such as textbooks, anatomical atlases, or plastinated specimens?

Content evaluation of each anatomical application

- Did you test the anatomical application?
- How well does the anatomical model cover the structures and systems relevant to your courses?
- How appropriate is the level of detail in the model for your courses?
- How well do the available functionalities align with your course requirements?
- Are there any inaccuracies or gaps in the model for your courses? If so, which ones did you notice? Are there any desired functionalities that are missing?

User experience of each anatomical application

- How user-friendly is the web version overall?
- How easy is it to access the web version?
- How easy is it to navigate and explore the web version?
- How efficient is the use of the web version?
- How easy is it to integrate material into your own course materials or the LMS?
- Did you test the associated app?
- How user-friendly is the app for the anatomical models?
- How easy is it to navigate and explore the anatomical application in the app?
- Do you have any additional comments about the user experience?
- What overall rating would you give to the anatomical application?

Additional comments

- Do you have any further comments about the tested anatomical applications?

Navigating the publishing trap: safeguarding researchers from predatory practices

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Abstract

This paper describes the motivation, development and results of the workshop “Spotting sharks in the ocean of academic publishing: how to steer clear of predatory behaviour”. The workshop was developed in response to questions from researchers who had published in a journal that later turned out to be unreliable or who questioned a journal’s quality when selecting a publication venue. The goal is to teach researchers how to make the distinction between reliable and untrustworthy journals and reduce distrust of new or smaller publishers. The session was developed at KU Leuven and then adapted for presentation at the EAHIL conference. It provided valuable insights into raising awareness, fostering collaboration among research support staff, and strengthening trust in the publishing landscape.

Key words: predatory publishing; open access; research support; scholarly communication; awareness training.

Motivation and development of the workshop

Research support staff at KU Leuven have noticed a growing number of inquiries about how to identify trustworthy publication venues, both prior to selecting a journal and after encountering issues with an unreliable one. Journals or publishers that engage in predatory or unethical practices take advantage of the academic publishing system without providing the editorial oversight or quality control you would expect from legitimate scholarly outlets. Rather than focusing on sharing credible and rigorous research, they often prioritize other goals, most notably financial gain (1). Therefore, the research support staff at KU Leuven developed the workshop “Spotting sharks in the ocean of academic publishing: how to steer clear of predatory behaviour”. The workshop helps researchers recognize and avoid predatory publishing practices, while also raising awareness, breaking the taboo around the topic, and encouraging open communication with peers. Its main goal is to support researchers in choosing suitable journals and to increase understanding of the wide

range of unethical publishing practices. The idea behind it is that journals and publishers are rarely entirely good or bad; many operate in a gray zone, with both positive and questionable characteristics. In addition, being able to recognize predatory publishing practices can also help when evaluating literature you plan to use in your own research. While the current workshop does not focus on this aspect, learning to spot suspicious journal or publisher characteristics can already make a valuable contribution.

Additionally, there has been a growing distrust towards publishers with a damaged reputation (2, 3). For example, journals or publishers that have been black-listed, or discredited for unethical publishing practices. It is difficult for such publishers to recover, as distrust often persists long after they have improved their policies (4). This distrust also extends to smaller, lesser-known or new journals, significantly reducing their chances of gaining a place in the scientific publishing landscape.

Therefore, it is important to teach researchers how to critically evaluate journals instead of relying on static

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lists (e.g. Beals list only updated about every four years; MIAR updated once a year) that try to make decisions for them. At the same time, fostering trust in smaller and newer publishers is essential, reminding researchers that reputation is shaped by more than just journal metrics.

This leads to a paradox: while researchers are rightly cautious when choosing a publication venue, their reluctance leads to the growing dominance of a select group of large and powerful publishers (5). As a result, bibliodiversity is undermined and hinders the development of new open access initiatives (6).

The rapid rise of artificial intelligence further complicates this situation. The sharp increase in automatically generated publications in paper mills is blurring the lines between reliable and unreliable even more (7).

In this context, there is a growing need for clear guidance for researchers when selecting publication venues.

Set-up and content of the workshop

The original workshop at KU Leuven

The original workshop was developed for researchers at various stages of their research careers and is structured into four main parts.

It starts with a theoretical part led by the lecturer, introducing the concept of predatory publication practices and outlining their typical characteristics. This foundation helps researchers learn how to recognize warning signs and avoid falling victim to such practices. Unethical publication practices do not prioritize the quality of research output and use deceptive tactics such as active, or even aggressive, recruitment emails, rapid publication without peer review, requesting the inclusion of irrelevant references, adding fake or irrelevant co-authors, identity theft and even extortion (1). These kinds of practices undermine the integrity of scholarly communication and pose a serious threat to the credibility of research.

Secondly, participants are introduced to resources, quality labels, and tools that help researchers evaluate whether a journal or publisher is trustworthy, or that provide guidelines to support transparency, integrity, and ethical standards in scholarly publishing.

Resources:

- *ISSN Portal* (<https://portal.issn.org/>): the International Standard Serial Number (ISSN) provides a unique code for a publishing platform. Each page

is enriched with additional metadata (e.g. publisher, country, indexing status, subject, medium). By consulting the ISSN portal, researchers can check whether the journal has a valid ISSN;

- *Information Matrix for the Analysis of Journals* (MIAR, <https://miar.ub.edu/>): MIAR aggregates data from over 100 sources (journal directories, international indexing databases and abstracting databases). Its goal is to help identify reputable journals by assessing their presence across these sources. To be included in MIAR, a journal must appear in at least one of the sources analyzed. If a journal is not indexed in any of the sources MIAR has checked, this raises the critical question of why this is the case. In such cases, the journal is likely to be poorly discoverable, which in turn means your publication may also be difficult to find, ultimately diminishing the visibility and impact of your research output;
- *Academic databases* (e.g. Web of Science (Clarivate), Scopus (Elsevier), Medline (National Library of Medicine), PubMed Central (National Library of Medicine)): verifying the indexing of journals in the major academic databases is an important check. Each database has specific criteria that must be met before journals, books or conference proceedings can be indexed. Examples of such criteria are peer review, editorial quality, ethical publishing practices, regular publication, international relevance, and technical standards for metadata and accessibility. In this way, such databases serve as a form of quality assurance: being indexed in one or more of the major databases signals the credibility and reliability of a journal, book or conference proceeding;
- *Directory of Open Access Journals* (DOAJ, <https://doaj.org/>): the DOAJ is a database of peer-reviewed, fully open access journals in over 80 languages. This database provides quality assurance for open access publishing, helping researchers find reliable publishing platforms. Note: If a journal is not indexed in the major databases or one of the other above-mentioned resources, this does not necessarily mean it is unreliable. It may simply be a very new journal that has yet to build its reputation required for inclusion;
- *Blacklists* (e.g. Beall's list of Potential Predatory Journals and Publishers, <https://beallslist.net/>): Op-

