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Open submission and open access: the right way ahead

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Research feeds science by creating knowledge. This knowledge is only useful if it can be effectively disseminated and read through access to scientific publications. All publications come with an attached processing and dissemination cost, and such costs are borne either by the author or by the reader. To benefit the reader community at large, an 'open access' movement was created that aimed to provide research articles free-of-charge to the end users (the readers). The practical problem now being faced is that the burden of cost falls on the authors in terms of article publication charges, which may range from US\$1000 to US\$3000 per article. Researchers from some economically weaker countries are often unable to meet these charges. We strongly believe that this is an impediment to the growth of science in those countries that are striving to make progress in social, scientific and economic development. There are virtually no funds to support the heavy article processing charges for open access journals in such countries.¹ Science, in-

stead of flourishing, is thus taking a back seat, and right to science,² which essentially includes contributing to and accessing scientific knowledge, becomes redundant.

There is an urgent need in the scientific community to have a vibrant 'open submission' movement that encourages researchers to contribute to science in its true sense. This will avert or facilitate author publication costs. Pooled funding provided by national governments or by donors as direct author support for payment of author charges is needed. Open access cannot be truly open unless authors from low- and middle-income countries can also publish. This would seem the logical way ahead for accelerating societal and scientific progress across the globe.

References

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