

## Editorial 1

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### Marine networks, academic networks [Editorial]

#### Redes marinas, académicas [Editorial]

The network connects isolated components. Grouping represents a way to strengthen and highlight what is overlooked in large environments, such as oceans, or scientific publishing. The recently established Ibero-American Observatory of Scientific Communication Journals, led by one of my closest collaborators, Dr Jesús Segarra-Saavedra, has the metaphorical objective of promoting marine, academic networks. The first activity to raise awareness of this network-initiative was the **1<sup>st</sup> Ibero-American Conference of Scientific Communication Journals (CIRCC)** held in November 2023 at the University of Alicante (UA), Spain, under the slogan *Editing, review and authorship in the era of diamond journals and ethical urgency*, with the support of the Department of Innovation, Universities, Science and Digital Society of the *Generalitat Valenciana* (GVA, Valencia Regional Government), the Vice-Rectorate for Research of the UA, the Faculty of Economics and Business of the UA and the University Institute of Social Studies of Latin America of the UA and research group Communication and specific crowd (Compubes).

This event drew in more than sixty communication journals to discuss the diamond route as a sustainability strategy. The diamond route is the sole route that responds to true open access because it does not involve payment in any of the different stages: reading, downloading, disseminating, printing, citing or referencing. What do we want to do with scientific results? Are these goods private or public? The diamond route provides assurance that the publication process, from start to finish, is centred on science as a public good. Our goal should be to persuade the institutions to provide us with strong support. The investment is worth it. We need that support, unreservedly, and there is funding – no doubt about that - that is invested in publishing in fee-paying, open-access journals, arguably. All that is needed is to redirect it towards this cause.

Most of the Spanish-language Communication journals are spontaneously based on the Diamond Route. This affords us an advantage over other fields. Projects that are open to the scientific community have been promoted by the editorial teams for years. It is crucial to emphasise our commitment to internationalising scientific production in Spanish and Latin America. Many journals publish their content in English, without renouncing Spanish because of its indisputable relevance, and, in that sense, the foundations are being laid for a positive internationalisation. There are also publications in other languages, such as French, Portuguese and Italian, whose importance cannot be overlooked. We call for financial support from public institutions - the Ministry of Universities and Innovation, FECYT (Spanish Foundation for Science and Technology), Universities, etc. - for translation of the manuscripts we publish and to be able to continue consolidating this internationalisation strategy, driven by the system, without any additional funding.

With one simple measure, I am inviting you to promote our mother tongue in Anglo-Saxon forums: **if we publish a text in English in a scientific journal, we should request an appended Spanish version of it.** If we do this, we are not abandoning our language and we are sending an important message to these, mostly foreign, journals: Spanish is also important. Uploading a Spanish version is feasible, does

not increase costs, does not challenge the evidence hegemony of English, increases the probability of reading and citation of the text, and it is difficult for an editor to oppose it.

The context within which journals operate is turbulent and subject to multiple tensions. The first issue of concern is **editorial dysfunction**. Journals were created to disseminate and share knowledge. In the present day, they have a decisive impact on the status of individuals and universities. Their role has been undermined. A **confused university evaluation system** is the second contextual tension. On the one hand, **the prevalence of the scientific article as a preferential merit** is noted and, on the other, **the impact of the journal (not the article) is valued as an indicator of quality**. Thirdly, **the cult of indexing** is as evident as the **widespread ignorance** of how it works. Finally, the groups involved are calling for a **better balance between the quantitative and qualitative assessment** of scientific products, making it essential to use exclusively bibliometric indicators in a responsible manner. ANECA (National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation of Spain), in the framework of the new Organic Law of the University System (LOSU) approved in Spain in March 2023, has begun to make adjustments in this sense, in the call for research periods (*sexenios*). The main change lies in the **curriculum vitae narrative**, which is focused on providing a rich and varied context of information that complements the classic bibliometric indicators.

Up to now, Spain's scientific publishing dynamics have been impacted by the 'quartile effect'. According to Scimago (2023), in the period 2000-2022, more papers were published, **the volume of editorial management grew exponentially** and, in addition, journals made an **enormous indexing effort**. Although our journals are receiving recognition, **the number of citations received is decreasing**, which is unfortunate. Is publication the end of everything? Is citation influenced by post-publication strategies? What actions can we take to encourage the citation of the huge number of published texts? What strategies can we use to attract the scientific community's attention? In this period of compulsive publishing, do journals need to become more sophisticated in their review and text selection criteria?

The publication of scientific research has a social value and should be beneficial to society. Do we agree? The diamond route creates the right framework for putting this idea into practice.

All of these topics were discussed during the conference through a rich exchange of experience and knowledge. Journals require **recognition, strong institutional support, and editorial independence**.

