Running a Student Journal: Best Practices for Success and Sustainability

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The STEM Fellowship Journal

The STEM Fellowship Journal is an open-access peer-reviewed journal that publishes scholarly research by high school and university students in the STEM fields.
Our Student Editorial Board

Editor-in-chief: Dr. Sacha Noukhovitch.

20-person large student editorial board, consisting of:

- Undergraduate & graduate students across the world (Canada, US, Pakistan, etc.)
- Various backgrounds in research and scientific communication
Editorial Workflow

STUDENT RESEARCH

MANUSCRIPT SUBMISSION

EDITING (THROUGH MENTORSHIP VIA THE STUDENT EDITORIAL BOARD)

PUBLICATION & SHARING YOUR RESEARCH WITH THE WORLD

FINAL EDITS & LAYOUT

PEER REVIEW
Recruit submissions via conferences
Running a Student Journal:
Best Practices for Success and Sustainability
Student Editorial Board Members

Kelvin Ng
B.Sc Student
McMaster University

Rahul Arora
B.Sc Student
University of Calgary

Mohammad Hossein Asadi Lari
B.Sc Student
University of British Columbia

Vassi Sharlandijeva
B.Sc Student
University of British Columbia

Sze Wah Samuel Chan
MD Student
University of Toronto

Dr. Sacha Noukhovitch
Editor-In-Chief
STEM Fellowship Journal
Student-Run Journals: A Training Ground

- Low-risk opportunity to engage in academic writing & editing
- Opportunity to publish smaller research projects or coursework
- Chance to develop critical writing and thinking skills
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Controversy

- Academic credibility – student editors are inexperienced
- Frequent management transitions impede journal growth
- Extensive role played by supporting faculty members?
Exploratory study: Survey STEM Student-Run Journals
Methodology

Survey of Student-run Academic Journals

This questionnaire will be used for a research project titled "Student-Run Academic Journals: A New Trend in Scholarly Communication" conducted by STEM Fellowship. STEM Fellowship is a non-profit organization that offers high school and university students interested in STEM a platform to discuss and develop novel ideas (http://stemfellowship.org). STEM Fellowship also runs a peer-review, open access journal that is published by Canadian Science Publishing.

The conclusions drawn from this questionnaire will be presented at the 2017 American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) annual meeting (http://www.aaas.org), hoping to shed light on the roles that student journals play in disseminating student research. The results may also be presented at the Council of Science Editors (CSE) (https://www.councilscienceeditors.org/), and Peer Review Congress (http://www.peerreviewcongress.org) conferences. Your participation in this questionnaire contributes to research which increases awareness for student-run academic journals and student leadership and innovation in scholarly writing on an international level. As student leaders in research, your honest insights are greatly valued and will definitely serve to improve the student scientific community.

We're asking for your email address simply to keep you informed on the progress of this project and in case we require follow-up to some of your answers. Your personal identity and the organization you represent will remain anonymous. In addition, there is the opportunity to join the dialogue on...
There has been a $9.9x$ increase in the number of student-run journals from 1995 to 2015.
Student-Run Journals On The Rise

University of Toronto Medical Journal (1923)

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Summary Statistics Of Student-Run Journals

80% of journals’ mission statements involved promoting student research or publication
Respondents Prioritize Original Research

- Original Research: 100%
- Editorials: 40%
- Reviews: 60%
- Opinion articles: 50%
- Interviews: 30%
- Other: 20%

Manuscript Category
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88% of responding journals were connected to a single institution

52% of responding journals had authorship restriction in place
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- **88%** of responding journals were connected to a single institution.
- **52%** of responding journals had authorship restriction in place.
- **76%** of journals use social media or market within their institution.
- **None** of the journals had an impact factor.
- Only **42%** were indexed in at least one online journal database.
Challenge: Limited Background Knowledge

46% had editorial boards with some to no background in the subject area of manuscripts they were assigned.
Challenges In Student Outreach

Number Of Journals

- Recruiting Reviewers
- Gathering Manuscripts
- Management Transition

Challenging
Slightly Challenging
Not Challenging
Student-Run STEM Journals Are A Growing Trend

STUDY LIMITATIONS

- Selection bias towards currently active journals
- 26 journals responded out of the 122 journals contacted
- Expand to beyond North American student journals
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- Focus seems to be on expansion within institution
- Altmetrics may be a better metric to capture readership
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**CHALLENGES**
- How to foster student interest in submitting to these journals
- Student editors lack sufficient background knowledge
- Faculty support is useful, but is a large time commitment
Student-Run Academic Journals in STEM: A Growing Trend in Scholarly Communication

By: Kelvin Ng, Mohammad Hossein Asadi Lari, Sze Wah Samuel Chan, HBSc, Rahul Krishan Arora, Farah Qaiser, Vassi Sharlandjieva, Sacha Noukhovich, PhD, OCT

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Full study can be found in CSE’s Science Editor:
Title: “Student-Run Academic Journals in STEM: A Growing Trend in Scholarly Communication”

Questions?
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