SPECIAL EDITION

REAL IMPACT

THE LATEST NEWS AND INSIGHTS FOR THE CHANGEMAKERS IN THE RESEARCH COMMUNITY, WHO ARE PASSIONATE ABOUT MAKING A DIFFERENCE AND CHALLENGING THE STATUS QUO.

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ACADEMIC CULTURE – IS IT TIME FOR CHANGE?

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CONTENTS

SPECIAL EDITION

WELCOME TO OUR THIRD ISSUE OF REAL IMPACT

This special edition presents the results of Emerald's Academic Culture Survey 2020, along with views on the challenges to change within academia.

There is mounting evidence that academic culture needs to be re-imagined. Competition driven by performance targets and metrics is partly to blame for a research culture that is increasingly overwhelmed, insecure and stressed.

At the same time, the research landscape is changing – open publishing is gaining momentum and there is a growing desire for a broader range of metrics and indicators. To drill down into these and related topics, particularly in light of the COVID-19 crisis, we conducted a global survey asking members of the research community their views on change within the academic sector.

The four main areas we sought to unearth were cultural issues within academia, research impact evaluation, open research and transparency, and the role publishers can play in driving change.

Here, we present the results of the survey, followed by commentary on the findings and the steps needed for change.

For more about what we've been doing to drive change within society and academia, see our Global Inclusivity Report 2020.

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PR Manager

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EMERALD ACADEMIC CULTURE SURVEY 2020

In August 2020, we commissioned a global survey to gather views on change within the academic sector. The survey was sent to a random selection of 172,033 academics, librarians and students within Emerald's literati community. A total of 1,274 literati from 188 countries responded. Topics covered attitudes to research impact evaluation, cultural challenges within academia, openness and transparency, and the role publishers can play in furthering change within the research ecosystem.

In this newsletter, we present the key results of the survey, together with opinions from Emerald's senior team. The focus is largely on global perspectives, but regional specific breakdowns have been added where there are significant points of difference. To assess how views have changed over time, we also present comparable results from our Change Ready Report 2019.

The survey findings and expert opinions are presented within four main sections:

- **Impact evaluation**
- **Academic culture**
- **Openness and transparency**
- **The future role of publishers**

▶ Click here to get a breakdown of respondents

01 IMPACT EVALUATION

More and more of the academic community are rallying for a shift away from traditional metrics, particularly at the individual research level. In this section, we explore how change-ready we are as a sector and the initiatives that may help us move to fairer and more meaningful research evaluation.

There is a growing trend within the research community for a broader number of metrics and indicators to measure the quality of individual research contributions. The San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA) in 2012, followed by the The Leiden Manifesto and The Metric Tide, both published in 2015, have helped to drive awareness of the limitations of research metrics and indicators. However, despite subsequent changes to policy and best practices, journal impact factors (JIFs), h-indices and other metrics still tend to influence who gets hired, promoted and funded in academia.

As a signatory of DORA and in line with our Real Impact Manifesto to move beyond metrics and celebrate impact commitment, we have rolled out various initiatives to create awareness of the limitations of metrics and drive real impact. One area we have focused attention is helping researchers demonstrate the influence of their research on practice, policy and society. In collaboration with industry experts, we are developing a suite of resources that will help researchers tell their impact story. Support materials that are readily available include an Impact Literacy Workbook and Institutional Healthcheck Workbook.

To guide our efforts to further research impact, we are continuously listening to the research community and probing further into the barriers to, and opportunities for, change. Our surveys and reports in these areas over the past three years have been an attempt to stimulate debate and bring conversations to the fore.

How change ready are we?

In this year's survey, we found the desire for a broader impact metric had grown when compared to the previous year, with 20% of the research community calling for JIFs to be dropped all together, up from 13% in 2019. However, in terms of how research quality is measured at their institution, JIFs were perceived to play an important role – 71% selected JIFs as the way research quality is measured at their institution, up from 58% in 2019.

According to respondents, the biggest challenges to change include 'Incentives for career progression still aligned to traditional impact metrics (i.e. publishing in ranked journals)' (56%), closely followed by 'Difficulty in tracking research impact beyond academia' (55%), and 'Lack of clarity on what measures would replace rankings to assess quality' (49%).

Driving change

In terms of what individual researchers were willing to do to broaden the impact of their work and push for change, 'Publishing Open Access and sharing links to supporting datasets to get more 'eyeballs' on my work' came out on top, with just over half of researchers selecting this option. More opportunities for collaboration between industry and practice was believed to be the best way to make change happen, with 63% supporting this choice, up slightly from 2019.

Measuring up

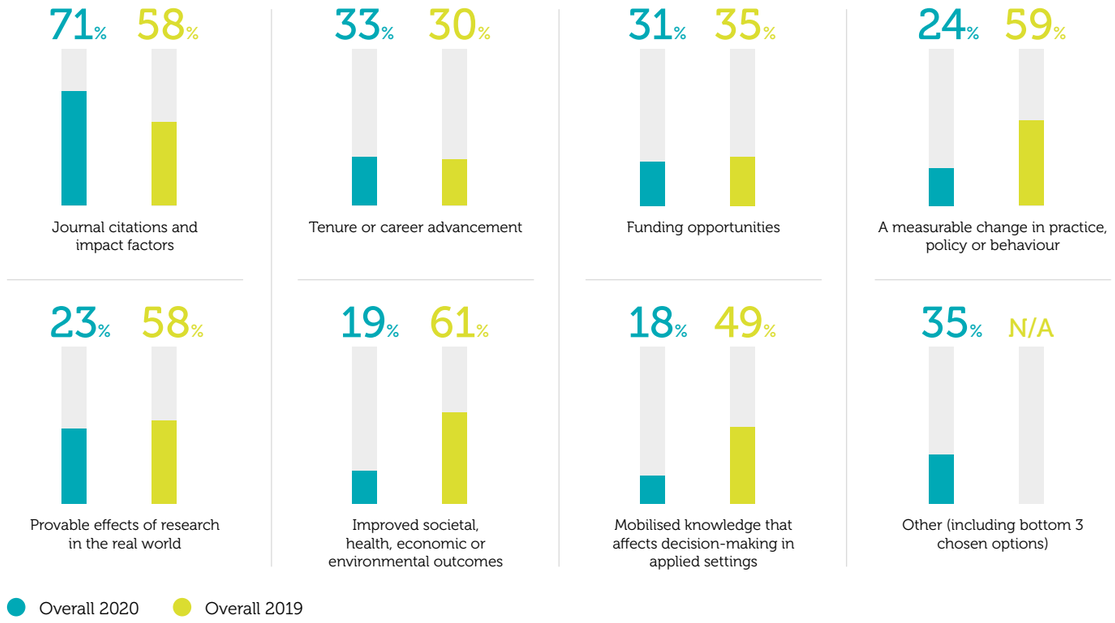
When asked, 'What main change would you like to see in the way research quality is measured?', suggestions included:

Quality over quantity: "Pay attention to the quality of a researcher's work, rather than quantity of research. Not all research should be equally weighted. Philosophical refection takes time. Yet, quantitative work can have quick outcomes. But their impacts are different. Current evaluation drives most researchers to do quick work, especially when they have heavy teaching load" (Female, Teacher, Asia)

Changes to incentives: "Changing the incentive structure for the career and performance evaluation beyond the publication and impact factors" (Female, Researcher, SSA)

On a scale of 1 – 10 where 1 is not at all important and 10 is very important, how important is demonstrating impact of research on society to...? (average score out of 10).

