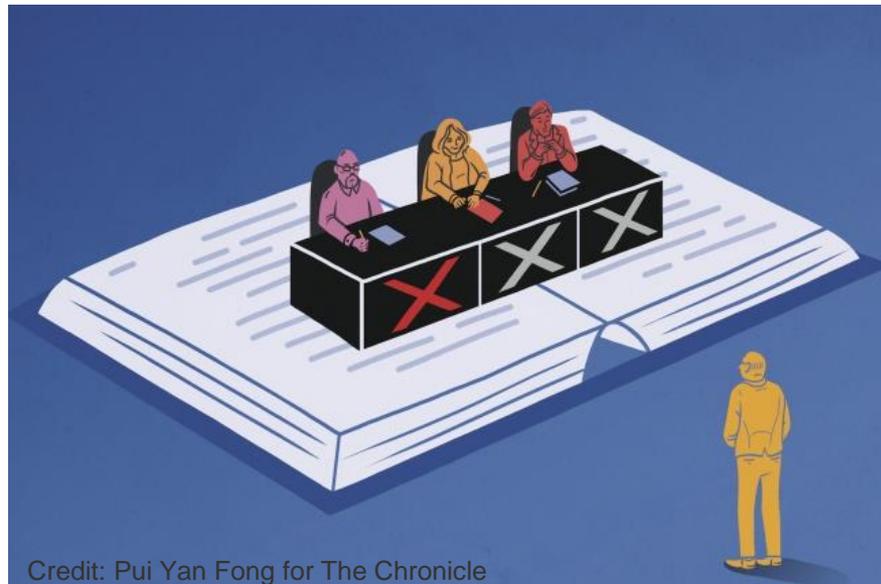


# Transparency and integrity of peer review

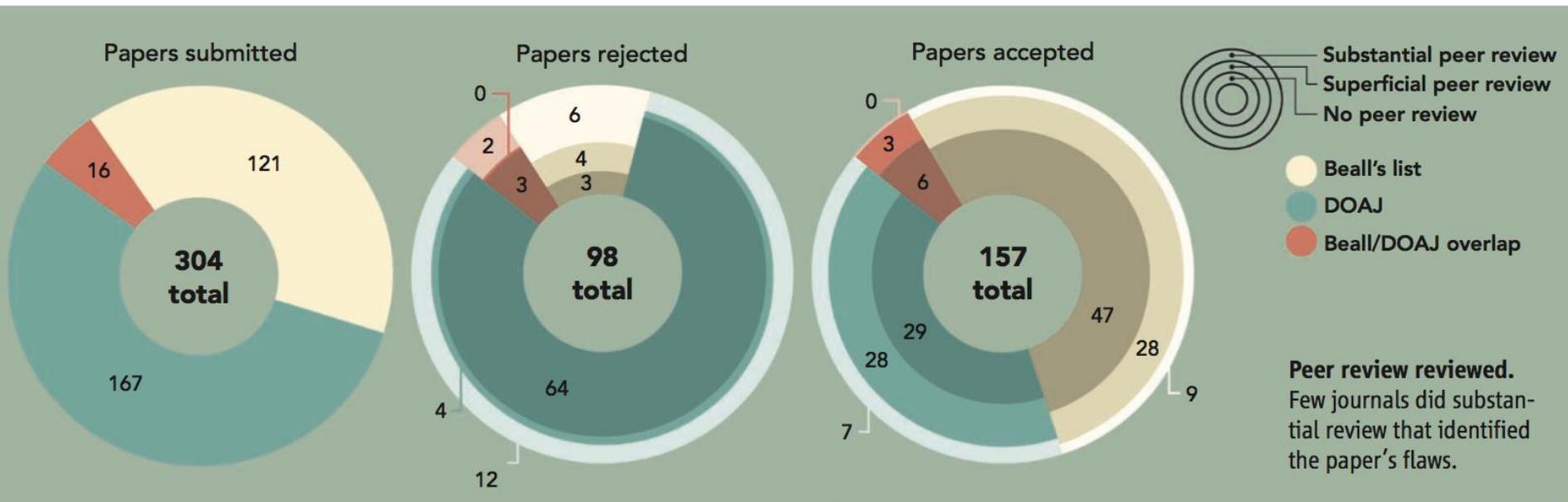


Credit: Pui Yan Fong for The Chronicle

Jelte M. Wicherts



# Some worrying results (1)



# Some worrying results (2)

Science Home News Journals Topics Careers



Thomas Rendleman/Pexels

SHARE



75

Australian dog serves on the editorial boards of seven medical journals



May. 24, 2017



# Some worrying results (3)



NATURE | COMMENT



## Predatory journals recruit fake editor

Piotr Sorokowski, Emanuel Kulczycki, Agnieszka Sorokowska & Katarzyna Pisanski

22 March 2017

**An investigation finds that dozens of academic titles offered 'Dr Fraud' — a sham, unqualified scientist — a place on their editorial board. Katarzyna Pisanski and colleagues report.**



PDF



Rights & Permissions

Subject terms: [Publishing](#) · [Ethics](#)



# A particular problem with (novel) OA journals

Gold Open Access (OA) journals often charge authors and can increase revenue by accepting many articles.

Biased or substandard peer-review processes will not stand full scrutiny by the community.

Hence, transparency concerning the peer-review process can be seen as indicator of good practice.

# Lack of transparency

- ✓ Vague criteria cannot be used to reject manuscripts, possibly leading to low thresholds for acceptance.
- ✓ Lack of information on decision-makers and procedures allows papers to be reviewed by a single peer (or by none) and be accepted by an editorial assistant who often works for the publisher (COI!)
- ✓ Lack of information on who acted as reviewers and yearly rejection rates impedes assessment of who did the reviewing and quality thresholds

# QOAM: Rating transparency



1. Easy to use
2. Transparent scoring rules