tionally, so-called “blacklists” can be consulted when forming an opinion about a publishing platform. Blacklists contain journals accused of potentially unethical or predatory practices. Journals appearing on such lists are typically scrutinized for issues such as lack of transparency, weak or absent peer review, and misleading metrics. However, blacklists rarely provide detailed justification for including a publisher or journal. Therefore, researchers must independently verify whether a journal truly engages in predatory behavior. These blacklists have been criticized for potential bias (8). Moreover, the rapidly evolving publishing landscape makes it difficult to keep such static lists up to date.

Additionally, it is possible to check whether a publishing platform has ethical quality labels. Quality labels:

- *Committee on Publication Ethics* (COPE, <https://publicationethics.org/>): COPE is committed to training and supporting editors, publishers, universities, research institutes, and anyone involved in publication ethics. Membership in COPE demonstrates that journals, publishers, organizations, universities or research institutes intend to adhere to the highest standards of publication ethics and apply the COPE Principles of Publication Ethics, as outlined in the Core Practices. When publishing platforms apply for membership, they are evaluated and must meet a set of minimum criteria to be approved as a COPE member;
- *Open Access Scholarly Publishing Association* (OASPA, <https://oaspa.org/>): OASPA is a diverse community of academic and professional publishers engaged in open scholarship. Approved members have undergone a rigorous review process and have pledged to adhere to OASPA's Code of Conduct.

Specific tools:

- *Think. Check. Submit.* (<https://thinkchecksubmit.org/>): this webtool provides checklists that researchers can use to identify trustworthy journals and books.

While a variety of tools and resources exist to help researchers assess the credibility of journals and publishers, it is important to recognize that no single tool offers a definitive answer. The identification of preda-

tory practices is inherently complex and often context-dependent. Therefore, researchers are encouraged to adopt a multifaceted approach, drawing on multiple sources of information rather than relying on one checklist or database. The publishing landscape changes rapidly, and it is difficult to keep a list, tool, or index up to date. Most of the tools mentioned above are updated regularly, with each noticing important changes at different times. Combining them maximizes the chance of detecting these changes. In this regard, the InterAcademy Partnership (IAP) spectrum approach (9) provides a valuable framework. Rather than categorizing journals in binary terms, it outlines a continuum of characteristics across three categories: fraudulent and deceptive journals, low-quality journals, and quality journals. By comparing the traits of a given journal with those described in each category, researchers can make a more informed and balanced judgment about its reliability and scholarly value.

The third part of the workshop focuses on real-world examples. Presenting actual cases of unethical and predatory publishing practices that have affected KU Leuven researchers demonstrates to participants that these issues are not just theoretical. They are real and have impacted colleagues within their own institution. Moreover, it can help break the taboo that still surrounds this topic. Many researchers find it difficult to admit that they may have fallen into one of the publishing traps, as this often comes with a sense of embarrassment or shame. Sharing such examples therefore helps to raise awareness and encourages more open and supportive discussion.

Finally, participants are presented with hands-on exercises so they can practice how to use the resources, quality labels, and tools to reach a well-informed decision about whether or not to publish in their case journal. The cases are deliberately diverse: some journals are clearly unreliable, others were clearly reliable, however, a large proportion of the cases falls within the gray area. Researchers are encouraged to think critically, experience that it is crucial to use several of the tools and resources simultaneously and ask for advice when in doubt.

The EAHIL adaptation of the workshop

For the 2025 EAHIL conference in Łódź, the original KU Leuven workshop was tailored to suit an interna-

tional audience of research support staff and librarians. The focus was primarily on sharing experiences, collaboration, and developing strategies to better support researchers in navigating the publishing landscape. For the EAHIL conference, the last two sections of the original workshop, which focused on practical examples and exercises, were replaced by a “case market”. During this session, participants worked in small groups to analyze cases and challenges encountered by research support staff. Within their groups, participants could share experiences, offer advice and explore preferred solutions. The session concluded with a collaborative discussion, where participants shared insights and best practices. In this way, the workshop aimed to raise awareness of red flags indicating predatory behavior in journals, to equip support staff with strategies to train researchers in evaluating journals using reliable tools and resources, and to build confidence in advising researchers by sharing strategies and experiences with colleagues. Overall, the workshop sought to develop best practices for rebuilding trust in academic publishing. The EAHIL edition generated valuable feedback. All participants supported the approach of the original KU Leuven workshop and emphasized the importance of raising awareness among researchers about predatory publishing practices. Furthermore, the importance of clear and effective communication within institutions was emphasized, so that researchers know who to contact if they have concerns about a journal or receive suspicious invitations. Another key insight was the importance of involving researchers directly in journal evaluations. Rather than conducting assessments on their behalf, support teams should empower researchers. This can be achieved by teaching researchers how to conduct such an evaluation themselves or by providing researchers with information to help them make their own well-informed decisions. Finally, participants suggested offering short information sessions or checklists to help researchers know where to find support.

Conclusions

The workshop “Spotting sharks in the ocean of academic publishing: how to steer clear of predatory behaviour” made it clear that predatory publishing is not only a problem of deception, but also a problem of trust.

While the focus on predatory publishing practices has promoted useful vigilance, it has also fostered unintended distrust of smaller or newer journals. This calls for a nuanced approach that not only protects researchers but also teaches them how to make independent judgments.

Through practical examples and exercises, the use of reliable tools and resources, and exchanges between support staff and researchers, this workshop helps researchers recognize and avoid predatory publishing practices, while also raising awareness, breaking the taboo around the topic, and encouraging open communication with peers. In this way, researchers are supported in selecting suitable journals and in increasing their understanding of the wide range of unethical publishing practices. Open communication and raising awareness are the best weapons against predatory and unethical publishing practices.