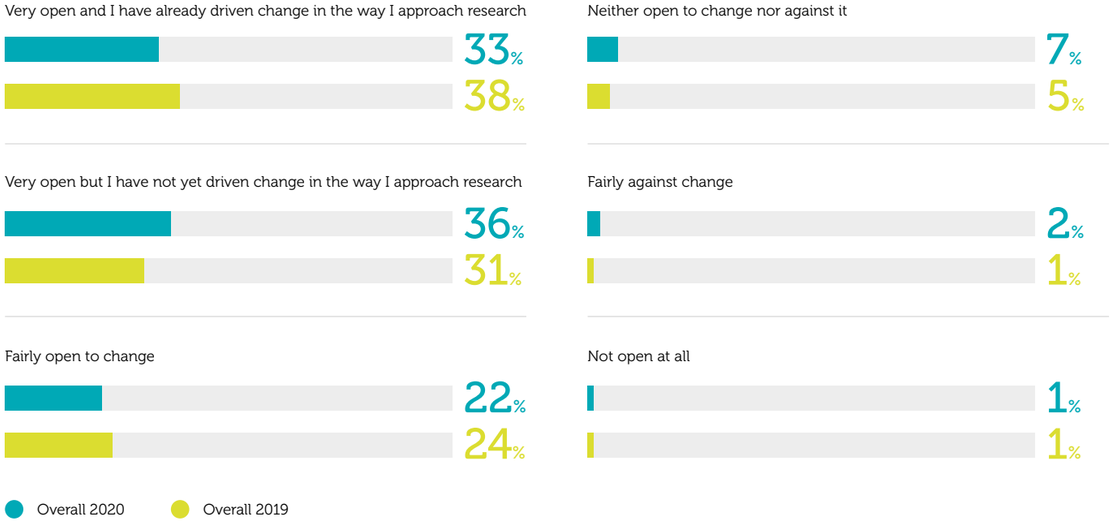
How is the quality of your research impact currently measured? (Please select up to 3 options.)



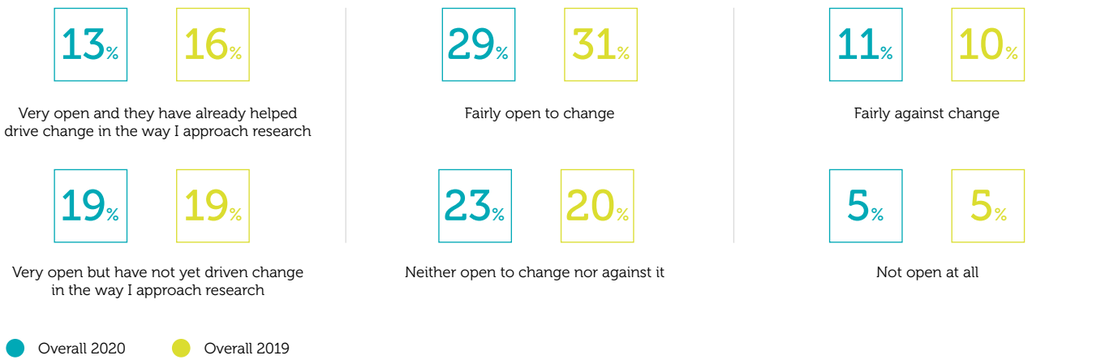
On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is not at all important and 5 is very important, how important are the following factors in helping achieve broader impact with your work?

Do you expect the priority of measuring real-world impact to change in your institution in the next 12 to 18 months?

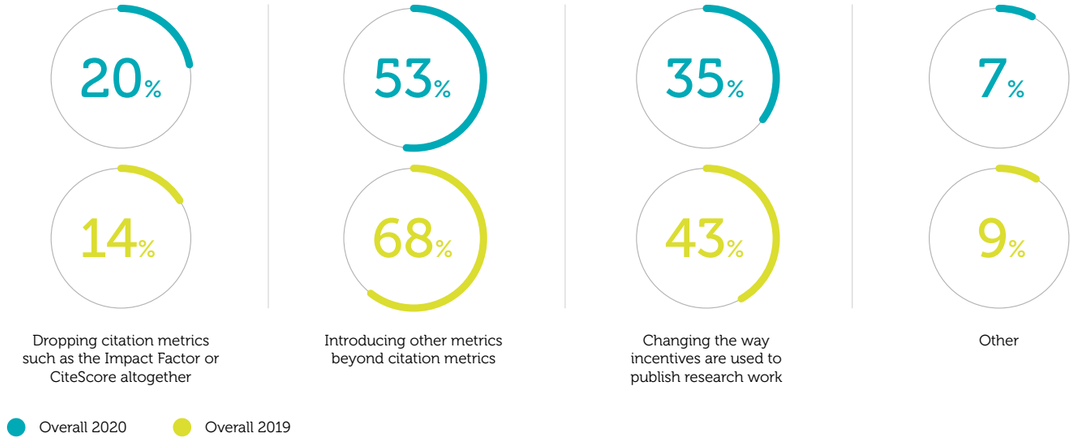
How strongly do you support the idea of changing the way research impact is measured? (Please select 1 answer.)