3. Acceptable criteria
4. Broadly applicable
5. Psychometrically homogeneous

### Score Card

Editorial information 4.0	Peer review 4.8
Governance 5.0	Workflow 4.5

**Base Score for this journal:**

**4.0**

by\* [Jorden Esser](#)

### PLoS ONE

ISSN: 1932-6203  
 Publisher: Public Library of Science (PLoS)  
 Language: English  
 Disciplines: medicine, science

**Editorial information** | Peer review | Governance | Workflow | Valuation

Aims, scope, and expected readership of the journal are clearly specified on the journal's website.  
 1: Absent  2: Poor  3: Moderate  4: Good  5: Excellent

The names and affiliations of members of the editorial board are listed on the website.  
 1: Absent  2: Poor  3: Moderate  4: Good  5: Excellent

The website of the journal indicates how open editorial correspondence and reviewer's comments are.  
 1: Absent  2: Poor  3: Moderate  4: Good  5: Excellent

The role of members of the editorial board is explicated on the website including who will make final decisions about article acceptance (e.g. editor, associate/action editor).  
 1: Absent  2: Poor  3: Moderate  4: Good  5: Excellent

### Score Card

Editorial information	Peer review
4.0	4.8
Governance	Workflow
5.0	4.5

**Base Score for this journal:**

**4.0**

by\* [Jorden Esser](#)

### PLoS ONE

ISSN: 1932-6203  
Publisher: Public Library of Science (PLoS)  
Language: English  
Disciplines: medicine, science

**Editorial information** Peer review Governance Workflow Valuation

The website indicates whether all submissions are sent out for review.  
 1: Absent  2: Poor  3: Moderate  4: Good  5: Excellent

Criteria used by reviewers to rate submissions are specified on the website.  
 1: Absent  2: Poor  3: Moderate  4: Good  5: Excellent