Acknowledgements

The authors of this paper received the EAHIL award in the best workshop category at the EAHIL 2025 workshop, "Imagine", Łódź, Poland, 11-13 June 2025.

Submitted on invitation.

Accepted on 17 November 2025.

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Making the Medical Library of the University of Bern a caring and safe space

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Abstract

In alignment with the University of Bern's broader efforts to combat discrimination and uphold inclusivity, the Medical Library (BibMED) at the University of Bern has launched the Caring Library initiative. This initiative promotes a safe, welcoming space through twenty guiding principles displayed prominently behind the information desk. These principles, such as respect, inclusion, and solidarity, serve as a daily reminder of the values that keep our community caring and discrimination-free. This article describes the motivations behind the Caring Library initiative. The BibMED is committed to fostering an environment where all backgrounds and identities are valued and respected.

Key words: libraries; diversity; inclusion.

Caring library

The staff at the Medical Library (BibMED) of the University of Bern warmly welcomes everyone to use the library as a space for learning and connection. We are committed to fostering an inclusive environment that is free from discrimination and stigma, where every person is valued and respected. Our commitment is reflected in twenty guiding principles that define a *safe* and *caring* library. We encourage all library users to preserve this atmosphere by treating others with compassion and respect, and by offering support when needed. We display this statement prominently on a wall behind the Medical Library (BibMED) information counter. Alongside it, we have framed illustrations that highlight the fundamental principles of a caring library and encourage staff and users to actively contribute to an inclusive environment (*Figure 1 and 2*). For years, the BibMED has been dedicated to creating a discrimination-free space for our diverse community of staff and users. We demonstrate this commitment through our initiatives, which include engaging in social media awareness campaigns, displaying the Progress Pride flag and anti-racism posters on library walls, and offer-

ing a quiet Self-Care Space in which people can rest and unwind. The space is made private by curtains, equipped with plants, and furnished with mats, mattresses, and giant convertible beanbags. The BibMED has organized events like screening of *Dear White People* by Justin Simien, hosting readings on sexualized violence with Agota Lavoyer, featuring the work of artist Lucy Neidhart on sexual consent for Sexual Harassment Awareness Day (1), celebrating the World Mental Health Day by showcasing books on the subject and offering free tea every week, organizing visits by therapy dogs to promote stress relief during semester or final exams (2, 3). We have collaborated with student organizations such as the FSMB (Fachschaft Medizin der Universität Bern, the association of medical students) to host game evenings, and with the BLS (@bier.life.support) student association to organize parties at the BibMed where students can dance and chill (4). We also collaborate with CLASH Bern (Collectif de Lutte contre les Attitudes Sexistes en milieu Hospitalier), a student collective that works to combat sexism and sexual harassment in hospital and university settings (5).

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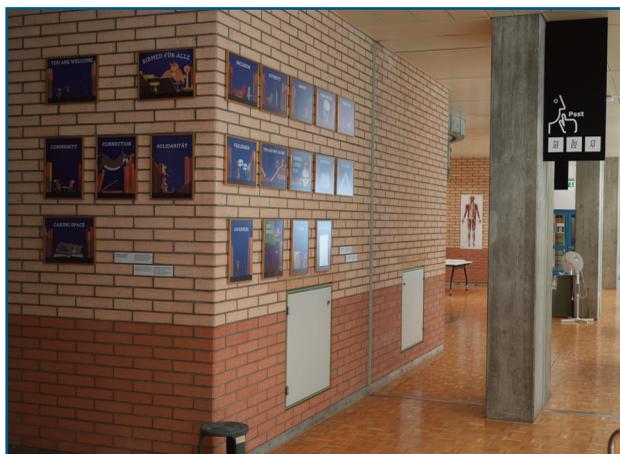


Fig. 1. A wall behind the Medical Library (BibMED) information counter, with some of the fundamental principles of a caring library.

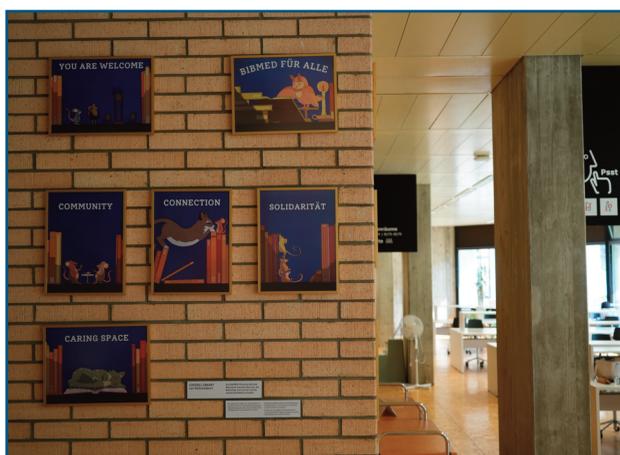


Fig. 2. Framed illustrations that highlight some of the fundamental principles of a caring library.

Discrimination affects us all

Discrimination – the unequal, disadvantaging treatment of groups of people enforced by structural and institutional power – harms us all, regardless of our racial or ethnic background, cultural heritage, gender, sexual orientation, age, physical abilities, mental or physical health, or socioeconomic status. The University libraries are embedded within institutions of learning, where structural oppressions including racism, ethnocentrism, sexism, heterosexism, ageism, ableism, mental health, physical health, and classism, continue to exert force. The University of Bern recognizes these structural prob-

lems, as highlighted by Vice-Rector Prof. Dr. Heike Mayer in her address during the 15th Action Week Against Racism in the city of Bern. Her message, titled *Racism Concerns Us All!*, affirmed: "Racism is a societal problem that does not leave educational institutions untouched. That is why the University of Bern is committed to protecting against discrimination and combating racism at structural, institutional, and individual levels. We are working on sustainable change by implementing specific measures".

The Vice-Rector further reassured the community that those who experience or witness racism will receive support. Any university affiliate can confidentially report discrimination at the Office for Equal Opportunities. The university unequivocally states: "The University of Bern does not tolerate discrimination of any kind" (6).