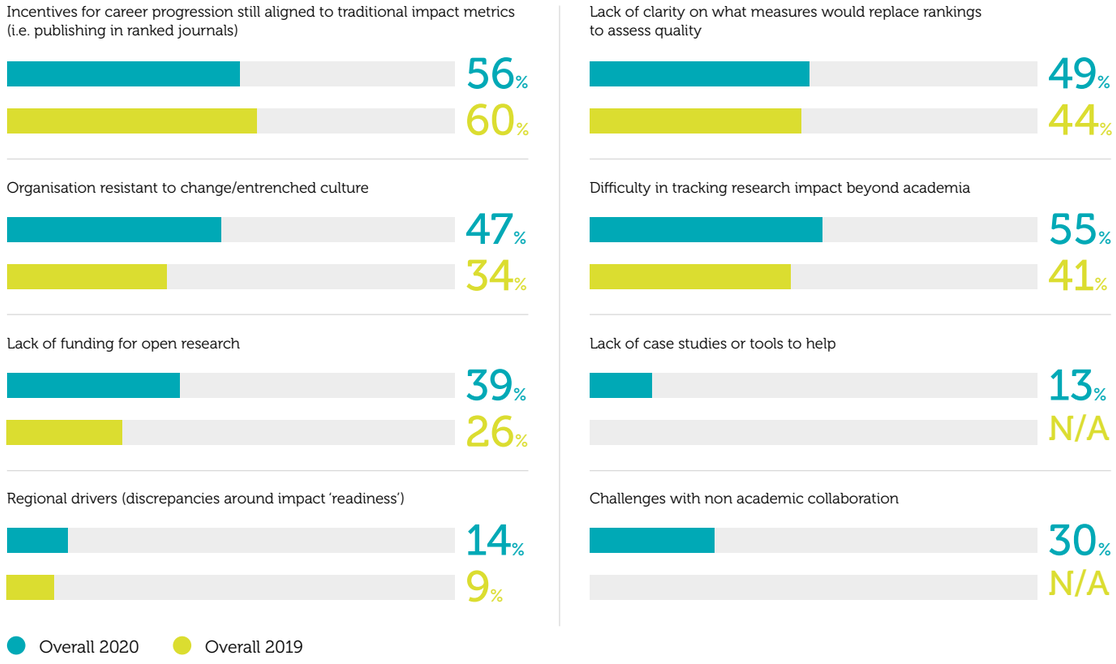
How supportive/interested are those in your broader institution in driving change when it comes to other ways to measure research impact (Please select one answer.)



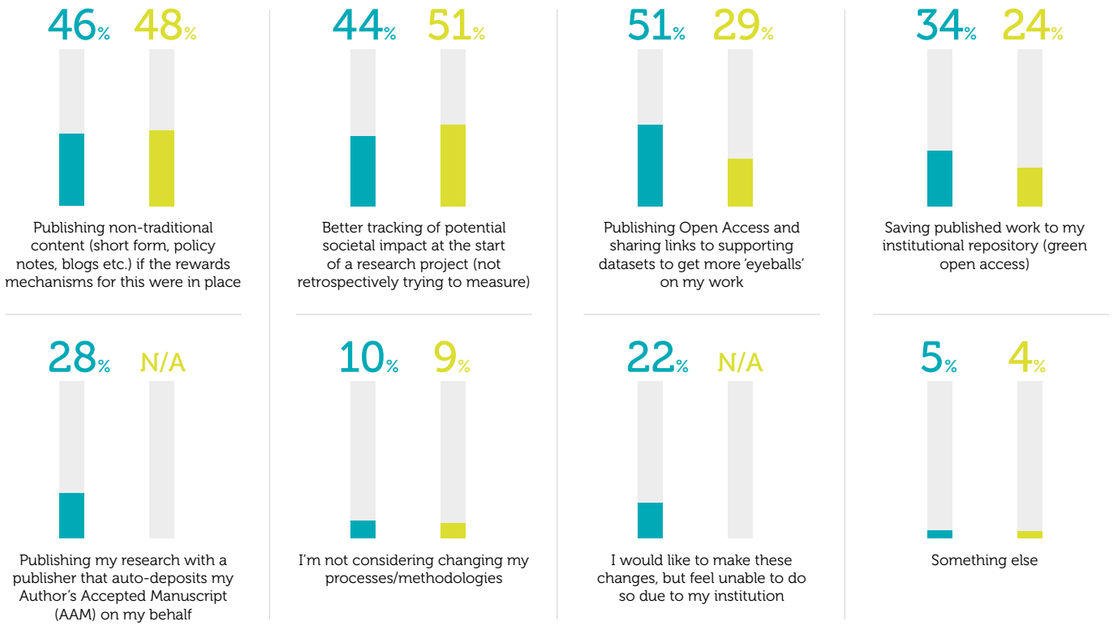
What main change would you like to see in the way research quality is measured? (Please select 1 option.)



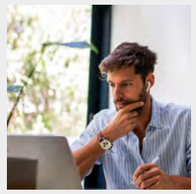
Which of the following do you consider to be the biggest 'challenges' of changing the way research impact is assessed? (Please select all that apply.)



When it comes to your research, what types of change would you consider implementing? (Please select all that apply.)



In your opinion what are the best way(s) to enable change to happen? (Please select up to 3 options.) (% of times chosen in top 3.)



THE EMERALD VIEW

Supporting research that can make a real difference is crucial to our progress on global issues such as climate change and poverty, says Tony Roche, Executive Vice President of Publishing and Strategic Relationships at Emerald. In this context, he calls for the development and recognition of a broader range of research evaluation metrics, in addition to narratives that support the impact journey.

More than ever, researchers need to demonstrate how their efforts are delivering provable effects in society. Findings from our latest academic culture survey back up what we're seeing and hearing from our global network of researchers, scholarly comms experts, policy makers and funders.

With societal challenges such as the climate crisis now a reality, the contribution of research will be subject to ever greater scrutiny. Against this backdrop, it is increasingly evident that the mechanisms for evaluating the quality and contribution of research (and researchers themselves) are no longer fit for purpose.

Eliminating the blockers to change

Drawing on our latest survey, it is encouraging to see researchers, institutions, funders and policy makers placing greater emphasis on the societal impact of research. While this is now widely accepted in principle, poorly aligned evaluation and incentive structures are clearly blocking these aspirations. Bibliometric indicators and citations have a role to play, needs not be sacrificed for research to better connect with real world impact.

There has been positive movement in some national evaluation systems, with open routes of dissemination increasingly preferred, however the participation of the intended beneficiaries in society is still limited, and mechanisms to mobilise knowledge remain poorly developed.

This year's survey also highlights cultural challenges within research that must be addressed through the research evaluation process as driver of change, to incentivise responsible research practices for the benefit of all.

Giving voice to the underrepresented

Emerald is committed to action through co-creation, to bring the voice of the beneficiary as well as underrepresented researchers themselves more directly into the research and publication process, and we will hold ourselves to account to measure progress here.

As a participant within the global research and scholarly comms ecosystem, we work with over 30,000 researchers each year, and through our own commitments to diversity and inclusion we can ensure that the research we publish is more representative and reflective of the needs of society.

Supporting research impact

Our commitments extend to working with policy makers and funders, so that a wider array of indicators and metrics, as well as the narratives to support the impact journey, are developed and recognised through evaluation processes themselves. This clearly requires coordinated efforts and a willingness to work together, so that research can perform better in its critical underpinning role to support societal progress in areas such as climate change mitigation, environmental degradation, poverty and illiteracy.

> *"Emerald is committed to action through co-creation, to bring the voice of the beneficiary as well as underrepresented researchers themselves more directly into the research and publication process"*

Tony Roche
Executive Vice President of Publishing and Strategic Relationships

02

ACADEMIC CULTURE

Being an academic can be stressful, the pressure to publish in a high-impact journal and bring in grant income, as well as navigate growing bureaucracy and job insecurity, is leading some researchers to become dissatisfied, depressed and anxious. In this section, we explore the key challenges facing academics, including remote working as a result of the pandemic, and the need for a step-change in academic culture.

