

Free Journal Network (FJN) Annual General Meeting 2021 Meeting Minutes

19 April 2021 – virtual meeting (Zoom)

Meeting start: 14:00 CET

Meeting end: 15:34 CET

Corrections to previous meeting minutes: N/A

Documented by: Wendy Patterson, FJN Secretary

Members in attendance

Present: Mark C. Wilson (MW), Wendy Patterson (WP), Jean-Sébastien Caux (JSC), Patrick Trettenbrein, Mark Costello (MC), David Wood (DW), Jens Gustedt, Simon Batterbury, Nicolas Wicker, Nicolas Alessandrini, Mike Meissner, Jose Luis Bravo, Dimitri Zaitsev, Dan Kral, Alex McCormick, Laurence Benichou (LB).

Voting and voting outcome

Motion raised:

Article IV shall be changed to include content of Bylaw Articles 2.1 and 8.3:

This corporation is organized exclusively for one or more of the purposes as specified in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, including, for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Upon the dissolution of this corporation, its assets remaining after payment, or provision for payment, of all debts and liabilities of this corporation, shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose. Such distribution shall be made in accordance with all applicable provisions of the laws of this state.

Motion was seconded.

Votes were cast and all attendees were in agreement to pass the motion.

Topics of business

The President and Secretary presented reports as included in the Annex.

Additional discussions raised included:

- Discussion about difference between diamond vs platinum OA terminology
- Suggestion raised to hold video calls once a month to supplement our online Gitlab forum
- Deadline of May 15, 2021 for the FJN funding for member journals was announced twice
- Additional points made by JSC with regards to the diamond OA study:
 - Study is missing a constructive strategy for a funding scheme for diamond
 - Pros: the study was otherwise good and will initiate further discussions within cOAlition S
- MC: We should frame what we are doing with FJN as a service to libraries that requires an annual subscription; this will save them money long term.
- MC: use money we have to help journals with these technical requirements.
- LB asked if it is desirable for all of their diamond OA journals to join FJN. The general consensus was yes, all diamond OA journals are welcome and their additional high quality journals would be a benefit for our network.

Actions agreed to be taken

MC will discuss with his library to see if they might want to support our efforts. He requested a template (to be provided by MW)

LB will send more of their diamond OA journals to apply to FJN

MW will arrange more regular meetings for members to discuss topics of interest

Annex

Part 1: Introductions and updates from FJN President, Mark Wilson

Part 2: Suggestion for raising standards from FJN Secretary, Wendy Patterson

FJN AGM 2021 slides

Mark C. Wilson (President, Free Journal Network)
19 April 2021



AGENDA

(times in EDT)

- 8 AM Welcome and introductions
 - Introduction of board members
 - Brief report on legal reorganization of 2020
- 8:20 AM Report on fundraising
- 8:30 AM Financial report
- 8:40 AM Report on recent developments in diamond OA and publishing
- 9 AM Raising minimum standards for our journals
- 9:20 AM Announcement of FJN grants
- 9:30 AM How you can contribute
- 9:45 AM Any other business
- 10 AM Closing comments



Welcome to FJN

- Started in 2018, legally incorporated in 2020
- Board of Directors has 9 elected members (no elections this year)
- Advisory Committee appointed by Board
- **Mission:** support the ecosystem of scholar-controlled, open access journals with no author charges
- Everyone here is a volunteer, with a day job, so please offer help and be nice!

FJN Board of Directors

- **Jean-Sébastien Caux** (infrastructure). Prof. Univ. Amsterdam. Physics.
- **Mark Costello** (At large member) Prof. Nord Univ. Marine Biology.
- **Elyse Gustafson** (Treasurer). Exec. Director Inst. Math. Stats. OA Publishing.
- **Wendy Patterson** (Secretary). Director Beilstein-Institut. OA Publishing.
- **Barbara Sarnecka** (Journal rep.). Prof. UC Irvine. Psychology.
- **Virginia Steel** (Library rep.). Head Librarian UCLA.
- **Patrick Trettenbrein** (Journal rep.). PhD Student Max Planck Inst. Cognition.
- **Mark C. Wilson** (President). Visiting Prof. UMass Amherst. Mathematics/CS.
- **David Wood** (Journal rep.). Prof. Monash Univ. Mathematics.