One month later, on Sexual Harassment Awareness Day, Rector Prof. Dr. Virginia Richter addressed the employees with the following message: "At the University of Bern, we do not tolerate sexual harassment or sexism. Successful learning and working can only take place in a climate of trust and mutual respect. The University of Bern is legally bound to protect its members from sexual harassment. All employees have the right to have their personal integrity protected and their personal boundaries respected at work" (personal communication).

Aligned with the university's commitment, The BibMED actively seeks to minimize microaggressions – subtle, yet harmful and repetitive everyday discriminatory actions towards members of historically marginalized groups, including women, people of color, people who are elderly, LGBTQ+ people, people with disabilities, people with chronic illnesses or mental health conditions, and people with socio-economic or class disadvantages. Neither physical nor psychological violence is permitted in the library. Respecting others' boundaries is a core value.

Twenty core principles of BibMED

The twenty core principles of BibMED are: *BibMED for all; You are welcome; BibMED loves you; Safe space; Caring space; Our space; You matter; You are not alone; We are all diverse; Inclusion; Networking; Community; Connection; Self care; Solidarity; Unlearning; Awareness; Respect; Peace; Understanding.*

You might wonder how a place of learning like a uni-

iversity library can also be a caring space? As part of our ongoing efforts to foster a comfortable and inviting library, we prominently display twenty core principles behind the library's information desk, ensuring they are visible to everyone who uses the BibMED. These serve as a daily reminder to staff and patrons to foster a safe and inclusive space.

We arrived at these principles through our reading and our media viewing (6-9). We highlight terms that characterize and promote a caring atmosphere. Some terms consistently appeared in these varied sources, including *welcoming, peace, safe space, caring, inclusion, understanding, awareness, connections, respect, solidarity, self-care, and community*. Out of the consistent terms, we selected twenty to display.

On orientation days for prospective students, first-year medical students are introduced to the principles underlying our goal of establishing a Caring Library where no one is marginalized, and all individuals feel welcome and supported. They are encouraged to demonstrate moral courage by rejecting discriminatory behaviors and reporting any incidents of discrimination or harassment they observe.

Definitions for the twenty principles

We suggest the following definitions for our twenty principles:

- *BibMED for everyone* – the BibMED welcomes everyone equally;
- *You are welcome* – you belong here;
- *BibMED loves you* – the BibMED values, supports, and invests in you;
- *Safe space* – we foster an environment where everyone feels safe and protected;
- *Caring space* – a space dedicated to physical, social, spiritual, and mental relaxation;
- *Our space* – the library is our space;
- *You matter* – we respect the needs and preferences of all users and staff;
- *You are not alone* – we will help you if you need support;
- *We are all diverse* – we acknowledge and celebrate our differences;
- *Inclusion* – we welcome diversity in our inclusive community;
- *Networking* – we foster connection and collaboration;

- *Community* – together, we form the BibMED community, where all are welcome and respected;
- *Connection* – we encourage users and staff to make meaningful connections;
- *Self-care* – take care of your mental, physical, and social health;
- *Solidarity* – we work together and support each other to achieve our goals;
- *Unlearning* – we make space for new ideas, challenge biases and assumptions, and value growth;
- *Awareness* – we are respectful, attentive, and considerate of others' boundaries;
- *Respect* – we engage with others as equals, treat them fairly, and accept their boundaries;
- *Peace* – the BibMED space is free from violence and hostility;
- *Understanding* – we strive to understand others' perspectives.

Future directions

These twenty core principles are both symbolic and aspirational. We are committed to establishing a safe and caring library at the University of Bern.

We hope to expand our initiatives. For example, organizing discussions around these principles, by designating a special “awareness week” for each one, where we would ask students to share their thoughts or experiences in short video messages on social media. Our library users and staff could also identify further words and concepts to add to our principles on social media. And we could also present this project at conferences or write academic papers on the topic.

For now, we are focused on building a caring BibMED community by encouraging self-reflection and actively fostering inclusive and supportive practices. We who have worked on this project have found it a rewarding experience, made even more meaningful by the BibMED's leadership, which has demonstrated its commitment by proactively supporting initiatives that cultivate an inclusive culture.

Conclusion

The Caring Library initiative at the Medical Library (BibMED) of the University of Bern exemplifies a deep commitment to inclusivity, respect, and well-being within an academic space. By fostering a discrimination-free environment and actively promoting the values of *belonging, safety, and community*, BibMED sets the

standard for a supportive university library. Through its diverse initiatives – including the creation of self-care spaces, awareness campaigns, and collaboration with student organizations – the Caring Library actively challenges structural discrimination and microaggressions. Displaying our twenty core principles reminds us daily of their importance and invites all users to contribute to our culture of compassion and support. We look ahead to expanding the project, engaging our users and staff more deeply, and broadening academic discourse.

Acknowledgements

About the project

Mohamed Wa Baile initiated this project in collaboration with Claudia Schumacher and Raul Bison (all from the University Library of Bern). Mohamed Wa Baile researched and selected the terms that we use as our principles; he also proposed the labels and determined the order of the frames on the wall. Claudia Schumacher selected the frames and designed the labels. Raul Bison chose and created the illustrations. Our three-person team regularly met in person and online to propose and discuss ideas. Daniel Giot, the caretaker of the building installed our frames and the labels. The social media team (comprising library staff and medical students) continues to raise awareness on Instagram, where they highlight the twenty principles and our other campaigns.

Received on 22 October 2025.

Accepted on 24 November 2025.

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Human vs machine in medical search strategy development: a comparative evaluation of ChatGPT-4.1

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Abstract

This study examined the potential of generative artificial intelligence, specifically ChatGPT-4.1, to support the development of search strategies. Using two Cochrane Review topics as benchmarks, AI-generated MEDLINE strategies were compared to the expert strategies using PRESS (Peer Review of Electronic Search Strategies) criteria. Results show that ChatGPT-4.1 can accurately translate research questions and apply Ovid syntax and Boolean operators, but shows considerable weaknesses in subject heading and text word selection.

Key words: artificial intelligence; information storage and retrieval; systematic reviews as topic; methods.

