

Contents lists available at [ScienceDirect](#)

# Cognition

journal homepage: [www.elsevier.com/locate/COGNIT](http://www.elsevier.com/locate/COGNIT)

## Editorial

### Introducing a fund for open-access fees



This is a time of flux in the journal publishing industry. Multiple publishing models are being tried, from traditional library subscription to author-paid open access, and everything in between. The editors of *Cognition* are optimistic about the final outcome of this upheaval. We hope it increases the accessibility of science. We also believe that we have a responsibility to maintain the strength and continuity of our journal.

*Cognition* is a hybrid journal: when a submission is accepted, authors can choose between two options: subscription-based access or author-paid Gold Open Access. The subscription-based route is free to the author and makes an article available to all subscribers to the journal. Subscription articles can be shared legally in several ways. Authors can self-archive their manuscripts immediately and enable public access from their institution's repository after a 12 month embargo period, though this applies only to authors' accepted manuscripts, not to published articles. Details can be found at [https://www.elsevier.com/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0004/78502/Policy\\_handout.pdf](https://www.elsevier.com/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/78502/Policy_handout.pdf). The Gold Open Access route means that articles can be accessed and distributed without restriction, after the author pays an Article Publication Charge (APC). Currently, *Cognition's* APC is \$2150 US.

In response to an appeal from our academic community, the editorial team at *Cognition* polled the journal's editorial board to gauge their satisfaction with the journal and their attitudes about the journal's role in the open dissemination of science. We asked the editorial board both specific and open-ended questions regarding their opinions about open access, the need for a paper version of the journal, and the journal's relationship with Elsevier. We obtained a response rate of over 60%.

While the editorial board expressed a range of opinions, most members were happy with the journal's relationship with Elsevier. Elsevier provides a number of services that may not be obvious to authors: It employs several people whom *Cognition* editors work closely with to take care of administrative tasks and solve problems. Elsevier also maintains electronic systems to handle the workflow including everything from initial submission to reviewer reminders to letter templates and resources for authors, reviewers, and editors. Elsevier provides a reliable archive for publications, data, and other supplementary material. The archive has mechanisms in place to maintain its availability if Elsevier were unable to do so. Elsevier provides legal support including editor indemnity for author fraud and other misdeeds. They provide excellent resources for issues concerning copyright, data security issues, and the other legal issues that come up when dealing with a huge number of situations. They also provide training. Elsevier remunerates editors (though not reviewers or, obviously, authors).

The poll also indicated striking consensus on the open access issue: The editorial board was happy with the journal's mixed approach to dissemination, but it felt strongly that open access fees are too high. They felt that a substantial reduction in open access fees would make the option more attractive to authors, with the effect of increasing access around the world to scientific work published in the journal, work that is frequently publicly funded.

Some journals are lucky enough to have their fees paid in part or in whole by a third party. Currently, the linguistics journal *Glossa* is supported by the Association of Dutch Universities, the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research, and the Open Library of Humanities. The journal *eLife*, specializing in the life sciences and biomedicine, is supported by non-profit foundations. The risk such journals face is that the third party might change its mind. If the organizations supporting these journals stop supporting them, author charges could shoot up. Some of us were surprised that the APC of journals published by the major associations associated with psychology are in many cases higher than *Cognition's* charge.

In light of the clear mandate from our board, and with full knowledge that cognitive scientists around the world feel strongly that there should be easier access to high-quality scientific work, the editors at *Cognition* approached Elsevier with a request to lower open access fees. A process of negotiation ensued with the result that Elsevier will start a fund to defray open-access costs for those authors with limited means of support. Here are the details:

- Authors whose articles are accepted after 1st May, 2016 can apply by requesting a form from the editorial office: [cognition@elsevier.com](mailto:cognition@elsevier.com).
- Decisions to grant discounts are at the discretion of the Editor-in-Chief, in consultation with the Publisher.
- Accepted authors always have the choice to publish their article as a subscription article at no cost (even after requesting an APC fee reduction), and the subscription option includes Green Open Access <https://www.elsevier.com/about/open-science/open-access>. *Cognition* has an embargo period of 12 months.
- APC discounts must be requested within one week of acceptance, and will have no impact on the decision made by an editor whether or not to accept the associated paper.
- Authors eligible for support under the Research4Life program (see <http://www.research4life.org/eligibility/>) may qualify for a waiver under the terms of this separate arrangement.

We believe that this fund provides a reasonable compromise between the interests of the community and Elsevier's. From the community's perspective, the initial amount provided by Elsevier is roughly equal to what it would cost Elsevier to reduce the APC to that of prominent journals that publish only Gold Open-Access. Better, it provides a means of channeling resources to those who are most in financial need.

The publishing industry will continue to change. In 2015, only 14% of *Cognition* articles were Gold Open Access, presumably because authors prefer the option of publishing a subscription article for free rather than paying a substantial amount for open access. As the funding models of institutions that purchase journal subscriptions change, and they begin to direct more of their budgets towards covering open access charges, we anticipate that rate will go up. But it may be that other publishing models will take over before Gold Open Access becomes the norm. Perhaps peer-review will become a historical curiosity as authors start archiving their work directly. That is unlikely to happen unless a method for

evaluating the quality of archived publications emerges that obtains sufficient support within the academic community. Until that happens, *Cognition* will remain one arbiter of the quality of work in cognitive science. We take that responsibility seriously and hope it can be exercised fairly.

Signed by *Cognition*'s Editorial Team:

Steven Sloman  
Albert Kim  
Jean-François Bonnefon  
Johan Wagemans  
Michael C. Frank  
Jennifer E. Arnold  
Gregory Murphy  
Manos Tsakiris  
Jacob Feldman  
Stella F. Lourenco  
Karen Wynn