The Board meets online twice per year and works by email throughout the year.

Advisory Committee

- [Saray Córdoba](#) (University of Costa Rica; Latindex)
- [Katharine Dunn](#) (Massachusetts Institute of Technology Library)
- [Martin Eve](#) (University of London (Birkbeck), English and Humanities)
- [Timothy Gowers](#) (University of Cambridge, Mathematics)
- [Matthieu Latapy](#) (Sorbonne, Computer Science)
- [Peter Suber](#) (Harvard University, Office of Scholarly Communication)
- [Dmitri Zaitsev](#) (Trinity College Dublin, Mathematics)

Legal reorganization of FJN

- FJN is now a nonprofit corporation registered in Massachusetts, USA.
- I am responsible for registration and annual reporting.
- We have applied for nonprofit 501(c)(3) status with the United States IRS.
- We have not yet filed a tax return but intend to do that soon.
- Thanks to FJN member Lajos Balogh for help.

Minor change needed to legal documents

In order to be approved for tax-exempt status, we need to add to the Articles of Organization some information that is already in our bylaws.

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Fundraising report

- I have emailed about 20 university libraries in 2020.
- We have positive responses from 3 so far, and 2 more are considering.
- COVID-19 has put pressure on library budgets.
- We will apply more widely in 2021. Please suggest people and organizations to contact.
- Thanks to board members Virginia Steel and Barbara Sarnecka for major help.

Background on Diamond OA

Diamond OA is the latest name for open access journals with no fees for authors. All FJN journals are diamond by definition.

- Diamond OA journals publish about 10% of all articles, but APC-OA journals have overtaken them recently.
- There are an estimated 17000-29000 diamond OA journals.
- They are relatively much more common in South America and Eastern Europe than Western Europe and North America.
- They tend to be much smaller than APC-OA journals, owned by universities or not formally owned, and operate on very small budgets.
- DOAJ has over 16000 journals, 70% of them diamond.

The common thread is control by academics and very little money involved.

cOAlition S report on OA Diamond journals

Summary of technical findings

- About 60% of diamond OA articles have a DOI as opposed to about 95% of articles in APC-based journals.
- About 50% of diamond OA articles have a machine-readable licence (85% for APC-OA).
- About 30% of diamond OA journals have an archival preservation policy.
- About 30% of diamond OA journals use ORCID.
- About 25% of diamond OA journals publish machine-readable full-text (less than half the APC-OA rate)
- About 25% of diamond OA journals publish open citation information.
- Only 37% of diamond OA journals comply with more than half of the technical requirements of Plan S, 4% with all of them.

Diamond OA report: recommendations

The report makes 20 recommendations to journals and funders. Some are:

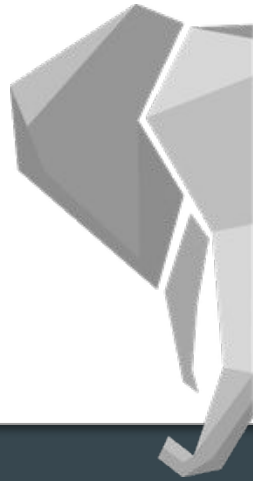
- Journals that comply with their standards should register in **DOAJ**
- Journals should specify their ownership status, to avoid unnecessary legal risks and for better sustainability.
- Funders should facilitate the acquisition of DOIs for smaller journals through Crossref Sponsoring Organisations

There is nothing clear said about how operating expenses of Diamond OA journals should be supported by funders and libraries!

See blog post by FJN board member J-S Caux: <https://www.coalition-s.org/blog/opportunities-in-waiting/>

FJN grants

- The Board has decided to offer at least \$5000 from our current funds as one-off grants to currently accepted journals (only).
- Please send application by email to info@freejournals.org, explaining what you want the money for, and the minimum you could accept. **Deadline 15 May 2021.**
- To make the money go further, consider applying for matching funds from your institution.
- We expect applications for specific projects: reimbursement for out-of-pocket costs, historical DOIs, improvements to journal website or editorial software, clerical help with applying to DOAJ, etc.
- We will not fund any ongoing costs from this scheme.



