



Genetics Society of America

9650 Rockville Pike, Bethesda, MD 20814-3998
Phone: (301) 634-7300 • Fax: (301) 634-7079
society@genetics-gsa.org
www.genetics-gsa.org

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Preprints & Scholarly Publishers: A Synergy

GENETICS and *G3: Genes/Genomes/Genetics*, peer-reviewed, peer-edited journals published by the Genetics Society of America (GSA), are proud to support the posting of preprints. Here, we outline our experience in a draft statement.

Since 2012, in response to requests from members of our community, the GSA Journals have supported the posting of preprints. In 2015, we were among the first to partner with bioRxiv. Authors can submit a manuscript for peer review at *GENETICS* or *G3* while simultaneously submitting the manuscript to bioRxiv as a preprint. As part of a pilot project, it is now possible to submit preprints from bioRxiv directly to our journals for review. Thus, we and other journals are already conducting the type of experiment proposed by ASAPbio. So far, few authors (<8%) opt to post preprints on bioRxiv before their paper is submitted to our journals for review.

We believe pre-print servers offer advantages to scientists and to the community. Preprint servers enable researchers to quickly communicate findings and ideas and to receive comments from interested colleagues. Scholars have long sought input on their papers prior to publication, albeit via discussion, snail mail, email, and other means. Preprint servers are a means to that end, with an even broader reach. Additionally, depositing a manuscript on a preprint server allows researchers to establish precedence or priority of discovery for ideas and data contained in the preprint. In this way, the time spent in peer-review does not impede the release of data or the determination of precedence.

We believe that posting preprints followed by peer-review for a journal may increase the short- and long-term impact of the paper. It is, however, crucial to balance the need to release and disseminate scientific results quickly with our collective responsibility — to science and the public — to evaluate and certify those results. Public trust in science requires that results first be critically evaluated. We believe this is best managed by scientist-editors and carefully chosen reviewers who are experts in the field.

We believe that journal peer review and the resulting decision by scientist-editors should be swift, yet thorough and fair. Related to the ASAPbio meeting, discussion has touched on potential delays caused by peer review in some fields and journals. Speed is a priority for our journals. For reviewed papers in 2015, the average time from submission to first decision in *GENETICS* stands at 33 days; for *G3*, 31.8 days. We also believe that it is important to publish results quickly. Within ~48 hours of acceptance, investigations in our journals are published as early online papers, complete with DOI, plus PubMed, Google Scholar, CrossRef, and other indexing deposits, but before other processes take place (e.g. linking of genetic terms to model

organism databases, checks for plagiarism, image forensics, copyediting, adherence to nomenclature standards, final data checks, etc.).

We do not recommend that posted preprints be used as the version of record or as a substitute for thorough, formal peer review, editorial guidance by scientist-editors, and publication and dissemination via a journal, among other activities. The system of peer review is not arbitrary at the GSA Journals. Each decision is made by carefully chosen editors (at least two for every decision), and decisions are thoroughly considered, with letters that parse the reviews and provide guidance to the author, even in cases of rejected papers.

Our experience so far is that posted preprints combined with submission, peer-review, and publication in a journal run by scientist-editors will best serve the scientific community and others who read and use the results of the research. In keeping with best practice for reproducibility, our data release policy requires that all data supporting the paper's conclusions be publicly available and clearly presented by the time of publication.

For those scientists who opt to participate, *GENETICS* and *G3* support preprints when combined with the certification of peer-review and decision-making by a practicing scientist-editor, followed by journal publication when applicable. Note: during peer review by a journal, it is likely that a preprints may not be validated scientifically and may be declined for publication; therefore it is critical to make clear the distinction between definitions of the terms *preprint* and *article*.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Johnston
Editor-in-Chief, *GENETICS*

Brenda J. Andrews
Editor-in-Chief, *G3: Genes/Genomes/Genetics*

Tracey DePellegrin
Executive Editor, GSA Journals
GENETICS & *G3: Genes/Genomes/Genetics*