Why publish in an overlay journal?

Overlay journals are affordable and efficient

- Most overlay journals have no Article Processing Charges (APCs) and no embargo periods (they are diamond journals)
- Authors simply deposit their preprint into the repository or preprint server, then submit the link to the relevant overlay journal. The preprint will be immediately available to readers.
- See the example of Discrete Analysis

Overlay journals are quality controlled

- Overlay journals have editorial boards
- Like traditional journals, articles submitted to overlay journals undergo a peer review process
- Many overlay journals rank highly within the traditional journal citation metrics.
- See the example of Advances in Combinatorics

Overlay journals are recognized by all major indexing services

- Overlay journals assign a persistent identifier assignments to articles
- Articles in overlay journals are included in citation services, indexes and discovery services

Overlay journals support bibliodiversity

- Overlay journals are often run independently by groups of scholars, rather than large publishing companies. COAR fosters international, concerted efforts to develop strong, community-governed infrastructures that support diversity in scholarly communications (referred to as bibliodiversity).

Overlay journals contribute to innovation in scholarly publishing

- Because articles are available in an open repository or preprint server and licensed for reuse with attribution, automatic translations/multilingual versions are possible.
- Article versioning is easier in overlay journals because there are common practices across repositories and preprint servers
- See the example of Panlingua

These resources were developed by COAR in 2022
Why choose the overlay model for a new or existing journal?

Overlay journals have significantly reduced production costs

- Because the storage and access costs for the articles are covered by the repository or preprint server which hosts the article, the costs of running an overlay journal are significantly lower than traditional journals.
- Funding opportunities are growing because there are a growing number of academic libraries interested in supporting the overlay model

Copyright issues are not a concern

- Articles and preprints in repositories and preprint servers are already licensed under an open license, therefore there are no hassles with copyright for editors

Overlay journals make scholarship more discoverable

- Articles in overlay journals are discoverable through both the preprint repository and the journal web pages and therefore are more visible in the ecosystem
- Articles and preprints in repositories and preprint server most often use open licenses, allowing inclusion in overlay journals without additional copyright negotiations
- In many disciplines, scholars already use preprint servers as a primary way to stay up-to-date on the latest research in their field because they are centralised, known deposit centres that offer search functionality
- See examples in both arXiv and and the Open Journal of Astrophysics, which have all of their articles indexed in Google Scholar.

These resources were developed by COAR in 2022
Getting Started

Use a hosted service

- There are a growing number of (low or no) fee overlay service provider(s) which support journal submission, editorial and publishing workflows.
- For example: episciences.org or Scholastica

Do it yourself

- Overlay journals are relatively easy to set up. Some use WordPress to host the webpages and maintain a simple editorial workflow with peer reviewers using email.

Case Study: Psicológica journal

Psicológica is a ‘do it yourself’ overlay journal with content hosted on the Spanish National Repository, Digital.CSIC.

The Spanish Society for Experimental Psychology moved their journal, Psicológica, from a traditional model to an overlay journal model. The editors and board of the journal are committed to a sustainable path for open scholarship and the overlay model reduced the cost of running the journal, enabled them to avoid chagrin authors’ fees (APCs) as well as subscriptions, and ensured they had more editorial control of the journal. In addition, working with the National Repository of Spain meant that if the journal/society were to disappear one day, the content would remain persistent and continue to be preserved over time by the repository.

These resources were developed by COAR in 2022
Workflow

Indexing the journal

1. *Psicológica* already had an existing eISSN, as it had been previously published. If your journal does not have an ISSN, you can apply for one [here](#).
2. Editors created a list of databases in which they wanted to be indexed.
3. Editors submitted the journal to Clarivate/JCR and Scopus using this [template](#). They have successfully been indexed in Clarivate and are still waiting for Scopus to respond.
4. Due to time constraints, the editors have not yet contacted the other indexes, but plan to do so in the future.

Challenges

- **WordPress customization**: PublishPress, is a plugin that costs 60 Euro per year and manages the peer review process. This requires quite a fair amount of work at the beginning of the setup of the journal.
- **If you don’t have a repository with a peer review module** There are a number of options in terms of repositories that you can use to host your preprints and published articles including your institutional repository, many of the preprint

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servers and Zenodo. However, most of these repositories do not offer an open peer review module or functionality. That said, this workflow can also be done in a more manual way. Linking preprints to peer reviews can be done through links and relationships in the metadata of the repository. See COAR-ASAPbio recommendations for more information on how to do this.

- **Training on workflows:** Training new associate editors has taken time and intention. As such, *Psicológica* developed a tutorial to help with onboarding and consistency among editors.
- **Peer review:** Managing the peer review process is mainly done via email.
- **Time and resources:** Running the journal has been a lot of work and it is recommended that, if there are resources available, journals find part-time editorial support

More information about the transition of *Psicológica* to an overlay format

- [https://blog.scholasticahq.com/post/journals-using-overlay-publishing-models-equitable-oa/](https://blog.scholasticahq.com/post/journals-using-overlay-publishing-models-equitable-oa/)
- [https://pandelisperakakis.info/2021/04/21/is-there-life-beyond-publishers/](https://pandelisperakakis.info/2021/04/21/is-there-life-beyond-publishers/)

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