

# Online Services for the Evaluation of (Open Access) Journals

## Problems and challenges

- new (open access) journals are constantly launched: the market has become non-transparent
- researchers are increasingly dissatisfied with the practices of some journals – criticism especially refers to the amount of article processing charges (APCs) by many open access journals and peer review or manuscript management in general
- questionable practices like “predatory publishing” have the potential to harm open access
- debate: blacklisting vs. whitelisting of journal practices – the case of “Beall’s list”, which is now offline

## Solution

- there are several free of charge online services which prefer whitelisting or simply collect facts about journals along with personal experiences from authors
- online services provide at least some orientation and can be used by libraries when providing advice on open access and selection of appropriate journals

## Comparison of different online services

Online service	URL	Number of journals covered	Focus	Further information provided	Mode of participation
<b>Directory of Open Access Journals</b>	doaj.org	> 9,400	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• open access journals with peer review</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• kind of peer review</li> <li>• information on APCs</li> <li>• licence used by the journal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• request from publishers/editors</li> <li>• application is reviewed by volunteers; therefore community driven</li> </ul>
<b>Quality Open Access Market</b>	www.qoam.eu	> 24,500 (not all journal entries contain comprehensive information)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• open access and hybrid journals</li> <li>• experiences by authors, reviewers, editors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• transparency of journal website with regard to editorial information, peer review, governance and workflow</li> <li>• comparison of APCs: information on website vs. recently paid</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• basic information is provided by librarians (volunteers)</li> <li>• valuation: scientific community (authors are encouraged by email to share experiences); crowd sourcing</li> </ul>
<b>Open Access Spectrum Evaluation Tool</b>	www.oaspectrum.org	> 1,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• selection of open access, hybrid and subscription journals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• degree of „openness“ within six categories: reader, reuse, and author posting rights, copyright, automatic posting and machine readability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• review by defined experts on scholarly communication and publishing, librarians</li> </ul>
<b>Journal Reviewer</b>	www.journalreviewer.org	> 850 (not all journals are reviewed, rough estimation of reviewed journals: 12%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• no indication on how journals are selected</li> <li>• experiences by authors with regard to peer review</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• detailed information on peer review, e.g. duration, report length, quality, recommendations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• authors can share their experiences</li> </ul>
<b>SciReV</b>	scirev.sc	no indication on number of journals reviewed, rough estimation: 1,600	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• experiences by authors with regard to peer review</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• detailed information on peer review, e.g. duration, average number of reports and rounds, quality, difficulty of reviewer comments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• authors can share their experiences</li> </ul>

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## Conclusion

- not all online services cover a critical mass of journals
- status of information partially unclear: some information seems to be outdated
- journal selection criteria sometimes not transparent
- there is no one-stop shop: different sources need to be combined to get an overview

## References:

- Schmitz, Jasmin (2015): Plattformen zur Bewertung von Open-Access-Zeitschriften. In: PASSWORD 12, 18-19.
- van Gerestein, Danielle (2015): Quality Open Access market and other initiatives: a comparative analysis. In: LIBER Quarterly 24 (4). DOI: 10.18352/lq.9911.