FREE *JOURNAL* **NETWORK**



Wendy Patterson
FJN Secretary

Annual General Meeting
April 19, 2021

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Minimum standards for FJN membership: summary of the most important, current criteria

- satisfy all 5 Fair Open Access Principles: control by the scholarly community, allow authors to retain copyright, all articles open access with an explicit licence, charge no author fees, and not overpay for publishing services;
- have an ISSN;
- have an explicit and transparent quality assurance policy for published articles;
- have an explicit policy on publication ethics;
- offer the choice of a CC licence to authors for each published article;
- include a title and abstract in English for each published article;
- be in existence for at least 12 months + 5 papers; in existence for 6 months + 10 papers;
- international nature of editorial board and authors;
- regularly indexed (DOAJ, SciElo, Scopus, etc.);
- publish original research.

Minimum standards for FJN membership: discussion of future criteria

The following suggestions are aimed at helping us, as a collective, raise standards and publish quality content for our communities while contributing and connecting to the existing scholarly publishing system. With these suggestions I hope we can help:

- Bring more **credibility** to your journals
- Improve **dissemination** of your scholarly content
- Make your journal and content more **visible**

These are my personal (not agreed to with our Board) suggestions based on my experience in publishing. Some of you may already adhere to these suggestions.

Minimum standards for FJN membership: discussion of future criteria

- **Best practices currently accepted by the scholarly publishing community**
- Technical improvements
- Other suggestions that benefit your journals and our network

Minimum standards for FJN membership: discussion of future criteria - **Best practices currently accepted by the scholarly publishing community**

- **Principles of Best Practice.** Generally, all journals should follow the “Principles of Transparency and Best Practice in Scholarly Publishing”.

These are a generally agreed upon, set of 16 best practices that the scholarly community has committed to.

- **Archival.** All journals must have a digital preservation policy (archival policy).

What happens when your journal ceases to exist? The articles you have published should be persistent and the authors need this security.

Minimum standards for FJN membership: discussion of future criteria - Best practices currently accepted by the scholarly publishing community

Archival. Quote from an author on the importance of archival:

“First Diamond journal I published in, the Journal of Library Innovation, closed 6 months after my article was published. As an author, I take journal sustainability into consideration now, but this isn’t always easy to gauge.”

Tips and tools

- Community maintained open source tools
- Conversion to a new, more modern file format
- OJS - free archival option via the Public Knowledge Project
- See [this study](#) for a comparison on archival options. Other options: Pubmed Central, EuropePMC, your national library

Minimum standards for FJN membership: discussion of future criteria

- Best practices currently accepted by the scholarly publishing community
- **Technical improvements**
- Other suggestions that benefit your journals and our network

Minimum standards for FJN membership: discussion of future criteria - Technical improvements

1. **Persistent article identifiers.** DOI, ARK or Handle are the most commonly used.
 - A DOI is **permanent**. A DOI is **unique**. A DOI creates a path for a **citation**. DOI registration dramatically increases the **findability** of your content. DOIs are a **minimum standard** in scholarly publishing.
 - **Crossref:** popular, good support, largest collection of scholarly content, free public APIs used by many (many!) databases, aggregators and indexers who pull information from here..

Minimum standards for FJN membership: discussion of future criteria - Technical improvements

2. Metadata.

- What is it and why? Proper metadata makes your content easy to find, cite, link, and assess.
 - Content (or descriptive) metadata – such as information on the title, authors, their affiliations, year of publication, etc.
 - Technical metadata – for instance information on the format and display software
 - Legal metadata – information about licensing, copyright, ownership, reuse, etc.
- Best practices
 - Deliver it to Crossref, embed it into your document, include it in your JATS XML (next discussion point).
 - Metadata can and should be maintained and updated (usually for free).
 - We all contribute to for the better good of the scholarly community.

Minimum standards for FJN membership: discussion of future criteria - **Technical improvements**

2. Metadata. Tips and tools.
 - Free [metadata search tool](#)
 - Free [REST API](#)
 - Member [Participation Reports](#)
 - ORCID iDs automatically transferred upon metadata delivery.
 - Metadata standards vary greatly with discipline. Tip: Find an innovative publisher in your field and see what they include to start.

