

Standardization of the digital author's identification as a unique and permanent register: ORCID

Normalización de la identificación digital de un autor como registro único permanente: ORCID

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A recently addressed issue in the scholarly publishing international world is increasingly becoming important: the need to properly standardize authors' names and affiliation institutions¹. This is a long-standing problem; hence identifiers such as ISBN for books and ISSN for magazines have been used for decades².

Yet, nowadays, the name of a given author would come out differently on his articles or databases; this

may be due to inaccuracy when signing their articles, different editorial practices or mistakes when introducing their records in databases³. That is why recovering the total scientific work of an author becomes so challenging and, consequently, knowing his professional career and collecting his complete scientific production. This redounds in erroneous productivity, visibility and impact estimations of both scientists and research centers.

Facing such a problem and aiming to standardize the digital author's identification, different initiatives (the standardization of the digital author's identification, researcher profile and Digital Author Identifier³) have arisen, to work out what is known as scientific signature variability.

To meet the need for a persistent digital identifier

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–not only for scholarly publications, but for countless different objects, creations and works in general– the Corporation for National Research Initiatives (CNRI) of the United States proposed the Digital Object Identifier (DOI, 2000, <http://www.doi.org/>) which provided, among other facilities, a permanent digital identification for every academic report published by electronic journals⁴.

In 2009, ORCID (Open Researcher and Contributor ID, <http://orcid.org/>), provided the scientific and academic community with a resource to unambiguously identify authors and link them to their work in different contexts; which was also compatible with other identification systems⁵.

ORCID is a 16-digit number compatible with the ISO Standard 27729:2012, which allows researchers to have a permanent and absolute author code to accurately distinguish both their production and research work. Researchers can individually and freely register-in with both purposes, obtaining their code and storing up, documenting and managing their professional output. It also enables collaboration by identifying and tracking other specialists with similar interests. Once ORCID register is obtained, it is possible to add information related to the author, such as: E-mail, standardized identification (uniform) from the author and from the institution where he/she works, possible variants of the standardized name, as well as publication references, among others aspects of interest⁵.

Similarly, the author acquires greater international presence and visibility since it is used to sign all of the articles sent to scientific journals. Such simplicity to obtain an ORCID code and the obvious advantages over other identifiers make us consider how profitable it would be to implement a universal code to identify: the most prolific scholars and scientists, professionals with high scientific and/or teaching categories, and every researcher in general; as a good practice of individual and institutional work, particularly from science and technology entities in our National Health System².

Therefore, implementing ORCID to obtain an unequivocal identity for researchers within the scholar arena becomes critical in order to compile their scientific production. So by registering every individual who publishes on any medical journal from Villa Clara, surely we will obtain greater international presence and visibility.

COMPETING INTERESTS

None

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