On the circuit

II Latin American workshop on resources and possibilities for electronic publication (ICSEP 2)

Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso (PUCV), Chile
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This Workshop was jointly organized by PUCV, Centro Argentino de Información Cientifica y Tecnológica (CAICYT), the International Council for Science (ICSU) and the International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications (INASP). It was sponsored by Comision Asesora de Bibliotecas y Documentacion (CABID) and the Science and Development Network (SciDev.Net) and funded by the National Commission for Scientific and Technological Research (CONICYT), BIREME-Brazil, UNESCO and ICSU.

The aim of the workshop was to strengthen editors' and scientists' capabilities in electronic publishing, particularly in the areas of biology and medicine. It dealt with introductory issues for improving the present system in science communication and covered the knowledge and skills necessary to prepare articles, making use of the advantages offered by the electronic format. It included case studies and group exercises in which participants were able to apply those concepts and techniques most relevant to their own experience.

Scientific publications have traditionally used the paper journal which presents major restrictions in the presentation of results. The electronic format allows some of the barriers of the paper edition to be broken down, such as by the publication of tri-dimensional and dynamic images, which enhance its interpretation and discussion – a key issue in the generation of new knowledge.

Objectives:

- To improve present systems in science communication

- To learn about the advantages of the electronic format for communicating science
- To strengthen the skills of editors and scientists in the preparation of articles for electronic journals
- To provide a forum for discussion of the opportunities presented by the electronic media and the rigorous scientific publishing environment.

In principle the aims of the workshop were mainly technical. However, as the workshops progressed and discussion ensued, the topics became more political and the whole worldwide process of science communication was considered in some depth.

The event was attended by 120 delegates from 15 countries. Among others, the following experts from various academic disciplines, publishing houses and libraries took part: *Jorge Allende* (researcher from the Universidad de Chile), *Atilio Bustos* (Director of the PUCV Library System), *Manuel Krauskopf* (Rector of the Universidad Andrés Bello and editor of *Biological Research*), *Claudio Menezes* (Regional Advisor for UNESCO), *Hooman Momen* (editor of the *Bulletin of the World Health Organization*), *Graciela Muñoz* (member of

ICSU's CDSI committee, and editor of the *Electronic Journal of Biotechnology*), *Abel Packer* (Director of BIREME), *Erik Sandewall* (President of ICSU's CDSI Committee), *Carol Tenopir* (academician at the University of Tennessee), and *Jorge Walters* (Coordinator of Information Technologies at BIREME). *Tomàs Baiget* (Project Leader, Statistical Institute of Catalonia, and editor of the journal *El Profesional de la Información*) acted as the scientific informant.

Valparaiso Declaration

At the conclusion of the discussions, the following declaration was drafted:

1. Experts and researchers must work in favor of scientific rigor, both adhering to the protocols of the established scientific methods in their experiments and research studies, and acting with honesty in their possible collaborations as referees when evaluating the work of their peers. Likewise, scientific rigor necessarily extends to the entire process of communication through scientific publications.
2. Journals must improve their production processes by using online technologies in order to reduce their publication times.
3. Assessments of reading habits and analyses of the market for electronic journals clearly confirm the fact that the Internet is already a place of convergence and the preferred medium for the transmission of scientific knowledge.
4. Managers of scientific journals are responsible for achieving their maximal dissemination, bringing with it greater visibility and accessibility. They should not only ensure that their contents and format are standardized but also that they are indexed in the greatest possible number of databases and indexes, and that the complete texts are immediately available in multiple repositories.

5. Knowledge of the current bibliometric and scientometric indicators must be raised in order to ensure their proper application in the appropriate context and to prevent aberrations from occurring. To this end, the current vicious circle centralized in ISI (Institute for Scientific Information) must be broken, and we must evolve toward a different, decentralized model that does not put the science from determined zones and languages at a disadvantage.
6. Measures must be taken with governments, associations, professionals, and so forth in order to establish an alternative model for assessing scientific production, so that science that is not written in English is given the consideration it deserves in the global context. There cannot be "second class" avenues in the sciences.
7. Open software models and sources of information must be fostered to provide equal opportunity for everyone.
8. The gradual reduction in publishing costs as a result of electronic publication (given the fact that the costs of the production process are more and more being borne by the authors and readers) must inexorably lead to systems of communicating science that are open and managed by the scientific community itself.
9. Librarians and academicians are responsible for teaching students and users in general how to assess the quality of the information sources they use.
10. The scientific community must meet to analyze, discuss and propose publication norms in the electronic medium as soon as possible.

Further information on the II Latin American workshop on resources and possibilities for electronic publication (ICSEP 2):
http://www.icsep.info/
Photos:
http://icsep.fotopic.net