Background

In the context of Evidence-Based Medicine (EBM) effective Information Retrieval (IR) is essential but often challenging, as it requires domain knowledge, advanced search skills, and considerable time – resources that are limited in clinical practice. In consequence, integrating EBM into everyday workflows remains difficult. Recent advances in generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) offer new possibilities to support IR by facilitating the development of search strategies and by mitigating limitations in time and IR expertise.

Purpose

The study aimed to investigate the current potential of generative artificial intelligence – specifically ChatGPT-4.1 – to support the development of search strategies for EBM. To address this, the study tested two hypotheses:

- *H1:* ChatGPT-4.1 is capable of generating high-quality medical search strategies that are comparable to or better than those created by human experts;
- *H2:* the use of ChatGPT-4.1 significantly reduces the time required to develop medical search strategies.

Methods

To assess the potential of generative AI in supporting the development of medical search strategies, two Cochrane Review topics – Example 1 (1), Example 2 (2) – were selected as basis for the intended comparison. Cochrane Reviews were chosen as benchmarks due to their methodological rigor and expert-designed strategies. Both reviews were published after the training cutoff of ChatGPT-4.1 (June 2024 (3)) and had no prior versions, thus minimizing the risk of training-related bias.

Search strategies for MEDLINE (Ovid) were generated with ChatGPT-4.1 (OpenAI) via API for both topics using three different prompting approaches: Zero-Shot (the model answers without being given any example), One-Shot (the model gets one example to guide its answer), and Chain-of-Thought (CoT; in a step-by-step conversational style, the model, breaks a complex task into smaller steps and processes them one after the other before giving the final answer). The prompt structures were standardized across topics; only clinical questions and background details varied. The One-Shot technique included an illustrative Cochrane example (4), while the CoT approach involved stepwise reasoning guidance. For Zero- and

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One-Shot, only the model's initial outputs were analyzed; for CoT, the first complete strategy was used. The AI-generated and the benchmark strategies were evaluated using the PRESS (Peer Review of Electronic Search Strategies) checklist (5), covering six categories: 1. translation of the research question, 2. Boolean and proximity operators, 3. subject headings, 4. text word searching, 5. spelling, syntax and line numbers, and 6. limits and filters (see Data availability statement before the References).

Results

Translation of the research question

ChatGPT-4.1 consistently applied the PICO framework across all prompting approaches, except for the Zero-Shot condition for Example 2. Evaluation against the PRESSed expert strategies indicated that the AI systematically captured the relevant aspects of the research question, demonstrating strong capabilities in text analysis, contextual understanding, and thematic grouping of research topics. Across most conditions, the model used the same aspects as the benchmark strategies for searching. An exception was the Zero-Shot technique, where all identified thematic aspects were included in the search. This resulted in highly precise but overly narrow retrievals, which are generally unsuitable for comprehensive systematic searches. Overall, in structuring the research question and identifying relevant components, the One-Shot and CoT approaches aligned closely with expert strategies.

Boolean and proximity operators. Spelling, syntax, and line numbers

Across all strategies ChatGPT-4.1 applied the Ovid-specific syntax correctly. Nonetheless display issues occurred: in the Zero-Shot outputs of both examples and the CoT strategy for Example 2, truncation symbols were interpreted as Markdown formatting, which resulted in italicized text. This required time-consuming manual correction, otherwise the searches would have been largely ineffective. Correct Boolean logic was applied consistently. However, hallucinated MeSH terms caused misalignment in line numbering, requiring manual adjustment of OR and AND connections. Proximity operators (ADJ) were formally correct but not always semantically optimal: some terms were searched separately rather than being placed in close proximity

to other relevant terms which would have yielded better results. Some terms were searched with a proximity operator, although treating them as a phrase would have been more appropriate. Overall, the AI demonstrated strong formal correctness but only limited capability to encode nuanced IR knowledge for adjacency operator selection.

Subject headings

ChatGPT-4.1 demonstrated insufficient understanding of MeSH hierarchies and term definitions: the model applied term explosion arbitrarily, occasionally even introducing false descriptors. The model seems unable to distinguish between relevant and irrelevant terms of the controlled vocabulary leading to unnecessary term inclusions. Hallucinated terms occurred in five of six AI-generated strategies (except in the Zero-Shot strategy in Example 2). Furthermore, AI is unaware of thesaurus term relationships. In CoT 2, the AI used the newer term without referencing the older one. While the CoT approach showed greater creativity and generated more search terms for complex topics, the AI struggled to fully capture multidimensional aspects, which require the use of a range of relevant descriptors. Consequently, AI-generated subject heading usage was qualitatively inferior to the expert strategies, requiring manual verification and correction, which mitigates any potential time savings. Nonetheless, the model reliably suggested central MeSH terms for each PICO aspect, offering modest assistance in initial term identification. With increasing topic complexity, performance deteriorated.

Text word searching

Although ChatGPT-4.1 generally identified central text words for each PICO aspect, it also included irrelevant terms and sometimes overly specific terms. For more complex or multidimensional topics, the AI-generated strategies contained fewer synonyms and related terms than the expert strategies, in particular in the Zero- and One-Shot prompt outputs. The dialogical CoT approach performed better but still included fewer terms than the human experts. In general, truncation was applied correctly but nonetheless arbitrarily, occasionally missing essential variants. Therefore, IR-knowledge of the user for proper interpretation is essential. In most cases the AI gave no explanation for its search field se-

lection, which sometimes seemed appropriate (ti,ab,kf) but sometimes insufficient (only ti,ab) for systematic retrieval. Considering common term occurrence patterns, the search words were not optimally combined (OR, ADJ, phrase) by the AI. However, a notable strength of the model was its ability to consistently account for both British and American spellings of the selected terms. Overall, the AI works adequately for identifying candidate text words, but combination, truncation, and field selection quality are insufficient for systematic searches. Manual review is necessary, reducing potential time savings. The model remains useful for initial term identification.