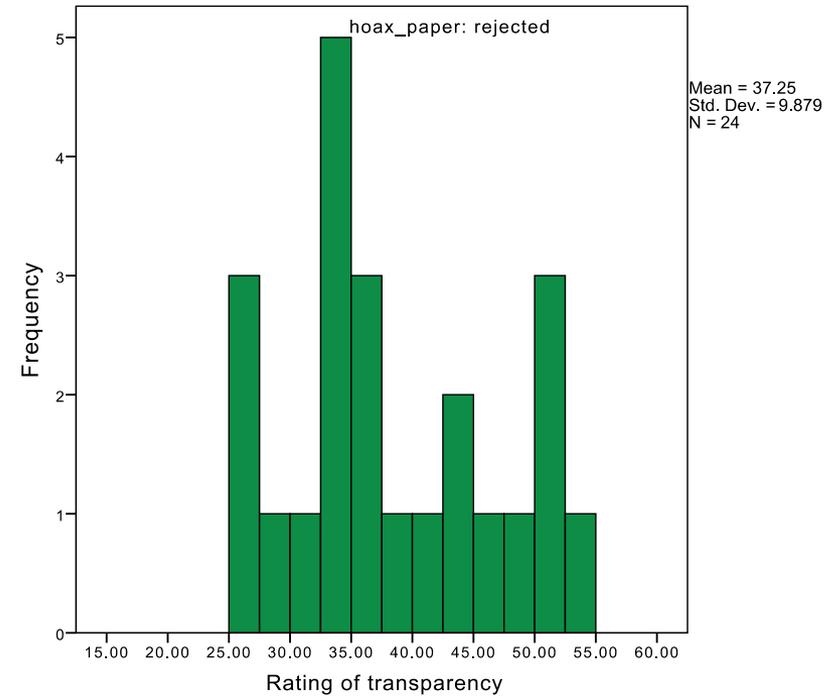
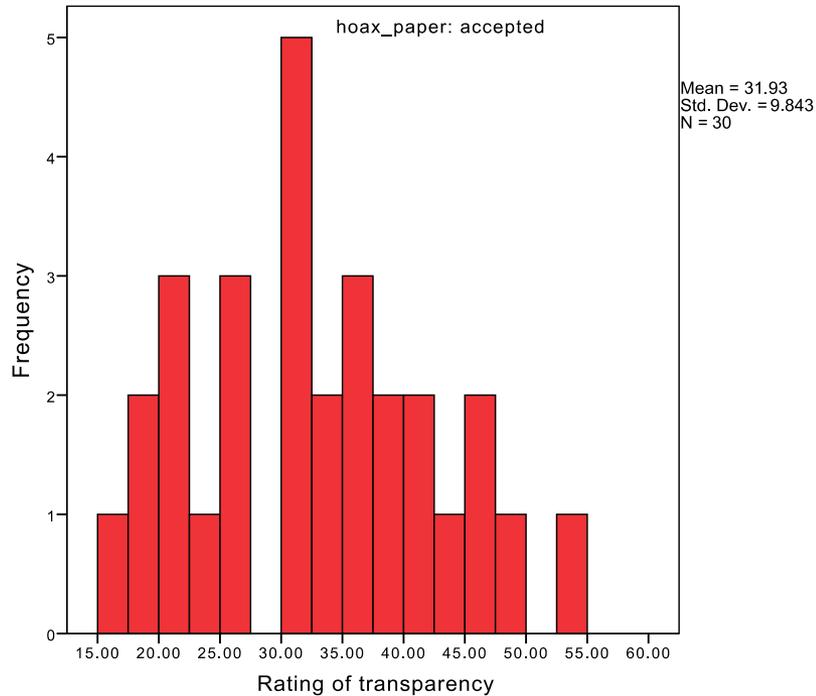
The website indicates if authors have a say in suggesting names of (non-)desired reviewers.  
 1: Absent  2: Poor  3: Moderate  4: Good  5: Excellent

The journal website allows ratings of papers and post-publication commentaries by the community.  
 1: Absent  2: Poor  3: Moderate  4: Good  5: Excellent

