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Peer Community In Animal Science: a free publication model for transparent and open science

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The scientific publication system should evolve into practices that enhance free dissemination and full access to research findings. At the same time, it should ensure reproducibility and transparency and safeguard scientific integrity from the detrimental effects of the current “*publish or perish*” culture. The objective of this contribution is to introduce the *Peer Community In (PCI) Animal Science* initiative (<https://animsci.peercommunityin.org/>), which represents an alternative to the current publication system under the umbrella of the “*Peer Community In*” project (<https://peercommunityin.org/>). *PCI Animal Science* is an international community of researchers working in animal science and related areas and it promotes open science and research transparency. Although *PCI Animal Science* is not a scientific journal, it operates similarly with editors (here: recommenders) and reviewers. Currently, the *PCI Animal Science* community has 64 recommenders from 20 countries. *PCI Animal Science* is a non-profit initiative, run and managed by researchers. The *PCI Animal Science* community performs, at no cost, rigorous open reviews of preprints that have been deposited on repositories such as bioRxiv and Zenodo from a wide range of research areas related to animal science. Based on independent reviews, a recommender decides whether a paper is recommended or not. Recommended preprints are peer-reviewed and citable stand-alone articles of high scientific value that do not need publication in traditional journals. However, if the authors wish, they can also publish their recommended preprint in the Diamond Open Access *Peer Community Journal* (<https://peercommunityjournal.org/section/animsci/>) at no cost. Authors can also submit their recommended manuscript to PCI-friendly journals (*i.e.*, journals that consider the PCI evaluation in their own review processes) or to other journals. This contribution shows the workflow of the evaluation of manuscripts by *PCI Animal Science* and the advantages of adopting this new publishing model.