Higher education has become an increasingly stressful place to work, with academics required to meet more and more teaching, research and institutional demands. A recent paper and a report by the Wellcome Trust have both revealed that academics are under significant pressure, experiencing bullying, job insecurity, excessive workloads and mental health issues. Significantly, they highlight that there is a greater emphasis on quantity and metrics than on creativity and quality.

Another key area that requires attention within academic culture, are the ongoing gender and racial inequalities that have made headlines in recent months. While some gains have been made to level the playing field for women, progress on racial equality is much further behind. Earlier this year, The Guardian reported that there were three times as many male than female professors in UK universities and fewer than 1% of all professors were Black. Further discussion on these issues can be found in our Global Inclusivity Report 2020.

Meanwhile, COVID-19 adds to these existing tensions, with academics having to adapt to new ways of working, collaborating and teaching, all while potentially juggling childcare.

Top challenges in academia

Within this context, our survey sought to understand the challenges that researchers face within academia today and the impact this has on areas such as mental health and work/life balance. In our survey, 'Outdated institutional management practices and policies' (59%) topped the list of challenges, followed by 'Pressure to publish' (58%). More than 1 in 10 said that these pressures were affecting sleep patterns, mental and physical health and personal relationships. 'Inadequate funding and resources for research' was cited as key issues, together with 'Lack of support networks' and fears over 'Job security'.

Some answers revealed gender disparity within academia. A total of 45% of males said their institutions provided equal opportunities, but only a third of females agreed the same. Female academics were particularly concerned about mental and physical health and sleep patterns – and scored higher than their male counterparts in all but one area (motivation outside of your job).

At the regional level, Indian researchers were found to be the most content in their roles with nearly half saying they never considered leaving academia, compared to 27% of Australian and 23% of North American researchers saying they thought about it all the time. Negative impacts were felt most strongly at the 6 - 10 year postgrad career stage, although nearly 1 in 10 struggled with sleep patterns in their first five years of academic research.

Remote working

In terms of the impact of remote working (mainly driven by COVID-19), it was encouraging to see that nearly half of researchers (48%) felt supported by their manager, although 3 in 10 cited 'Creating a clear separation of home life and work life while being at home' as the single biggest challenge.

Looking at the regional variations, the most likely to feel isolated when working remotely were respondents in the Middle East and North Africa (25%), and more male (18%) than female researchers (13%). Remote teaching and student engagement was most significant for India, while in Southern Europe it was separating personal and work time.

Under pressure

When asked, 'What do you think are the main pressures in academic life today?', suggestions included:

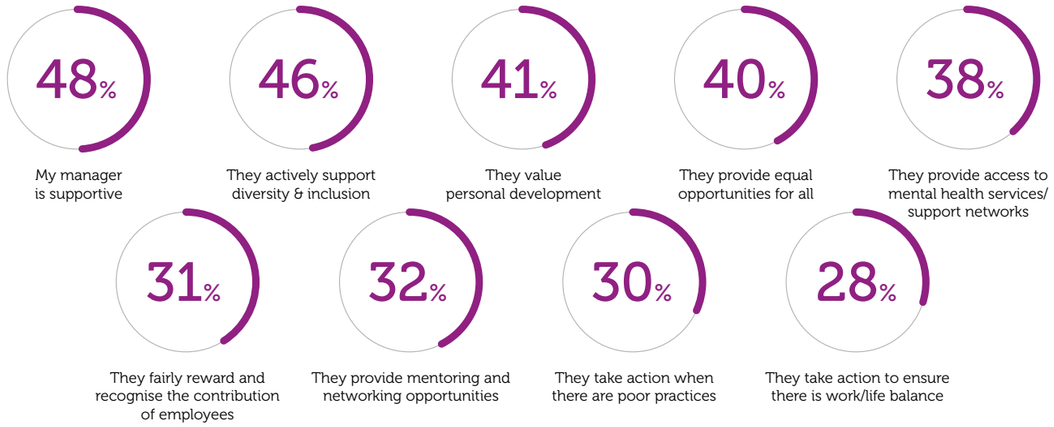
Dishonesty: "Rigged peer review network with some editors forming a network to publish their own circle's work and pushing their own papers to be cited" (Female, India, Researcher)

Loneliness: "Universities vary. [...] Many people within universities are not particularly happy, can be lonely, have low self-esteem, and so on. The classic symptoms of a highly competitive individualistic culture are present in too many university departments. The feminisation of universities and increasing diversity of many may help this situation." (Male, Australasia, Professor)

Profitability: "I would summarise all of the above as follows. The degree of corporatisation is ridiculous. The underlying ideology of accountability is sound. However, the ideology is completely lost in the implementation." (Male, Australasia, Researcher)

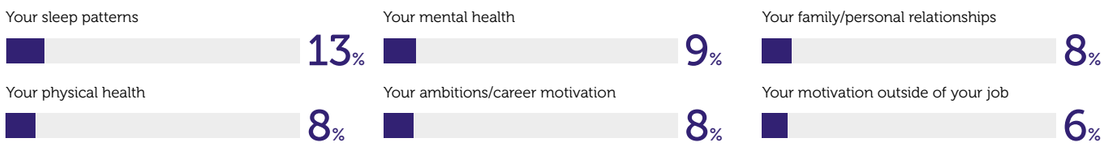
Overload: "More work by less people in less time [...] it doesn't work and is causing burn out. We want to do the job well, but we are expected to do so much more than what is truly academic." (Female, UK, Teaching)

On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is not at all agree and 5 is strongly agree, how much do you agree your institution does well in the following areas?



Please type 3 key words that most describe the organisational culture in your institution.

On a scale between large negative effect to large positive effect, how much of an impact does your job have on the areas below?

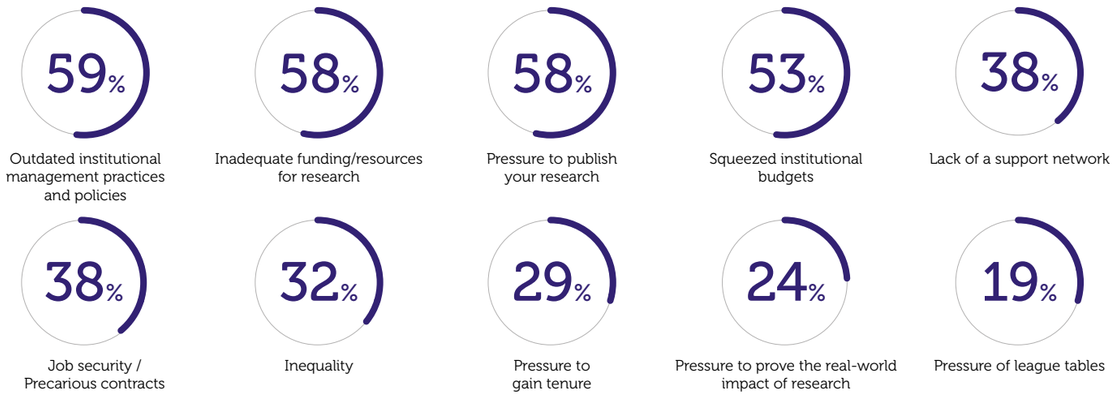


Have you ever considered leaving academia due to the culture, practices or pressure?