# QOAM: Some results

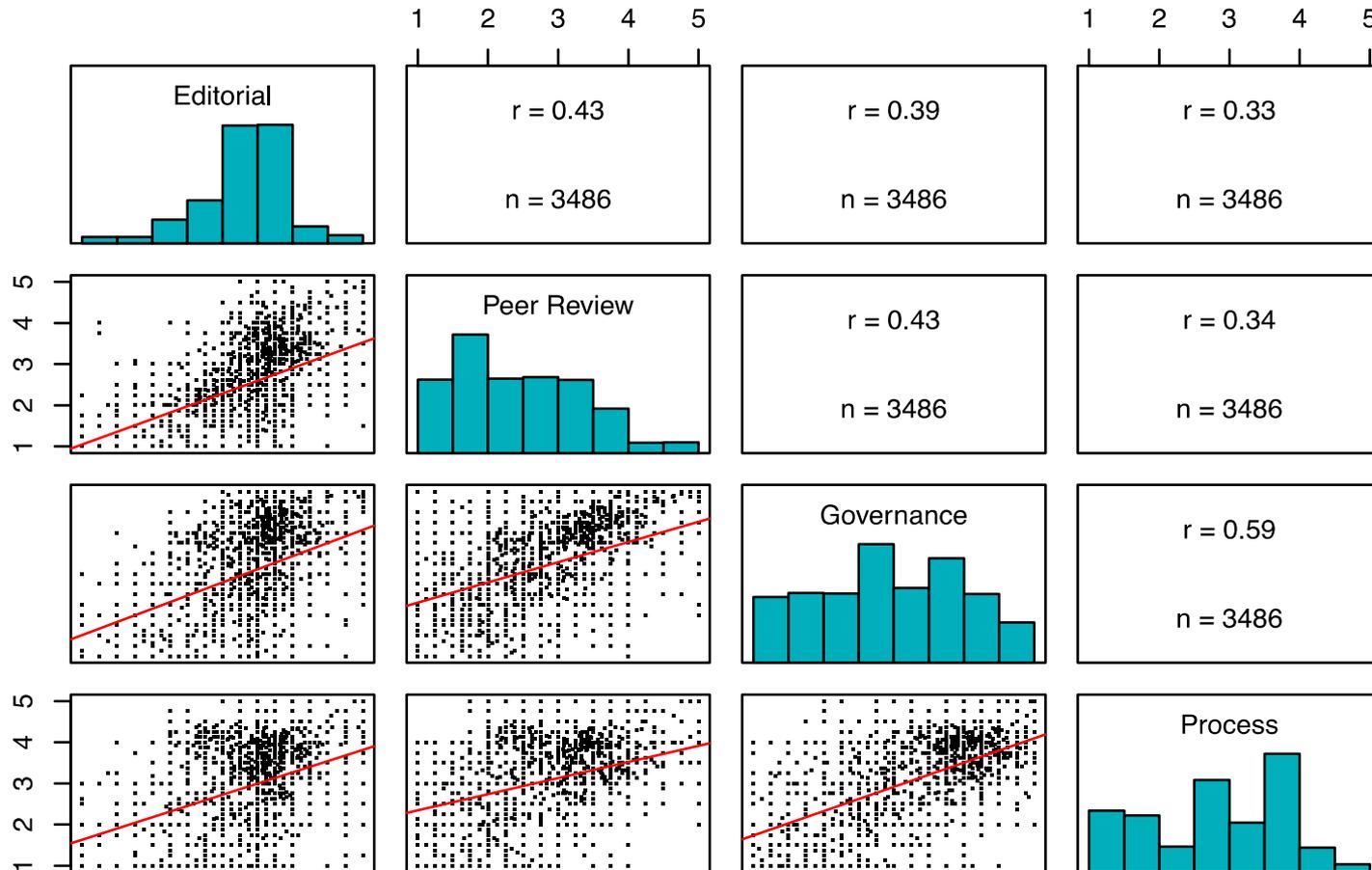
- Ratings of transparency of the peer-review system by different stakeholders are internally consistent and show adequate inter-rater reliability.
- Transparency ratings of 92 established journals by authors predict ( $r = .48$ ) author-rated quality of the review process at these journals
- Ratings of transparency could predict whether a journal was earmarked as “predatory” by Jeffrey Beal.
- Transparency ratings predict journals’ Impact Factor

# QOAM predicts rejection of hoax paper



Source: Wicherts, J. M. (2016). Peer review quality and transparency of the peer-review process in open access and subscription journals. *PLOS ONE*, 11, e0147913.

