



Publications Report for the BSA Board Meeting November 8, 2022

This report updates issues of interest and concern for BSA publications since this summer's Botany meeting in July.

The OSTP/Nelson Memo—a significant step toward more open access in publishing

In late August 2022, the US Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) announced a new policy directing all federal agencies to mandate “free immediate and equitable access to research articles funded by a federal agency and immediate free access to the underlying data.” This policy shift brings the US closer in line with open access movements such as [Plan S](#) (developed by a group of funders in Europe) and is expected to go into effect by 2026.

The policy, issued in what is sometimes called the OSTP “2022 Memorandum” or the “Nelson Memo” (after the current head of the OSTP Alondra Nelson), requires making the research publicly available, as well as the underlying metadata (using persistent identifiers) associated with scholarly research and publication such as author names and affiliations (for all authors), dates of publication, and sources of funding (including grant awards).

An excellent explainer for the new policy and its potential ramifications for society publishers can be found here: <https://www.ce-strategy.com/the-brief/zero-embargo/>.

What this means for us is that the trend toward open access is accelerating, and we are in for an interesting, and challenging, road ahead. The memo is not mandating Open Access, but public access, so there is some parsing of the language and what it all actually means (see <https://scholarlykitchen.sspnet.org/2022/10/27/speculations-on-the-most-likely-ostp-nelson-memo-implementation-scenario-and-the-resulting-publisher-strategies/>).

Wiley did an analysis of the research published in *AJB* and *APPS* and found that 41% of papers published in *AJB* have some US federal funding; 35% of articles published in *APPS* have some US federal funding.

Equity and inclusion in publishing for those without access to funding for Article Processing Charges, through transformative agreements or grants/institutions/etc., are not guaranteed.

There is also some concern over whether partnering with a major commercial publisher remains a win-win proposition in an increasingly Open Access world. See

<https://scholarlykitchen.sspnet.org/2022/10/24/the-beginning-of-the-end-of-publisher-society-partner-contracts/>. This post is worth reading as we negotiate with our publisher and contemplate what may happen during and beyond the next 5+ years.

Contract Negotiations with Wiley

BSA Executive Director Heather Cacanindin has provided a brief backgrounder for the current contract negotiations with Wiley. They are ongoing and, we hope, moving toward a positive conclusion.

Publications Workshop in Mexico, potential collaborations in the future

In September 2022, Michael Donoghue and Amy McPherson traveled to Puebla, Mexico, for the [XXII Congreso Mexicano de Botánica](#). Michael gave a keynote scientific presentation on his research on *Viburnum* and introduced and participated in the BSA-sponsored Publications workshop offered for free to congreso participants. BSA members Mark Olson and Julieta Rosell presented on a winning formula for writing a scientific paper that gets reviewed and what an editor looks for in submissions to a journal. Amy McPherson presented on getting published and how to make sure your work is discoverable. We are discussing whether to develop the workshop into an offering for Botany360, and Michael is working with the Mexican Botanical Society to develop a joint symposium for next summer's Botany meeting in Boise, Idaho. A possible joint botany meeting for the two societies was also suggested for the future.

Synthesis Papers and Prize: Submissions are in process, committee to judge the contributions is the next step

Recap: The *American Journal of Botany* is launching AJB Synthesis papers and the AJB Synthesis Prize to showcase early-career scientists. The new AJB Synthesis section features invited contributions by early-career scientists that concisely summarize and synthesize a focal research area or question. These articles summarize recent research and provide new insights that advance the field. Contributions focus on newly emerging areas or provide new perspectives on established areas, and authors are encouraged to express a personal perspective, while maintaining a balanced view of the field. All Synthesis papers published prior to July 2023 will be considered for the AJB Synthesis Prize (\$2000).

We have received 7 of the 8 expected papers to be considered for the first Synthesis Prize. One is published, five are in various stages of review, one was rejected but expected to be resubmitted, and one is expected to be submitted soon. Our next step is to outline what's needed in a panel to evaluate the contributions, and to develop a rubric for the evaluation.

Update on special issues for *AJB* and *APPS*

Special issues raise the visibility of a journal and demonstrate the breadth of our content, as well as (often) help our Impact Factor, by attracting high-quality and potentially well-cited papers. We thank all of the Special Issue/Section editors and contributing authors for their hard work in making their Society journals as strong as possible.

Summer-Winter 2022:

- *APPS: Methods in Aquatic Botany*—led by guest editors Greg Pec and Julia Cherry; published July-August 2022
- *APPS: Meeting the Challenge of Exceptional Plant Conservation: Technologies and Approaches*—led by guest editors Valerie Pence, Emily Coffey, and Megan Philpott; published September-October 2022

- *AJB: Approaches to the Study of Quantitative Fitness-Related Traits*—led by Susan Mazer, Eugenio Larios (former ECAB-er), Ann Sakai, and Stephen Weller—November 2022

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- *AJB: Pollen as the Link Between Phenotype and Fitness*—led by Agnes Dellinger, Vini de Brito, Nathan Muchhala, Oystein Opedal, and Rocio Perez-Barrales
- *APPS: Emerging methods in botanical DNA/RNA extraction*—led by guest editors Richard Hodel, Ed McAssey, and Nora Mitchell
- *APPS: Bioinformatics for Plant Biology*—led by guest editors Katherine Emelianova, María Fernanda Torres Jiménez, and Diego Mauricio Riaño-Pachón
- *APPS: Advances in Plant Imaging across Scales*—led by guest editors Pierre Bonnet, Gil Nelson, Pam Soltis, and Luiza Teixeira-Costa
- *APPS: Resilient botany: Innovation in the face of limited mobility and resources*—led by guest editors N. Ivalú Cacho, Gillian Dean, Greg Pec, and Alejandro Zuluaga Trochez

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- Joint *AJB/APPS* special issues on *Polyploidy* (title TBD)—led by Mike Barker, Kelsey Glennon, Yunnian Jiao (*AJB*), and Michael McKain and Ya Yang (*APPS*)
- *APPS: From Theory to Practice: New innovations and their application in conservation biology*—Proposal submitted for symposium at Botany 2023, with proceedings to be published as a special issue, in celebration of the 10-year anniversary of *APPS*! Led by Christopher Krieg

Update on Journal Editors post-Botany meeting

Since July 2022, *APPS* has welcomed three new Associate Editors: Miquel Capó (University of the Balearic Islands), Elizabeth (Libby) Ellwood (iDigBio), and Christopher Krieg (University of Wisconsin-Madison)

New *APPS* Reviewing Editor Board: *APPS* Reviewing Editors work directly with Associate Editors during the manuscript review process to gain experience in the editorial and publication process.

After an open call, 13 new REs were selected for a two-year term, starting in September 2022:

<https://bsapubs.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/hub/journal/21680450/homepage/editorialboard#rev>

There have been no changes to the editorial board post-Botany 2022 for *AJB*.

Manuscript submissions:

For *AJB*, manuscript submissions are up 6% over where we were last year at this time.

For *APPS*, submissions are the same as they were last year at this time.

The BSA Publications Team strives to serve the mission of the Society and the botanical community.

Respectfully submitted 26 October 2022

Amy McPherson and Emily Sessa

Director of Publications; Director-at-Large for Publications