Limits and filters

Similar to its performance with Boolean operators, ChatGPT-4.1 correctly implemented syntax limits and filters, thereby demonstrating formal precision. But in one instance (Example 2, CoT), the AI applied an older Cochrane RCT filter (2008 version) rather than the current 2023 version, falsely claiming that the version used was the most up-to-date. This discrepancy presumably reflects the AI's training cutoff and its exposure to more examples of the earlier filter. Notably, the AI applied the validated filter correctly and completely, surpassing the experts in this specific case, who used the filter with a slight modification. Overall, the applied filters and limits were relevant for the research questions but often their application was unnecessary, occasionally even counterproductive (e.g., language restriction). Regarding limits and filters, AI cannot replace expert judgment: the asserted currency of filters used cannot always be relied upon, and the AI does not evaluate the necessity, relevance, or potential sensitivity loss associated with limits and filters. Consequently, manual review remains essential, therefore limiting any time savings.

Conclusion

H1: ChatGPT-4.1 displays strengths in structuring the research question and in correctly applying Ovid syntax and Boolean operators, thus enabling the generation of functionally correct search strategies. However, significant limitations exist in subject heading and text word selection: while the AI reliably identifies central terms, it struggles with indiscriminate term explosion, hallucinated descriptors, and incomplete coverage of

multidimensional topics. As a result, five of six AI-generated strategies retrieved the relevant articles included in the Cochrane Reviews, but strategies were generally formulated too precisely for comprehensive systematic searches. Expert judgment remains essential to identify and correct errors. AI can serve effectively as a generator of ideas or for drafting initial strategies, particularly when context information and sequential prompts (Chain-of-Thought) are used. Therefore, H1 is confirmed for the PRESS categories “translation of the research question” and “spelling, syntax and line numbers”, partially confirmed for “boolean and proximity operators” and “limits and filters”, but not supported for “subject headings” and “text word searching”.

H2: Regarding efficiency, ChatGPT-4.1's strengths in structuring the research question, applying syntax, and using Boolean operators allow for the rapid generation of functionally correct strategies and the suggestion of relevant search terms. However, time savings diminish when expert validation is needed – particularly for proximity operators (to assess appropriate word distances), subject headings and text word searches (to verify completeness, term placement, and linking logic), and filters or limits (which, while syntactically correct, require confirmation of validity and currency). Additional time may also be needed for correcting technical errors, such as missed truncation symbols or shifted line numbering. Thus, H2 is confirmed for “translation of the research question” and “spelling, syntax and line numbers”, partially confirmed for “boolean and proximity operators”, but not supported for “subject headings”, “text word searching”, and “limits and filters”.

Acknowledgment

This article is based on the author's thesis to obtain a Master degree from the University of Applied Sciences Cologne. Therefore, methodological limitations of this study include the small number of search examples, evaluation by a single reviewer, and the lack of medical expertise for term relevance assessment, restricting the generalizability of findings. Nevertheless, this study highlights the potential of generative AI to assist in search strategy development, with the caveat that expert oversight remains crucial for high-quality systematic retrieval.

Data availability

Further information and data (prompts, AI-outputs, complete PRESS-evaluation tables in German) are available from the author upon request.

Submitted on 12 November 2025.

Accepted on 24 November 2025.

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Exploring the impact of scientific research through citation analysis tools in policies and guidelines

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Abstract

Research impact has traditionally been measured through academic citations. In recent years, however, the focus has shifted towards assessing the broader effects of research on society, including its influence on policy-making and clinical guidelines. This brief article explores the role of citation analysis, extending impact measurement beyond academia. Using data from Scival Impact Module, we demonstrate how scientific publications from our institution have influenced policy documents and guidelines. We argue that these tools are essential in recognizing the real-world value of research, providing meaningful indicators for evaluation and accountability.

Key words: *research impact; citation analysis; policy documents; guidelines; altmetrics; bibliometrics.*

Introduction

Traditionally, the assessment of research impact has focused on citations in academic literature (Impact Factor and H-index). In recent years, however, a significant evolution has taken place: measuring the research impact now includes also considering its real-world effects, particularly on health policies and the development of clinical guidelines. It is no longer just about citations in academic journals – now, we’re asking: Is this research actually making a difference in the real world? Are policies changing? Are clinical guidelines being updated? That’s where some tools help us trace the path from research to real-world outcomes.

Tools for measuring impact

Several tools have been developed to go “beyond” classical bibliometric analysis. Among them:

- BMJ Impact Analytics;
- Scival Impact Module;
- Overton.io;
- Altmetric.com.

These tools make it possible to track the presence and relevance of scientific publications not only in academic articles but also in policy documents, government reports, international guidelines and grey literature database.

Methods

At Fondazione IRCCS Policlinico San Matteo, we analyzed data provided by the Scival Impact Module with the aim of understanding what type of impact the publications produced by our researchers generate outside the strictly academic sphere. The Impact module provides data, indicators, and analyses to deepen local understanding and to build clear, effective narratives about the broader impact of research activities. The module sources its policy data from Overton – a searchable index encompassing policy documents from more than 150 countries. Among the included institutions are the FAO, the EU Publications Office, the WHO and NICE. The Impact module reports how often publications are cited within these policy docu-

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ments. We've been using this tool to get a clearer picture of how our studies influence policy and practice. This tool connects scientific papers with policy documents, guidelines, and reports. Therefore, instead of just counting citations in journals, we're tracking how research is being used to shape real-world decisions. Please note that these citations are not tracked by citation databases like Scopus or Web of Science, and they are not included in the h-index of the researchers. The results have been incredibly encouraging.

Results

The analysis showed that several publications were cited not only in scientific literature, but also in policy documents and guidelines, confirming the real-world relevance of the research produced. So far, more than 600 of our articles have been cited in policy documents and guidelines across 44 different countries and by over 100 organizations. In *Figure 1*, we can see the types of policy bodies and how many of our articles each has cited. Percentage of academic output cited in policy documents, offering a size-neutral indicator of impact. They can be considered “time-independent metrics, which provide useful, reliable information immediately upon publication and do not rely on the passing of time for useful data to accumulate.

Policy Body	Policy Body Type	Country/Region	Citing Policy Documents
World Health Organization	Intergovernmental Organisation	Intergovernmental	23
Government of Switzerland	Government	Switzerland	37
Gesundheitsministerium	Government	Spain	37
Canada Drug Agency	Government	Canada	34
Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Wissenschaftlichen Medizinischen Fachgesellschaften (AWMF)	Government	Germany	42
NHS Trusts	Government	United Kingdom	38
NICE	Government	United Kingdom	38

Fig. 1. Total amount of scholarly output cited by body

Articles cited in policy documents show a much higher Field-Weighted Citation Impact (FWCI) than our overall scholarly output. FWCI shows how often a publication is cited compared to the world average for similar publications. In fact, the FWCI for all our scholarly output is 2.08 while is 7.23 for our scholarly output cited by policies. More than 1 means that the output is more cited than expected according to the global average.

