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The scholarly communication handbook: From research dissemination to societal impact

Having in mind how bulky many handbooks on different topics can be, this text astonishes not only by being so concise, but also by how much of relevant issues it presents to its intended audience. The author suggests that it may be useful for training of PhD students and in post-graduate educational programmes for librarians and information professionals. I would also suggest that this may be a handbook for academic librarians providing advisory service for researchers about academic publishing options. Most of them may be well aware of many issues presented in the handbook, but as any handbook it may prove useful with some issues that are less often met in their practice. However, as the author herself suggests, the book was guided by her own lack of experience in publishing, the primary audience for it would be young researchers.

The book consists of nine chapters. The first of them provides a short introduction to scholarly communication and to the overall thematic structure of the handbook. Two others present the types of publications, including the open access ones. I have found them quite exhaustive and instructive. Though the author does not get involved in critical discussions, many useful instruments for making informed decisions about the publishing channels are provided for the users of this handbook.

The chapter on the complex issue of copyright and licensing pursues an instrumental goal of providing enough information for practical purposes and possibilities to pursue the topic further. The same can be said of the chapter on peer review, which provides general understanding of the process and various types of peer review. It may also help some first-time reviewers to reduce the uncertainty caused by the novelty of the job.

Chapters six and seven look into the impact issues related to measured indicators of research metrics and a much more complicated topic of societal impact. The latter was the most disappointing for me as it seemed to be heavily biased to self-promotion and social networking, instead of going more into finding about the impact of the produced research results. On the other hand, it is the area that is highly dependent on a particular research area and even discipline, so there are no unified measures as with research metrics. These difficulties are addressed in the chapter to some extent.

However, I liked the chapter on research integrity very much because of its clear outlines of possible pitfalls and advice of how to avoid them doing the 'right thing'. Many of the difficult problems that we meet in this ethical sphere of research are just outlined, leaving space for users to explore them in depth. Some ethical advice is missing, such as, realising support for open access in the best way, or how to protect research participants in making one's research public, but these issues are also guided by different norms depending on the discipline.

The last chapter on critical issues opens many interesting topics. If the handbook is adopted for post-graduate education of librarians and information professionals it can be one of the most

beneficial for generating seminar discussions. I liked the one on biblio-diversity and multilingualism the most, maybe because I publish in multiple languages and see the difference in how unfairly the different publications are treated by research management on different levels in different countries. International advisors to the universities all over Europe are cynically advising to publish only in English, neglecting local research language, impoverishing national scientific terminology, and losing relevant multiple perspectives of many research problems.

The closing part of the book provides three different scenarios that introduce three scholars facing different publishing challenges. This section demonstrates how most of the instructions provided in the handbook can be used in different scenarios for different researchers. This would be really useful examples for academic librarians.

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