

## Peering at peer review – COST Transdomain Action: New Frontiers of Peer Review (PEERE)

14–15 October 2014, Corvinus University of Budapest, Hungary



Peer review is at the heart of scientific publishing but we do not know how it functions across research disciplines, which have different research and publication practices. A new Action from COST – an intergovernmental framework for European Cooperation in Science and Technology – will address this issue. PEERE – COST Transdomain Action: New Frontiers of Peer Review aims to improve the efficiency, transparency, and accountability of peer review through a trans-disciplinary, cross-sectoral collaboration. The objectives of the Action are 1) to analyse peer review in different scientific areas by integrating quantitative and qualitative research and incorporating recent experimental and computational findings; 2) to evaluate the implications of different models of peer review and to explore new incentive structures, rules and, measures to improve collaboration at all stages of the peer review process; 3) to involve science stakeholders in data sharing and testing initiatives and, 4) to define collaboratively a joint research agenda that points to an evidence-based peer review reform.

The Action had its first meeting at the Corvinus University of Budapest, on the 14th and 15th of October 2014, entitled: “Towards an interdisciplinary approach to peer review: theory, models and data.”

The aim of this meeting was to review the state of the art of peer review in different disciplines and sector domains; define available and missing links between theory, models, and data; and identify the main challenges for studying and improving peer review. Members of the PEERE Action, coming from 28 countries, discussed their research in peer review and three keynote speakers shared their views on peer review in different disciplines. Michèle Lamont from Harvard University, USA, presented the view from the social sciences, including results of qualitative research on how decisions are made at research grant review panels. Tom Jefferson from the Italian Center of the Cochrane Collaboration talked about the failure of the peer review system in detecting research and publication misconduct in health research. Brad Wible, editor at *Science* magazine in the USA, shared the changes in peer review and editorial practices in his journal. All presentations are available at the PEERE website: <http://www.peere.org/2014/09/18/towards-an-interdisciplinary-approach-to-peer-review-theory-models-and-data/>.

Three PEERE Working Groups had their official start at the Budapest meeting. Work Group 1, under the leadership of Dr Chiara Franzoni, from the Polytechnics University

of Milan, Italy, and Professor Stephen Cowley from the University of Southern Denmark, is tasked with the analysis of theory and models of peer review in different fields. Work Group 2 will focus on data sharing and testing. Led by Professor Ana Marušić from the University of Split School of Medicine, Croatia, and Dr Kalpana Shankar from the University College Dublin, Ireland, this group will work on establishing standards to promote and manage data sharing among stakeholders and testing initiatives. Working Group 3 is led by Professor Bruce Edmonds from the Manchester Metropolitan Business School in the UK, and Professor Elise Brezis from Bar-Ilan University in Israel. The main objective of this group is to define a joint research agenda and possible implementation activities.

We hope that the PEERE Action will create a network of researchers, editors, publishers, and other stakeholders in the peer review and publication processes so that we can generate new knowledge and tools to better understand and improve research practices and the communication of research results.

EASE is a supporting partner for this COST action and we hope that EASE editors will get engaged in PEERE activities. Visit us at the PEERE website (<http://www.peere.org/>), follow our activities and results, and contact us if you would like to include your journal and collaborate on elucidating the peer review process across research disciplines.

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