The main areas of impact? SciVal's subject areas are organized using the All Science Journal Classification (ASJC) system, which provides a hierarchical classification

of 27 broad subject areas and over 300 categories used within Scopus. As San Matteo we covered many areas: from general Medicine to surgery. This kind of impact – societal impact that's this close to the patient – has never been tracked so clearly before. It represents a real breakthrough in how we understand the value of our research. And it is not just about recognition. Having this kind of data helps us support our researchers, guide our institutional strategy, and demonstrate our value to funders and stakeholders. It gives us a much more complete – and meaningful – picture of what scientific impact looks like today (*Figure 2*).

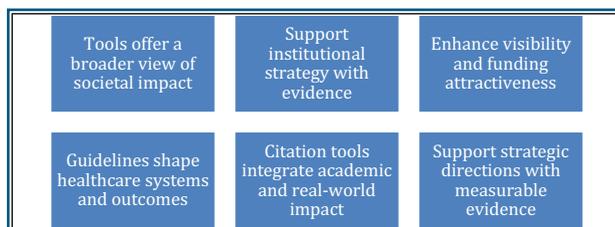


Fig. 2. Societal and academic impact.

Discussion

These findings highlight the importance of adopting a multidimensional approach to research evaluation. Beyond academic citations, policy and guideline mentions reflect the practical contribution of research to healthcare systems and society at large. Institutions can use this information to enhance research visibility, demonstrate accountability to funders, and strengthen applications for competitive grants.

Conclusions

The use of citation analysis tools in policies and guidelines represents a revolution in the way of evaluating the impact of scientific research, integrating traditional metrics and proposing a more holistic view of the influence of scientific discoveries on society. Such tools offer research institutions the opportunity to obtain a more accurate and transparent view of their contribution to society. The application of these tools can be essential for research institutions to demonstrate the value of their scientific output to various stakeholders, improving their positioning in quality assessments and their attractiveness for both public and private funding.

The adoption of citation analysis tools in policies and guidelines represents a crucial step in recognizing the “real” value of scientific research. It is no longer just a matter of measuring academic influence, but of highlighting how research results help shape political, healthcare, and clinical decisions, with direct effects on society.

Acknowledgements

The lead author of this paper received a special mention as the third highest-scoring presentation in the 3-minute presentation category at the EAHIL 2025 workshop, “Imagine”, Łódź, Poland, 11-13 June 2025.

Submitted on invitation.

Accepted on 14 November 2025.

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Letter from the President



Francesca Gualtieri

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Dear EAHIL Members, Colleagues

As the year draws to a close, it has been marked by numerous new opportunities. Significant progress has been made in supporting our profession, although many challenges await us in the forthcoming year.

Among these challenges, Artificial Intelligence (AI) stands out prominently. Acquiring a professional understanding and the ability to manage AI effectively will be imperative. Remaining well-informed and disseminating knowledge will be essential priorities for 2026.

We are actively engaged in the development of a new website for our Association, which we anticipate launching by next spring.

It is no secret that securing additional funding remains crucial to enable the Association to offer increasingly advanced training programs and to provide young colleagues with scholarships to participate in workshops and conferences. For 2026, we are pleased to continue offering two scholarships to new young colleagues to ensure early-bird registration. Furthermore, we intend to revitalize the mentoring program, relying on your generous contributions. I extend my gratitude to my fellow board members for their dedication to this vital initiative.

We are confident that you will renew your commitment to presenting proposals for the future, including hosting and supporting upcoming EAHIL conferences.

I wish to take this opportunity to extend my best wishes to you and your families for a peaceful and prosperous new year. Thank you to all EAHIL members for a successful first year together.

Season's greetings

Francesca Gualtieri
EAHIL President



Annarita Barbaro

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Dear colleagues,

for this issue's Publications and New Products column, I've explored the web to gather a selection of news and articles covering a range of timely and relevant topics. I hope you'll find them both interesting and useful.

I would also like to take this opportunity to extend my warmest wishes to you and your families for a wonderful New Year.

FROM THE WEB

- **The Open Access Button is no longer active**

On November 18, twelve years after its initial launch, the Open Access Button was officially retired. The OA.Works team made this decision to better address key challenges currently facing the Open Access movement and to concentrate their efforts on two main initiatives:

[OA.Report](#), which streamlines Open Access policy compliance checks and follow-ups, helping institutions put their OA policies into practice;

[ShareYourPaper](#), which simplifies repository deposits and supports APC-free publishing.

It is possible to read more on their blog post [Sunsetting the Open Access Button & InstantILL](#)

- **Recommendations for a Classification of AI Use in Academic Manuscript Preparation**

STM released a new document, [Recommendations for a Classification of AI Use in Academic Manuscript Preparation](#), which outlines different ways artificial intelligence can assist in preparing academic manuscripts. Rapid advances in AI—especially generative AI—have greatly expanded the ability of machine tools to support writing, editing, and even creating images and diagrams for research papers. However, publisher guidelines have not kept pace, creating uncertainty for authors (regarding when and how to disclose AI use), peer reviewers (regarding what constitutes acceptable AI assistance), and readers (regarding what content is AI-generated versus human-generated). This document is meant to provide a framework that publishers can use to develop their own policies on appropriate AI use and required declarations by authors.

- **For Equitable and sustainable scholarly publishing**

This [bilingual checklist](#) presents 13 concrete actions researchers can take to move toward a more equitable and sustainable scholarly publishing ecosystem. Each action is classified by career stage (all, mid-career, senior) and potential risk to career advancement (low, medium, high). This checklist encourages researchers to reflect on and adapt their own publishing practices and was first published by Stefanie Haustein in a University of Ottawa, Institute for Science, Society and Policy (ISSP) blog post "[Why the economics of scientific publishing need urgent reform](#)".