	No, never	Occasionally	All the time	I am planning to leave in the next 12 months
Overall	34%	48%	14%	4%
UK	24%	51%	17%	8%
Australasia	10%	51%	27%	12%
China/East Asia/NAT	42%	47%	9%	2%
India	49%	40%	9%	2%
Latin America*	42%	49%	6%	3%
Middle East and Northern Africa	46%	46%	6%	3%
North and Western Europe excl UK	29%	48%	17%	6%
North America	33%	38%	23%	6%
South and Eastern Europe	31%	55%	12%	2%
Sub Saharan Africa	40%	56%	2%	1%

* Sample size for Latin America: 33.

What do you think are the main pressures in academic life today? (Please select all that apply.)



What do you think is the main pressure of working remotely? (Large negative effect.)

	Feeling isolated	Balancing work and looking after dependants	Having the tools to do the job	Creating a clear separation of home life and work life whilst being at home	Lack of support from my institution	Challenges with remote teaching and student engagement
Overall	16%	13%	9%	30%	8%	21%
UK	17%	12%	9%	35%	21%	2%
Australasia	15%	10%	12%	34%	16%	6%
China/East Asia/NAT	13%	12%	10%	23%	13%	2%
India	12%	12%	9%	26%	13%	26%
Latin America*	12%	21%	9%	27%	6%	21%
Middle East and Northern Africa	25%	15%	5%	17%	8%	1%
North and Western Europe excl UK	13%	15%	10%	30%	18%	7%
North America	20%	9%	7%	33%	6%	19%
South and Eastern Europe	15%	12%	8%	37%	5%	19%
Sub Saharan Africa	15%	15%	12%	26%	9%	21%

*Sample size for Latin America: 33.

THE EMERALD VIEW

Vicky Williams, CEO at Emerald Publishing, calls attention to some of the major systemic challenges within academia and the broader research ecosystem, as well as Emerald's vision to drive change for a more equal, diverse and inclusive research culture.

The results of this latest survey support a growing view that academia's culture and incentive structures need reimagining. Key areas for change include the practices and policies towards equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI), particularly around hiring and promoting faculty and non-academic staff at the senior level. The same is true for incentive structures and ranking systems, which are designed to favour sameness, commonality, mould and ideal.

These kinds of perceptions were highlighted in our Global Inclusivity Report 2020, which revealed that 55% of people in higher education want academia to address the lack of inclusivity within academic culture, while just over a third (36%) believe that incentives in academia work against the definition of inclusivity.

There are numerous failings within existing incentive structures, including the influence of journal impact factors (JIFs) on hiring, tenure and promotion, and in some regions of the world, even the size of office allocated. The good news is that this practice is being challenged and in recent years there has been a push towards a structure that assesses and rewards researchers according to the quality of their contributions and the broader impacts of their work, rather than on where and in what form they publish. DORA (Declaration on Research Assessment) is a significant step forward in changing the status quo, but signatories need to be held to account as to what their commitment means in practice.

The Publishers' role

Publishers clearly have a responsibility to stop propping up academia's current incentive structures – which we all benefit from – and to make the system equal, diverse and fair. We need to focus on discoverability, open research and diversity of research outputs, while simultaneously ensuring our editors, editorial boards and peer review processes support diversity. Fundamentally, we must move beyond the traditional article and silo-based approach to enable contributions to be recognised in different ways.

It is evident that scholarly publishing often mirrors academia in terms of its lack of diversity, so publishers have an additional responsibility to make changes throughout their organisations. For example, if we are to develop the right products for a diverse audience, we must challenge our recruitment practices, as well as engage in new activities such as co-creation.

"We know that to make an impact, diverse voices must be part of scholarly discourse, and this means reimagining the exclusionary practices that currently exist within the research ecosystem."

Vicky Williams
CEO Emerald Publishing

Committing to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI)

One of the initial steps Emerald took to promote EDI throughout the business, was to establish our equality and diversity programme, STRIDE, in 2016. For the first couple of years the initiative very much focused on gender equality and inclusion, but then broadened to look at wider aspects of diversity and inclusion, sexuality, mental health, age, disability, race and religion. It then moved from being a top-down programme to one that is owned and driven by employees.

When we launched STRIDE, I was the only female on the executive team and only 25% of our senior management team were female. Four years on and we are now a 4:3, male:female executive team and 50:50 senior management team, and that's without putting quotas and targets in place.

As the STRIDE programme matured, we wanted our internal commitment to be replicated throughout our products, processes and practices. To fulfil this goal, we established an EDI Steering Committee and EDI Lead in the business to embed EDI practices and processes across our portfolio, product development practices, people policies and external relationships. There is undoubtedly much work to be done, but it's a promising start.

Driving wider change

EDI is now synonymous with the Emerald brand, as is our commitment to help researchers and their institutions make a difference. We know that to make an impact, diverse voices must be part of scholarly discourse, and this means reimagining the exclusionary practices that currently exist within the research ecosystem – and I want us to be a big part of driving this transformation.

Emerald is actively trying to drive change, but we need support from our counterparts in publishing houses, as well as academia, and it is a very mixed picture globally. It's a huge challenge and we are still a relatively small publisher, but we will create that change if we come together and share resources, investment and whatever it takes to make the shift.

THE EMERALD VIEW

Work pressure and job uncertainty are some of the key factors causing academics to feel like they are at breaking point. Emma Tregenza, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion lead at Emerald, highlights the company's commitment to opening up conversations around mental health, as well as initiatives to support researchers during the COVID-19 crisis.

Over the last couple of decades, higher education has become an increasingly competitive and pressurised environment. The focus on performance metrics and regulatory requirements, along with a rise in job insecurity, are taking their toll on academics. In recent months, a move to remote learning and income losses as fewer students decide to enrol at university, has brought another layer of pressure to individuals and institutions.

Even before the pandemic, a 2019 report commissioned by the Higher Education Policy Institute (HEPI) exposed an 'epidemic' of poor mental health among higher education staff in the UK. Freedom of Information requests obtained from 59 UK universities revealed a steep rise in staff referrals to counselling services and occupational health referrals during 2009-2016. Rises of 50% were widespread, but a few universities found their referrals up by more than 300%.

