

# TESTING THE WATERS: PUBLISHING LITERACY – A NEW ROLE FOR MARINE SCIENCE LIBRARIANS?

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## Abstract

Libraries have a strong service culture. For decades information literacy has been well established in our libraries and information centers. The training on skills to search, evaluate and consume information is a substantial part of libraries' information literacy programs. At the same time, library services for authors still seem to be in their infancy, at least in specialized libraries beyond universities. There are plenty of varied possibilities to discover. Let us test the waters and explore how librarians may contribute to the publishing process of authors at their institutions. Where are the potential docking points for libraries during the writing and publishing process? Where are exciting opportunities to see? Which limitations have to be considered?

**Keywords:** Publishing process, information literacy, author support, library future, digital transformation, library services, open access.

## Do you know what a liblisher is? Or a publarian?

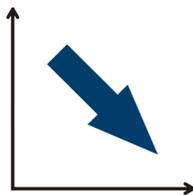
A liblisher or a publarian is a person who works in a library or in an information center. They contribute to the writing and publication process of scientific authors in the widest sense. There are two reasons why liblishers and publarians are introduced to you as our new job titles and why librarians are able to contribute to the writing and publishing process in their institutions:

1. The transformation within the publishing process.
2. The librarian's future position.

Both reasons are consequences of the so called Digital turn.

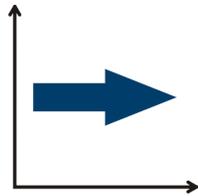
## The Digital Turn

Printed Aquisitions



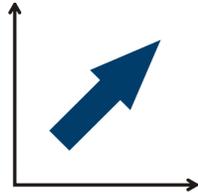
Library Stock

Our library's acquisitions are decreasing, due to the cancellations of major scientific publishers. Background is the German project "DEAL."



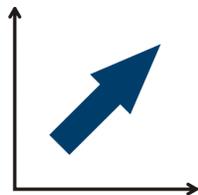
Our Library Stock is more or less constant. There are almost no new acquisitions, but no de-acquisitions at the moment as well.

Electronic Documents



More and more scholarly output is published electronically. Scientific information is increasingly becoming available online.

### Publishing Requests

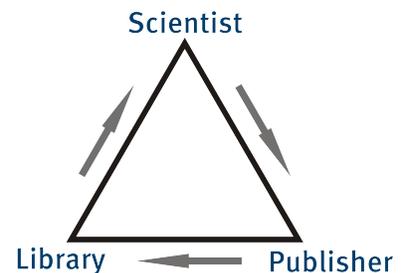


Our Scientists request an increasing amount of help in the process of publishing their papers.

### Digital Turn

By the digital turn a new model of publication process has been developed and the transformation process is still going on (Keller, 2016b).

To see the differences let's have a look at the traditional publishing process first. The scientist is in the role of the creator of scholarly output and wants to publish his or her findings and results. Scholarly communication is a vital element of science, so the scientist gives the documents to the publisher for distribution.



Publishers manage the process of scientific publication; new findings are reviewed for quality and then presented to the rest of the scientific community.

Libraries acquire the scientific literature from the publisher and provide it to the scientist. The scientist can access the online subscriptions or use the printed library stock. The role of every stakeholder is clearly defined.

The model of traditional publishing process is no longer as it was for the last centuries, due to the digital turn.

## New Publishing Process

Within the new publishing process, we see boundaries blurring.

The role of the scientist is similar to the traditional process. He is still in the position of the creator of scholarly output. He wants to present his findings to the scientific community. Now, as illustrated by the figure, many online suppliers as well as publishing platforms are available.



Furthermore, there is a high dynamic within the information environment. With new online distribution channels, the traditional mediator role of scientific publishers has come under scrutiny. The scientist can choose between different options to distribute his knowledge. The transformation to publishing open access definitely has a strong impact on our work, as I have seen for myself already within the last few years. The journal *Science* announced recently that a “bold open-access push in Germany could change the future of academic publishing” (Vogel & Kupferschmidt, 2017). The authors refer to the project “DEAL.”

Along with many German institutions, the Institute for Baltic Sea Research is participating in the project “DEAL.” Our institution cancelled all Elsevier subscriptions in 2017 and intends to cancel all SpringerNature and Wiley subscriptions as well. Instead of buying subscriptions to specific journals, consortium members want to pay publishers an annual lump sum that covers publication costs of all papers whose first authors are at German institutions (Vogel & Kupferschmidt, 2017).

The consequence is that there is less and less need for library’s to manage journal subscriptions. Furthermore, the full texts are stored in digital archives by the publisher. When you look at this new publishing process, where do you see the library? The position of the library has changed. As roles and responsibilities get sorted out, we as librarians are testing the waters to identify what present and future role we may have (Gold, 2007). To stay visible within this new publishing process is one of the most crucial challenges we are facing (Australian Library and Information Association, 2014).

## Services in the library of the Leibniz-Institute for Baltic Sea Research

The Leibniz-Institute for Baltic Sea Research is an independent research institution specializing in interdisciplinary study of coastal oceans and marginal seas. The library is responsible for the needs of more than 130 researchers, which include Marine Geologists, Marine Chemists, Physical Oceanographers, and Biological Oceanographers.