Minimum standards for FJN membership: discussion of future criteria - Technical improvements

3. **Machine readable content.** Publishing is inherently a digital process.

Machine readability of the content is now at least as important as human readability as it facilitates the automated harvesting, text mining and re-use of content.

- Machine readability is the key to **dissemination**.
- Advantages of machine-readable content
 - Proper indexing and absorption into important aggregators and databases.
 - Processes can be automated when structured, machine-readable content is available.
 - The more information that is machine readable, the higher your information is ranked by browsers.

Minimum standards for FJN membership: discussion of future criteria - Technical improvements

3. **Machine readable content.** Machine vs. human readability
 - Human readable: PDF, HTML
 - Machine readable: various flavors of XML (although other options exist, TEI in the humanities?)
 - How to do this?
 - Manual conversion (not recommended, prone to error)
 - Various tools available for conversion of Word and LaTeX to XML (both commercial and open source) XMLmind and Pandoc, LaTeXML, etc.
 - Hire someone
 - Who has other ideas or suggestions here?

Minimum standards for FJN membership: discussion of future criteria

- Best practices currently accepted by the scholarly publishing community
- Technical improvements
- **Other suggestions that benefit your journals and our network**

Minimum standards for FJN membership: discussion of future criteria - Additional suggestions

1. **DOAJ.** Apply to be included in DOAJ and the DOAJ Seal
2. **Minimum number of articles published per year.** I suggest an absolute minimum of 10.
3. **Liberal self-archiving policy.** Authors must be permitted to deposit all versions of their paper in an institutional or subject repository; without an embargo.
4. Make sure your **ownership** and legal status is well defined!
5. **Plan S.** Ensure your journals meet the basic criteria outlined in Plan S
 - Follow COPE Guidelines
 - Display important statistics for your potential authors in a transparent way
 - PIDs / DOIs
 - Archival policy
 - Quality metadata
 - Machine readable info on the OA status and the license embedded in the article
 - Also consider the “*Strongly recommended additional criteria*” listed

Minimum standards for FJN membership: discussion of future criteria - **Additional suggestions**

1. Apply to be included in **DOAJ**.
2. **Minimum number of articles published per year.**
3. **Liberal self-archiving policy.**
4. Make sure your **ownership** and legal status is well defined!
5. **Plan S.** Ensure your journals meet the basic criteria outlined in Plan S.
6. **Development/integration benefits with OJS.** Consider OJS. The Public Knowledge Project (PKP) and Crossref collaborate to help publishers and journals using Open Journal Systems take better advantage of Crossref services. Additionally, PKP can act as a Sponsoring Organization for OJS journals wishing to apply for Crossref membership, and is in some cases able to waive fees. Read more about Crossref for OJS users.

Minimum standards for FJN membership: discussion of future criteria - Summary of suggestions

1. Publish at least 10 articles per year.
2. If you don't currently have DOIs, become member of Crossref and register all articles with DOIs and deliver metadata.
3. Register with DOAJ.
4. Implement as much of the "Principles of Transparency and Best Practice in Scholarly Publishing" as possible.
5. Develop an archival policy.
6. Create XML versions of your content.
7. Consider OJS as it appears to be very useful in general and will cover many of these points it seems.

How you can contribute to the FJN

- Publicity and Marketing
 - FJN website general design and updates, development of a new logo, etc.
 - Do you know of someone who would volunteer or that we could pay to do this?
- Committees
 - Volunteer to start a committee: OJS Users, Journal Marketing and Promotion, Fundraising
- Administrative Assistance
 - General call for volunteers and (student) paid labor. Here are some ideas but let's discuss.
 - Help FJN member journals apply to DOAJ
 - Help FJN monitor member journals
- Networking and Outreach
 - Exchange and interact with other journal representatives by posting and responding regularly to our Gitlab [forum](#) and [Twitter](#). (Or is there another platform you would prefer that would better facilitate discussions? Slack?)
 - Talk to your librarians about FJN
- Consider becoming a Board member in the future