Because mental health matters

The ongoing pressures facing academics today have again been emphasised in Emerald's latest survey on academic culture, and echo what our research communities are telling us. Mental health is an issue we care deeply about, and we are continually looking for ways to raise awareness and encourage open conversations on this topic.

We acknowledge the pressures academics currently face and are working to address these issues where we feel we can add value. In this manner, we are challenging the traditional publishing model, providing support services and networks, creating new funding opportunities, and offering alternative ways for researchers to be rewarded and recognised for doing impactful work.

Support during the COVID-19 pandemic

In response to COVID-19, we made the C-19 Business Pledge to support customers, employees and communities during the outbreak and recovery from the pandemic. Focusing on mental health specifically, we launched a free MindTools COVID-19 support pack offering articles and videos on topics such as working from home, mental health and decision-making under pressure.

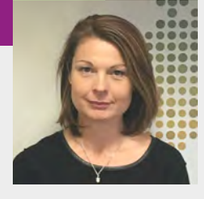
Other ways we are helping include making our research on COVID-19, the management of epidemics and pandemics, and supply chain management free for anyone to access wherever they are in the world. For those studying remotely, we have made our learning resources freely available on Emerald Insight. To help researchers specifically, we launched an Open Access Publishing Fund of £20,000, allowing them to swiftly publish their research without any Article Processing Charges.

Mental health at work

As an employer, we have rolled out multiple initiatives and tools to support the mental health of our staff. Our Employee Assistance Programme, for example, offers employees and their families free access to a professional team who can advise on a range of personal and work-related problems. In addition, staff can turn to in-house mental health first aiders, as well as engage in coffee mornings, webinars and other activities on a range of mental health issues.

During the pandemic we have further supported our flexible working arrangements, as well as adapted processes and policies, such as extending sick pay. We are proud that our commitment to wellbeing has recently been recognised, achieving Silver at Mind's Workplace Wellbeing Awards 2020, and we will continue to strengthen our programmes to support our employees, customers and communities.

"We are challenging the traditional publishing model, providing support services and networks, creating new funding opportunities, and offering alternative ways for researchers to be rewarded and recognised for doing impactful work."



Emma Tragenza
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Lead

03

OPENNESS AND TRANSPARENCY

Today, researchers can choose from a wide range of open access routes, enjoying the benefits of speedy publication, greater reach and faster impact. Here, we delve into the research community's positions on issues surrounding open access, data sharing, post-publication peer review and pre-prints.

Academic publishing is evolving, with initiatives such as Plan S fuelling growing demand for open access to research data and publications. The COVID-19 crisis has accelerated this movement, leading many publishers to prioritise the publication of research on coronavirus and eliminate paywalls.

The need for rapid and open publication has also led thousands of coronavirus studies to be posted prior to peer review on pre-print servers such as medRxiv and bioRxiv. Open and immediate access to the latest research on coronavirus is largely seen as essential in the fight against the pandemic, however, some argue that without a lengthy peer-review process pre-prints can be misleading and potentially dangerous.

As the move towards open access hastens, the research community is again questioning the relevance of JIFs. Many want to see the development of responsible metrics, in addition to other indicators that can fairly assess research quality and individual contribution.

Open access

Amid these ongoing and lively debates, we wanted to gather the research community's views on open access and open data, as well as gauge how attitudes and behaviours were changing in these areas. Our survey revealed a significant shift towards publishing through open access and sharing links to supporting datasets as the type of change that researchers are considering – from 29% in 2019 to 51% in 2020.

When considering the top enabler of change, 52% of respondents flagged open access options, but collaboration with industry and practice emerged as more important, with 63% selecting this option. The third most popular option was literacy (31%).

Open data

On the topic of open data, it was unsurprising that half of all respondents (and as many as 61% in North America) were concerned over datasets that contain sensitive or personal information that is inappropriate or unethical to share openly. For some, there also appears to be a lack of clarity on how to share data, with 7% of respondents admitting that they did not know how to do this. At the regional level, this increases to 16% of respondents in the Middle East and North Africa who were unfamiliar with data sharing.

Transparency

From a transparency point of view, around 80% of respondents chose double blind as the most effective peer review method, while post-publication peer review was selected by the fewest respondents. When considering pre-prints, nearly 1 in 5 said they can be dangerous, a belief held even more firmly with 1 in 4 in Australasia selecting this option. Paradoxically, only 7% of researchers in Northern and Western Europe share the view that they are dangerous. There was some common agreement, however, on the usefulness of pre-prints in getting research out quickly, an option that has gained popularity as the research community comes together to share COVID-19 related data.

Barriers to open access

When asked, 'What, in your opinion, are the challenges to publishing open access?', suggestions included:

Payment structure: "The fact that reviewers are not paid for their assistance, but authors are required to pay." (Female, Australasia, Researcher)

Cost: "There is zero incentive and significant cost. I look good to my institution if I publish in a traditional outlet, so why would I pay to have my research open access?" (Male, US, Researcher)

Holding back open data

When asked, 'What, in your opinion, are the challenges to publishing open data?', suggestions included:

Unprofitable: "If I have invested significantly in collecting and cleaning data, I have real issues with providing it for free. That dilutes my investment." (Male, NA, Teaching)

Lack of incentives: "Authors have strong incentives to keep their own data private and almost no incentives to share." (Male, NA, Head of Department)

High fees: "Open access fees are quite high (even if justified). Too much effort has to be invested in 'fundraising'. On the other hand, there are many predator journals which publish anything against payments, thus a negative halo effect associated with open publications can be observed." (Male, S&EE, Researcher)

What, in your opinion, are the challenges to publishing open access? (Please select all that apply.)

- 74% Limited to access to funding for the cost of open publishing
- 48% My institution prefers me to publish in traditional outlets with established metrics such as the impact factor
- 30% Resistance of publishers to move away from paywalls
- 30% It is not yet widely accepted by all subject disciplines/academic institutions
- 17% Policies and funding too STEM-centric compare with social sciences
- 17% Not enough publishing platforms allow me to do this at the moment
- 16% Confusion over open access mandates like Plan S
- 14% I want to publish open access but I'm confused how I go about it
- 6% There are no challenges to publishing open access

What, in your opinion, are the challenges to publishing open data? (Please select all that apply.)

- 50% Some datasets contain sensitive or personal information, which is inappropriate or unethical to share openly
- 46% Concerns about security of who will re-use the data and how
- 37% It is not yet widely accepted yet by all subject disciplines/academic institutions
- 31% I am not rewarded for making my data open
- 27% Open data will discourage participants from taking part in research projects
- 20% Datasets will have to stand-up to external scrutiny
- 18% Not enough publishing platforms allow me to do this at the moment
- 8% There are no challenges to publishing open data
- 7% I don't know how to share my data

Which of the following peer review methods are the most effective, either as an author or as a reviewer? (Please select all that apply.) Please note that descriptions of the methods were provided to respondents.