PUBLICATIONS AND NEW PRODUCTS

- **Help or hindrance? Peer review in the age of AI**

The Peer Review Week 2025 theme of this year, Rethinking Peer Review in the AI Era, invited a timely global dialogue on how artificial intelligence is reshaping the peer review landscape and the broader scholarly publishing ecosystem. Matt Hodgkinson wrote a post for the DOAJ blog, [Help or hindrance? Peer review in the age of AI](#), reflecting on some concerns around AI use in peer review - and flagged the inclusion of updated application guidelines with a section on artificial intelligence and other automated tools.

- **Differences between the Diamond Discovery Hub e DOAJ**

In this blog post are underlined the differences between the Diamond Discovery Hub (DDH) e DOAJ. Although DOAJ and DDH are both committed to equitable open access, and there will be an overlap in some metadata, the two services perform distinctive roles and provide value to the community in different ways. DOAJ is a broad, global index with an independent validation process for journals of all open access business models, while the DDH is based on a partnership model with Diamond OA content providers and focuses primarily on journals within Europe. It is possible to read the entire post at DOAJ and [The Diamond Discovery Hub: Working with the community to support open access](#).

- **The new Plan S**

Seven years after launching Plan S, cOAlition S has outlined a new strategic plan to guide its open access efforts from 2026 to 2030. The organisation will concentrate on three interconnected priorities: strengthening the foundations for full, immediate, sustainable, and equitable open access to peer-reviewed articles; supporting the digital infrastructure that underpins Open Access; and exploring publishing systems that are both financially sustainable and equitable, while tracking their outcomes and impact. This strategy is grounded in an updated shared vision: a scholarly communication system that enables rapid, open, transparent, and equitable circulation of trustworthy scientific knowledge. It acknowledges current publishing models and highlights the need for more sustainable and fair alternatives, such as the “Publish-Review-Curate (PRC)” model, diamond open access, and preprints. For more info and the full version of the cOAlition S Strategy 2026-2030 click [here](#).

READING SUGGESTIONS

- IFLA Journal Volume 51, No.3 (October 2025) is a special issue dedicated to the theme “Artificial Intelligence: Transforming Global Librarianship”. Bringing together 18 original contributions from around the world, the issue examines how AI is reshaping library services, information literacy, policy, and professional practice across diverse contexts. Guest editors of this issue are Andrew M. Cox (University of Sheffield, UK) and Xuemao Wang (Dean of Libraries, Northwestern University, USA). It is possible to download this issue at this link: <https://repository.ifla.org/items/b8ea2089-3bfa-4a6c-bdb9-36f0c830edbc>
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SOME FORTHCOMING EVENTS

CILIP Metadata and Discovery Group Conference 2026

March 11 –13, Bristol, UK

The theme of the conference is #MetaFutures and will explore how metadata brings together resources and users as well as how to span the gap between current practices and future challenges, particularly in an age of rapidly advancing AI technologies. More info [here](#).

49th UKSG (United Kingdom Serials Group) Annual Conference 2026

March 30 – April 1, Glasgow, UK

More info at this link: <https://www.uksg.org/events/conference26/>

7th International Library Staff Week

May 11-15, Istanbul, Turkey

This event will be held at the Koç University Suna Kıraç Library. Throughout the week, seminars, workshops, and interactive sessions will offer participants a platform for global knowledge exchange and collaboration on the theme “Rethinking Higher Education and Libraries in the Age of AI”. For further details and to complete the registration process, it is possible to visit their comprehensive [LibGuide](#). For further questions, it is possible to contact the organization at intllibweek@ku.edu.tr.

ALA 2026 Annual Conference & Exhibition

June 25 – June 29, Chicago, IL

More info at: <https://2026.alaannual.org/>

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



Remembering Dr. Beatrice Doran

(1940s- Deceased 13th October 2025)

The Irish health library community and European colleagues were saddened to hear of the passing of Beatrice Doran this year. Beatrice was formerly Chief Librarian of the Library at the Royal College of Surgeons of Ireland. She was one of the founding members of EAHIL. Her name is on the list of attendees of the meeting in Brighton in 1987. In later years both Beatrice and Shane Godbolt were often seen together, during dinners or other outside conference meetings, during EAHIL events. Indeed, Beatrice published an homage to her friend Shane published in the HJNI (1) in 2020.

Beatrice was a presenter on the programme of London ICML in 2000, an event that incorporated the EAHIL meeting of that year. The subject of her presentation was “Continuing education for librarians”. Beatrice was rather involved in that subject and studied business administration in the years that she was head of the RCSI library. She achieved an MBA and a PhD in 2011, “Knowledge Management: an empirical analysis in relation to Irish healthcare”. It is the first empirical study of its kind in the health system of the Republic of Ireland. Beatrice was an EAHIL Board member from 1993 to 1996. Beatrice was a trailblazer for Irish medical librarians and remained committed to and interested in librarianship long past her retirement. Those of us who have been working in this field for many years recall her sharp intellect and her strong support of emerging young professionals. She introduced the first clinical librarian post in Irish hospitals, was former Vice President and Secretary of EAHIL, and a President of the Library Association of Ireland. Founding member of the Munster Regional Section of the Library Association of Ireland. She was greatly involved in the implementation of early fully integrated Library computer systems. As a Library consultant, she worked internationally in Iraq, the Sudan, Malaysia and Saudi Arabia (2). In retirement she gained recognition as a local historian and published a number of books on the history of the Dublin suburb of Donnybrook.

Beatrice was active in the Irish library community and often gave inspiring presentations at Library events, which boosted the confidence and morale for the library community at large. A bibliography of some of her publications are available on Wikipedia (3). She wrote about medical school libraries (4); presented on a groundbreaking report known as the ‘McDougall report’ for Irish health libraries (5) Her interest in continuing professional development and new emerging roles for librarians was greatly appreciated. Beatrice is well remembered by Valentina Comba and Laura Cavazza for the collaboration in the 2nd European Conference of EAHIL.

May she rest in peace.

Acknowledgements

The EAHIL Board are grateful to Suzanne Bakker, Niamh Lucey and Valentina Comba for their contributions.

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Remembering Dr. Beatrice Doran

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IBAN NL08 ABNA 0530364697 - BIC ABNANL2A

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