- Reference management: We offer assistance and instructions in EndNote.
- Publication media: Match the medium to the message, so that the research will be received by a broader audience. What can be the most appropriate media or publication type – a journal article, data journal, fact sheet on a website, professional book, video...? Help to promote discipline-specific resources, because sometimes researchers are not aware of all options.
- Keywords: We emphasize the importance of keywords, because keywords are added value for the paper. Furthermore keywords are additional hooks for the search engine, improving the chances that your paper will be seen by the people you will address.
- Copyright
  - While writing: How to avoid plagiarism? Help the scientists to comply to good scientific practice.
  - While publishing: Help in choosing the right licenses to protect intellectual property.
- Author identification: Provide information on ORCID and author identification.
- DOI registration: This has been integrated to our library's service. The IOW library registers DOIs for digital documents, including datasets, published by the IOW.
- Journal evaluation: Finding the right journal, how to determine predatory journals, and counsel impact factors other journal evaluation indicators.
- Open Access: Provide advice on Creative Commons licenses, funding, and repositories.
- Spread publications: Distribution within the Leibniz Open Repository.

### Services in the library of the Leibniz-Institute for Baltic Sea Research

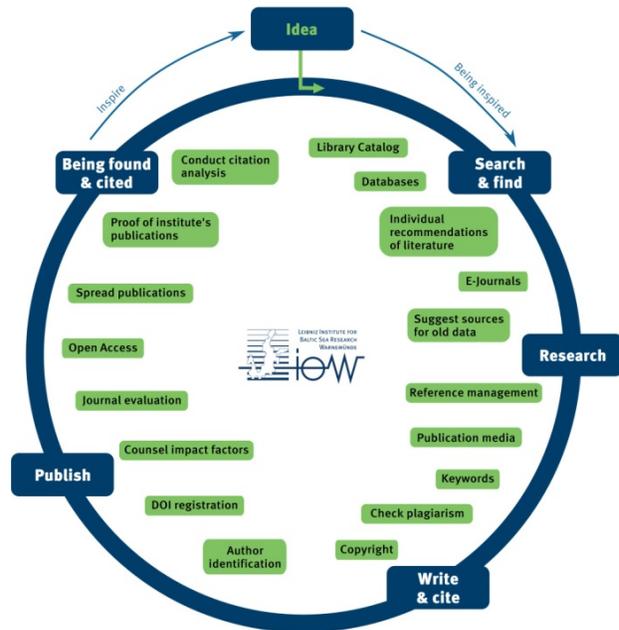


Illustration: Christian Heene & Olivia Diehr, 2017  
 based on Regina Goldschmitt (2014)  
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### Author Support

During the last years we have experienced more and more requests about publishing issues. In order to offer services for authors in a professional way, special skills are needed that often differ significantly from traditional library function ranges. The librarian's role can be informing as well as educating. How far you can guide authors through the writing process depends on your background. Once again, and illustrated as Docking points, our contributions to the writing and publishing process.



All our contributions to the writing and publishing process are inquiry-driven and based on individual consultation.

The new model of scientific publishing demands new skills from both the authors and the libraries, which may be summarized by the term publishing competence (Keller, 2016a). Two books which are especially helpful for authors, librarians and information professionals, are recommended:

- Allen, M. (2016). *Essentials of publishing qualitative research*. Walnut Creek, California: Left Coast Press.
- *Style Manual Subcommittee Council of Science Editors*. (2014). Scientific style and format. The CSE manual for authors, editors, and publishers (8. ed.). Chicago: Council of Science Editors in cooperation with The University of Chicago Press.

### Case Examples

To illustrate our services by some situations in our daily work, here are some examples of when librarians enter the stage and contribute to the writing and publishing process.

1) Senior Scientist #1:

*„My paper was rejected by the preferred journal. Because it covers an important recent event – a Major Baltic Inflow – it should be published without any major delay in an appropriate journal. What is your recommendation on other journals I can submit my manuscript to?“*

In this case speedy publication was an important consideration for the author. Also the ranking of the journal had to be considered for his career. We performed searches in Web of Science, determined the scope of several journals and could give recommendations.

2) Professor:

*“I am about to publish an encyclopedia as editor. Would you please check the bibliographic data of my reference list?“*

We checked to complete bibliographic data, which was a lengthy task because of the many references. For a thorough check, in certain cases some entries of the reference list even had to be ordered through Interlibrary Loan.

3) Senior Scientist #2:

*“The submission process becomes complicated and more complex. I am a co- author, but I can’t check the status of a submitted Elsevier article.“*

*“The publisher asks me for my ORCID, but I don’t have any. Do I need an ORCID, what is it for? How can I link my former publications with ORCID?“*

This was a situation where it was best to meet the researcher in her office, to give her the needed assistance in her working area. The advantage was that the registration process could be completed together, making it possible to help with any questions arising in the process.

4) Scientist:

*“I am writing an article and I would like to reuse a figure I already published in a Springer journal. Could you check if I can do that?“*

Although there is the right to cite, sometimes these questions are tricky. In case there is uncertainty about the copyright, the publisher needs to be contacted to get more information.

5) Senior Scientist #3:

*“How can I write a scientific paper with EndNote by using the tool Write&Cite? My reference list is different than described in the author guidelines. Can you help me editing the output style?”*

In the library, we use EndNote for our publication database, so we are able to help in many cases. This was a situation as well where it was helpful to meet the scientist in her office to edit her personal EndNote desktop settings.

### **Tips & Pitfalls**

- Focus your contributions about writing and publishing on essentials. There is no need to educate the world of publishing in detail. Avoid information overload (Allen, 2016).
- Provide tailored service, and have a look with fresh eyes at the specific situation.
- Interact with authors in face-to-face mode, prefer individual consultation, and implement your experiences into your personal knowledge base. Work like an advisor or guide (Tappenbeck, 2012).
- Know the scholarly environment of your scientists, and know the publishing landscape as well (Style Manual Subcommittee Council of Science Editors, 2014).
- Understand your limitations, and recognize when contacting other experts is appropriate.
- Collaborate with other information professionals and scientists.
- Trust matters! Documents and data are unpublished, so consider and respect confidential information.
- Trust in your competence and keep on learning.

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