- 82% Double blind peer review
- 21% Transparent peer review
- 16% Open peer review
- 9% Single blind peer review
- 9% Post-publication peer review

What is your opinion of pre-prints?

- 23% Pre-prints are useful to get research out quickly
- 19% There needs to be some quality assessment
- 18% Pre-prints can be dangerous as non peer reviewed research is then published in the public domain for all to use.
- 17% I am not familiar with pre-prints
- 12% Pre-prints add to the noise of research and aren't helpful
- 7% They help me get feedback on my continuing research
- 2% They are not needed in the humanities/social sciences

THE EMERALD VIEW

Reflecting on the findings, Shelley Allen Head of Open Research at Emerald, highlights the challenges to open access and data sharing, along with her thoughts on peer-review practices and the rise of pre-prints

As the survey suggests, we are seeing a growing trend towards open access publishing. However, there are two significant challenges – lack of funding and confusion over data sharing. A lot of our researchers aren't funded or in receipt of large grants that would cover an Article Processing Charge (APC). Therefore, we developed a zero-embargo green policy, so that they can make their Author Accepted Manuscript (AAM) available. We're also in discussion with libraries and consortia to find mechanisms to transition subscription spend to support open access. This includes transformative agreements where possible.

In terms of sharing data, this is an area where we see a lot of confusion for our authors. As most aren't funded, the first time they will make their data available is with us, at the stage of publication. There are challenges in identifying it, anonymising it, finding a suitable repository and there are still huge cultural barriers as there isn't yet much incentive for them to share their data.

Supporting open data sharing

In our experience of supporting authors, we see a lack of incentive, infrastructure and education on open data. As part of the research ecosystem, there's a lot publishers can do to help. Guidance and support are key to help authors understand what counts as a data set (it isn't always clear in social science), how to anonymise it and where to place it so that it is available in the future and has a digital object identifier (DOI).

We mandate open data on our open research platform – Emerald Open Research. We work closely with our authors to support them and we are learning a lot alongside them about what works and what doesn't. We're working towards mandating data availability statements across our titles to help build understanding and actively encourage authors to consider sharing their data. We want to make sure our systems can fully support them before we do this though, such as providing appropriate templates to guide them.

> *"In our experience of supporting authors, we see a lack of incentive, infrastructure and education on open data"*

Shelley Allen
Head of Open Research

Do we still need peer review?

There are pros and cons to all forms of peer review, and none are the perfect system, but I do think some form of quality validation is important in a world of fake news, etc. For me, it's about author choice and what best suits the research. For some, speed is of the essence, or they have concerns about bias and want an author led approach. Post publication peer review like we have on Emerald Open Research is a good option for them. Others are more comfortable having their work validated and improved before it is available for all to read.

The challenge of finding reviewers is the biggest stumbling block in all approaches. They are a scarce resource, so I think support and incentives for reviewers is where I would start with all review systems, regardless of structure.

A role for pre-prints?

There are concerns about pre-prints, as it can be an impossible task to kill bad information once it is out there, but there's no doubt they are here to stay and can be very useful for getting research out there quickly. There isn't the same tradition of pre-prints in the social sciences, but they clearly have a role to play in the process of research dissemination. For me, the challenge is ensuring that validation happens quickly, or we find ways to inform the media and the public more clearly about what a preprint is.

SECTION FOUR

04

ROLE OF THE PUBLISHER

The open access movement, coupled with a greater focus on societal impact, has led to the development of new publishing options and research support services. In this section, we explore the role of the publisher in promoting change, and discuss how the industry might help academics navigate current research challenges.

Since the launch of the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA) in 2012, many publishers along with research institutions, funders and other stakeholders have committed to the development and use of fair and balanced research assessments. Publishers are strongly positioned to be effective advocates and actors of change, ensuring that individual research is judged on its own merits and not the journal in which the work appears.

As a signatory of DORA and in line with our Real Impact Manifesto, Emerald is working with the academic community and key agencies to improve the culture around research evaluation, overcome barriers to impact and drive impact literacy. To give researchers different ways to tell the story of their work, Emerald is commissioning a broader range of research outputs such as Emerald Open Research (EOR). Through six gateways that are aligned to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, research published through EOR is subject to open peer review and is freely available to all to read, download and reuse.

Beyond publishing, Emerald is supporting areas such as research promotion and novel research outputs, as well as providing Early Career Researchers (ECRs) with advice and resources that will help them publish and win funding bids.

Promoting change

There is broader range of publishing and support services now on offer, but where does the research community want publishers to focus attention? To answer this question, we asked researchers across the globe for their views on how publishers should support change around research assessment and output. Our survey found that the majority (61%) want publishers to lead with different options to publish, and nearly half of respondents (46%) are looking to the industry to champion alternative methods of impact. However, Asia and the Middle East and North Africa were less likely to look to publishers to initiate change.

In addition to creating new ways to publish work, 45% of researchers want publishers to help with promotion. Another area of focus is the desire to see more exploratory research published. In terms of driving change within academic culture, while the majority felt that publishers could play a role, 8% disagreed, rising to 12% for researchers who were 16-20 years postgraduate.

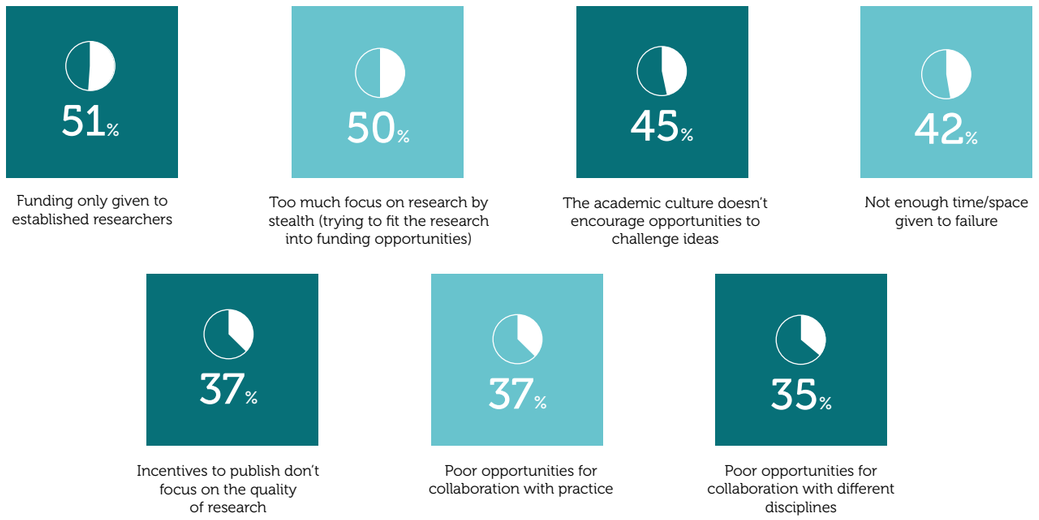
Research challenges

Digging into the biggest problems with the way research is done today, the research community believes that too much funding is directed towards established researchers, with just over half of the respondents (51%) agreeing with this. However, researchers in the UK (61%), Australasia (64%), Sub Saharan Africa (63%) and India (60%) felt more firmly. Half also agreed that there was 'Too much focus on research by stealth (trying to fit the research into funding opportunities)', the UK (59%), and Sub Saharan Africa (61%) significantly over indexed in their views.