There is a need for recognition of the key importance of collaborating in the editorial functions of diamond journals. The **mechanisms of recognition** available are varied: the teaching discharge, the consideration as a relevant merit of continuous editorial collaborations (Publons helps in this sense), the status of authority implicit in processes that involve evaluating science, the value of the scientific experience acquired as a result of performing editorial tasks effectively and continuously over time, the opportunity to identify research trends in the scientific field of the journal and to know, at first hand, the production and specialisation of colleagues in the field. Despite agreeing on the implicit value of this activity, how is it that we fail to establish clear and explicit recognition?

In addition, **institutional support** is essential. Financial aid for editorial tasks that enable the improvement of published texts; technical support in the electronic management of publishing software; technical support for indexing by institutional libraries; funding for translations; institutional licences for anti-plagiarism software; technical support from the communication offices responsible for the post-publication dissemination of research results; and funding for projects that promote the transfer of published results are, in all cases, measures that enable existing institutional services to be enhanced or funding to be utilised more efficiently. Although positive, it appears that what is being done is not enough. Diamond journals need this institutional support because we play a key role in the projection of the institutions that endorse us and in the visibility of the scientific field in which we operate.

The importance of **editorial autonomy** cannot be overlooked. Editorial autonomy is not to be compromised, either by due recognition or by the necessary institutional support. Journals must avoid external interference and conduct their work with ethical commitment and intellectual status. Journals have to maintain their same level of autonomy within an environment wherein academic freedom and university autonomy hold supreme importance.

Editorial work cannot be obviated or subsumed to personal initiative, bonhomie or altruism. We do science. Our aspiration for science is for it to be transformative and to have a positive impact on society and the economy. The system's sustainability can be guaranteed by the diamond route framework. Our intention is to work towards this direction from the Mediterranean Journal and the Ibero-American Observatory of Scientific Communication Journals (OIRCC).

Our issue consists of twenty scientific texts arranged in two special issues. *Visibilisation of science in social networks* is the subject of the first special issue, coordinated by Macarena Parejo-Cuéllar, Patricia

de-Casas-Moreno, Margoth Menay and Daniel Martín-Pena. Twenty-one manuscripts were received and only seven of these passed the review process for publication. The second special issue focuses on *Creative Industries on the Net*, has been coordinated by Antonio Castro-Higueras, José Patricio Pérez-Rufí and Toby Miller and includes five articles. This time, the miscellaneous section has been more competitive than ever. The rejection rate stands at 78 %. The miscellaneous section comprises seven manuscripts.

*The Influence of digital effects on consumer attitudes towards the advertisement and the brand* is the title of the article by Miguel García-Torres. The text concludes that digital effects have a greater impact on the attitude towards advertisements than on the attitude towards the brand.

Lucía Caro-Castaño, Pedro Pablo Marín-Dueñas and Javier García-Osorio share an article on the case of Isabel Díaz Ayuso and the ayusers on Instagram. The study expands knowledge on the narratives of humanising politicians in social media, as well as the increasing significance of fandom in the context of permanent campaigning.

*Obesity in Spanish online journals: from stigmatisation (of the obese person) to social responsibility and structural solutions* is the title of the contribution by José-Luis Arguiñano-Herrarte and Guillermo Gurrutxaga-Rekondo. Online journals are starting to play a role in proposing solutions to tackle the root of the obesity problem.

The content strategy of literary influencers contributes to the engagement of followers on Instagram. This is the main conclusion of the text co-authored by Marilé Pretel-Jiménez, José-Luís del-Olmo and Carmen Ruíz-Viñals under the title *The engagement of literary influencers with their followers on Instagram: bookstagrammers' content and strategy*.

Arantxa Sánchez-Vizcaíno provides evidence that the duos of the #SingWithMe challenge democratise access to music, allowing people to express themselves creatively through singing, composition and audiovisual editing. The manuscript is entitled *Decolonising music on TikTok: "Let's make a duet!"*

Gabriela Ortiz-Díaz and Elsa Moreno-Moreno are the authors of the article *Motivations of independent podcasters in Puerto Rico: between the entrepreneurship of the amateur creator and the formalised producer*. Independent podcasters in Puerto Rico see themselves as cultural and social entrepreneurs, promoters of alternative forms of economic capital: social, cultural and symbolic capital.

*With Fallen journal 2023. Implications for Spanish science of the expulsion of journals from Web of Science*, Rafael Repiso-Caballero and Ángel-M. Delgado-Vázquez publish as an article the preprint that denounces the presence of Spaniards in journals expelled from WoS and includes the sources of funding for these works.

Our expectation is that the scientific community will show a keen interest in the content of this issue.

## Reference

SCImago Country Rank (2023). Evolución 2000-2022 de la Comunicación española según la base de datos Scopus. <http://www.scimagojr.com>