

## How to find (and keep) reviewers

My experience based on physics and physics-related journals

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## Outline

- Finding reviewers
- Rewarding referees
- Monitoring performance
- Cooperation?

## Types of review processes

- Single blind – 84%
- Double blind – 44%
- Open peer review – 22%
- Post-publication review
  
- In house staff
- Academic editor(s)

## Finding reviewers

- Previous referees
- Suggestions from Editor / Board Members
- Authors appearing in the reference list
- Authors of other [good] papers in your journal
- Authors of papers in competitor journals
- Authors of papers in online repositories

## Points to consider...

- Seniority
  - the most senior reviewer is not always the best!
- ~~Collaborator or competitor?~~
- Location
  - electronic refereeing
- Changing quality standards
- "tactical" refereeing

## Rewarding referees

- Free access to the journal
- Perks as authors
  - free re-prints
  - free colour
  - reduced open access fees
  - etc
- Money?
  - True cost £1200-£1400 per paper
  - £1.9 bn per year in total!

## Rewarding referees

- Long-term relationship
  - Make the referees part of your success
- Thank them!
  - After each review
  - Annually
- Public acknowledgement
- Don't overwork good referees
- Good service, respect, courtesy!

## Good service?

- Be clear
  - Tell referees what you expect of them
  - Clear deadlines
- Tell them if their recommendation is not followed, and explain why
- Tell them immediately if their review is no longer required
- Training / guidance / support for new referees

## Monitoring performance

- Speed
- Leniency
  - Look for reviewers who recommend acceptance of papers that are eventually rejected
- Harshness
  - Look for reviewers who recommend rejection of papers that are eventually accepted

## Co-operation

- Neuroscience Peer Review Consortium (NPRC; <http://nprc.incf.org>)
  - "neuroscience journals that have agreed to accept manuscript reviews from other members of the Consortium"
- Aims:
- support efficient and thorough peer review
  - speed the publication of research
  - reduce the burden on peer reviewers

## Neuroscience Peer Review Consortium

- Launched January 2008
- 35 journals (of 211 Neuroscience journals in ISI Web of Knowledge)
- Commercial and society publishers
- Infrastructure provided by International Neuroinformatics Coordinating Facility (INCF)

## What manuscripts are suitable?

- Received supportive reviews but not accepted because, for example:
- not within scope
  - not sufficiently novel to merit publication in a general journal (and therefore better for a speciality journal)
  - lack of space
  - etc

*"entails virtually no cost or work, and provides a payoff in reduced work for authors, reviewers and editors"*

<http://nprc.incf.org/about/NPRC-editorial-01012009.pdf>

### NPRC – how does it work?



### NPRC - progress

- Currently only 1-2% of manuscripts received are resubmissions from other Consortium journals
  - Only ~ 15% of Neuroscience journals in Consortium
  - Lack of awareness of authors?
- Estimate 10% of manuscripts could go through NPRC
- Participating journals growing

Opportunity to do the same thing for Physiotherapy Journals?