The academic community appears to be dissatisfied with the constraints of the current research approach, for example, 42% of researchers agreed that not enough time/space was given to failure. This sentiment was mirrored in the desire for researchers to see more exploratory research published.

What, in your opinion, could publishers do to help improve academic culture (Please select all that apply.)

What, in your opinion, are the problems with the way research is done today (Please select all that apply.)



If there is anything else you would like to comment about, please use the box below:

THE EMERALD VIEW

In 2020, amid a global pandemic, scholarly publishing is being challenged and transformed like never before. The pace of open research has accelerated, and interdisciplinarity, co-creation, collaboration and data sharing are achieving greater recognition and importance. As the world seeks answers to the health and economic challenges of the crisis, Sally Wilson, Head of Publishing at Emerald Group, shares how publishers can support the researcher's journey to real-world impact by reaching the beneficiaries of the research, as well as giving a voice to the underrepresented

The pandemic has accelerated the desire for research that can make a difference and solve big problems. In academia, we are seeing an increased move towards the real impact agenda, although at different paces in different regions, as well as growth in the number of interdisciplinary research centres within higher education institutions. At the same time, the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are becoming more and more part of the recognised language within researcher, policymaker and funder communities.

Emerald's commitment to real impact

Publishers have a vital role to play in furthering research that can make a real-world impact, and this focus has become fundamental to our work and values at Emerald. In 2019, we signed up to the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA), leading us to supplement traditional impact factors and work towards a variety of complementary metrics such as Altmetric – to measure attention and reach.

Part of Emerald's real impact agenda is supporting and giving a voice to those underrepresented. To this end, we have signed a Royal Society of Chemistry-led industry initiative that commits us to setting a new standard for a more inclusive and diverse culture within scholarly publishing. Work is now underway to support greater diversity through our recruitment practices, editorial boards and authorship.

Diverse publishing options

Emerald's teaching cases are a useful illustration of our efforts to demonstrate impact and increase representation. Traditionally, cases have not reflected diverse or global voices, but we are at the forefront of trying to create that diversity within our offer. An example of this is our new case competition with the Association of African Business Schools (AABS) for 2021, which has a prize for the most innovative case teaching method or The Case for Women competition in partnership with Forté with its focus on female protagonists.

A further way we are enabling change is through Emerald Open Research – a platform that provides a fast route to publication and fully supports interdisciplinary research, with a focus on the SDGs. Alongside this platform, we are exploring new ways to transform our content that may include providing novel content types such as podcasts, animations, policy briefings or lay summaries. The overall aim is to engage a wider audience beyond academia, including those who will ultimately benefit from the research.

Career support

We know that the needs of researchers change over time, so we are continually looking at how we can provide the most appropriate services, products and initiatives to serve them throughout their careers. To help early career researchers (ECRs), for instance, we offer sponsorship of awards and invite them on to our journal editorial boards, while through our Impact Services we equip them with the skills and resources needed to help them win funding bids.

Beyond this support, we offer practical advice for those looking to get published with activities such as workshops and webinars. In the current climate, one of the most noticeable benefits of reaching out online is that there are often fewer barriers to entry, enabling us to support a richer, more diverse audience, who are at different stages in their career.

Innovate to impact

Academic publishing and the communities we serve are changing, and we must continue to innovate to provide a flexible and diverse publishing and services offer that meets the needs of the research community both now and in the future. Publishers are uniquely placed to support researchers in other ways too, such as helping them present their research in new and inventive ways.

In summary, publishers have a duty to drive, support and encourage changes that must take place within scholarly publishing and academia to make it a more diverse and inclusive research culture. This is a responsibility that we at Emerald are embracing, and is part of our manifesto to be a home for research that achieves attention, reach and real-world impact.

Sally Wilson
Head of Publishing

FINAL THOUGHTS

Desire for change

It is clear from our survey that the research landscape needs reimagining. Researchers have reported their ongoing struggles, ranging from pressure to publish and institutional reliance on journal impact factors (JIFs), to outdated institutional management practices and rising job insecurity. Amid this unrest, it is unsurprising that there is a growing desire for change, particularly around research evaluation, with 20% of the academic community now calling for JIFs to be dropped all together.

In response to the research community's discontent, there have been significant breakthroughs. DORA, for instance, marks a crucial step-change in advocating for a research evaluation system that considers a broad range of impact measures when assessing individual contributions and making decisions about hiring, promoting or funding.

The rise of open access

Another area where we are witnessing profound change is in academic publishing, particularly with the rise of open access. Initiatives such as Plan S, as well as the COVID-19 pandemic have led publishers to create a variety of open access options that allow research to be published at speed and made freely available to all. Researchers are increasingly in support of open access publishing, and in this year's survey we saw a significant jump in those willing to publish through open access and share links to supporting datasets – from 29% in 2019 to 51% in 2020.

Despite a growing enthusiasm for rapid and open publication, researchers have their concerns. Most (80%) survey respondents preferred the double-blind peer review method, and almost 1 in 5 thought pre-prints could be dangerous. A successful move towards open access therefore needs careful development and innovation.

Time for action

It is increasingly apparent that all stakeholders within the research landscape will need to come together to further change in the way research is published and evaluated. As a research community, we must go beyond fair speeches and signatures, ensuring that the commitments we make are reflected in practice.

We must hold each other to account and work together to create holistic systems and practices that are diverse and inclusive. Ultimately, we must work towards a research ecosystem that leads to real-world impact, benefiting society, the economy and the environment.

For publishers, this means championing alternative methods of impact, leading with different options to publish, as well as providing additional help in areas such as promotion and exploratory research. Importantly, we must move towards a research and publishing culture that promotes equality, diversity and inclusion.

"We know that to make an impact, diverse voices must be part of scholarly discourse, and this means reimagining the exclusionary practices that currently exist within the research ecosystem – and I want us to be a big part of driving this transformation."

Vicky Williams
CEO Emerald Publishing

REAL IMPACT

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For over 50 years, championing fresh thinking has been at the heart of the Emerald business. Our goal is to help those in academia or people in practice work together to make a positive change in the real world.

We commit to:

- *Supporting the community to overcome barriers to impact.*
- *Challenging simplistic and outdated approaches to impact.*
- *Driving impact literacy in the research sector.*

Join us in making a difference. Have your say in our blogs, or download our resources to help bring your research to life.

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Together we can make a **Real Impact.**

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