# Operational data from QOAM



# Valuation scores

Score Card

Valuation

3.0

Valuation Score for this journal:

3.0

By Reinoud Bootsma

Frontiers in Psychology

ISSN: 1664-1078  
Publisher: Frontiers Media  
Language:  
Disciplines: psychology

Valuation

I have published an article in this journal less than a year ago

I am an editor of this journal (If 'Yes', please tick the box)

The editor of the journal is responsive.  
 1: Absent  2: Poor  3: Moderate  4: Good  5: Excellent

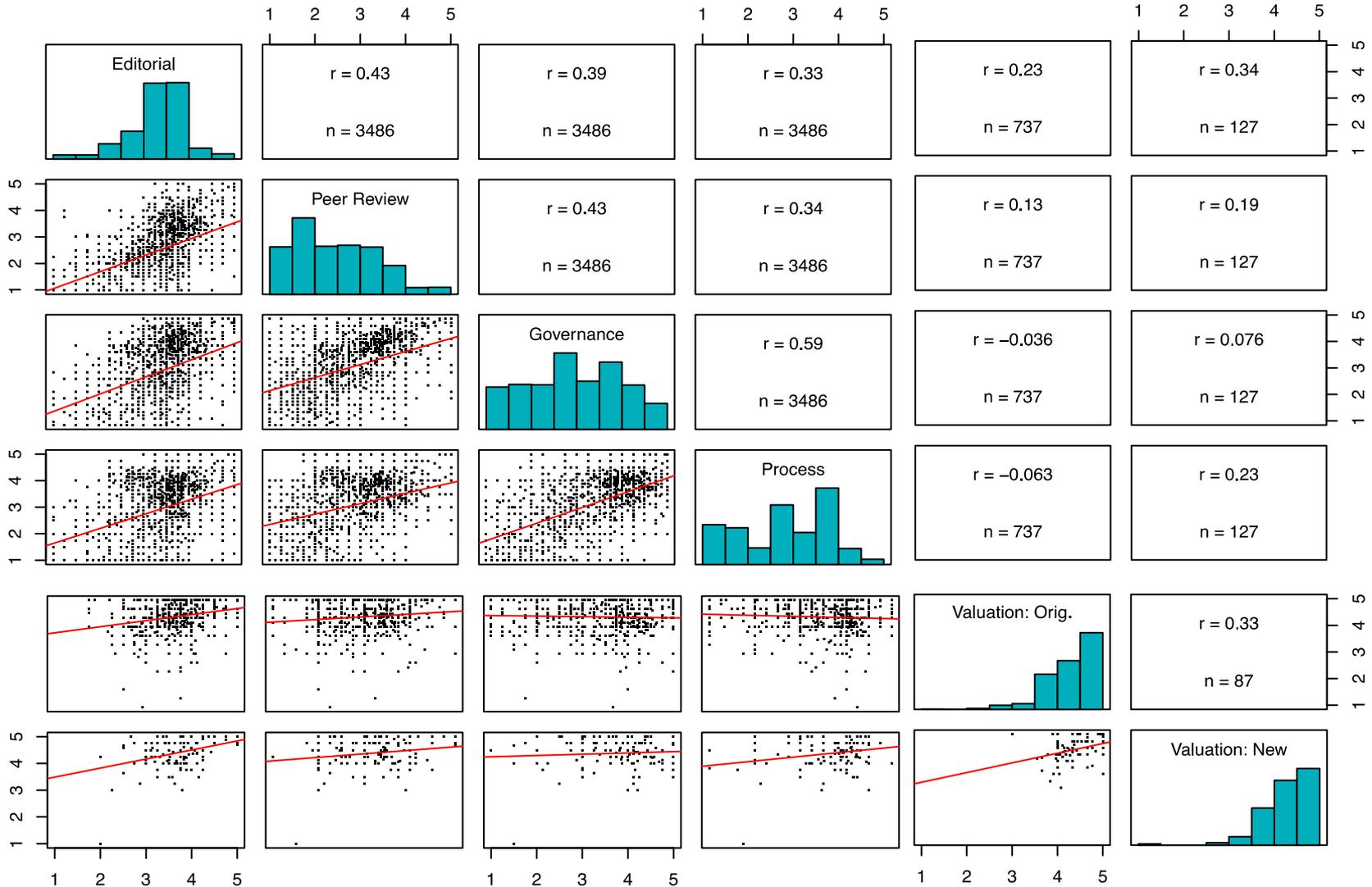
The peer review of the journal has added value.  
 1: Absent  2: Poor  3: Moderate  4: Good  5: Excellent

I would recommend scholars to submit their work to this journal.  
 1: Absent  2: Poor  3: Moderate  4: Good  5: Excellent

I would deem this journal good value for money  
 1: Absent  2: Poor  3: Moderate  4: Good  5: Excellent

Additional comments

# Predicting valuation by authors

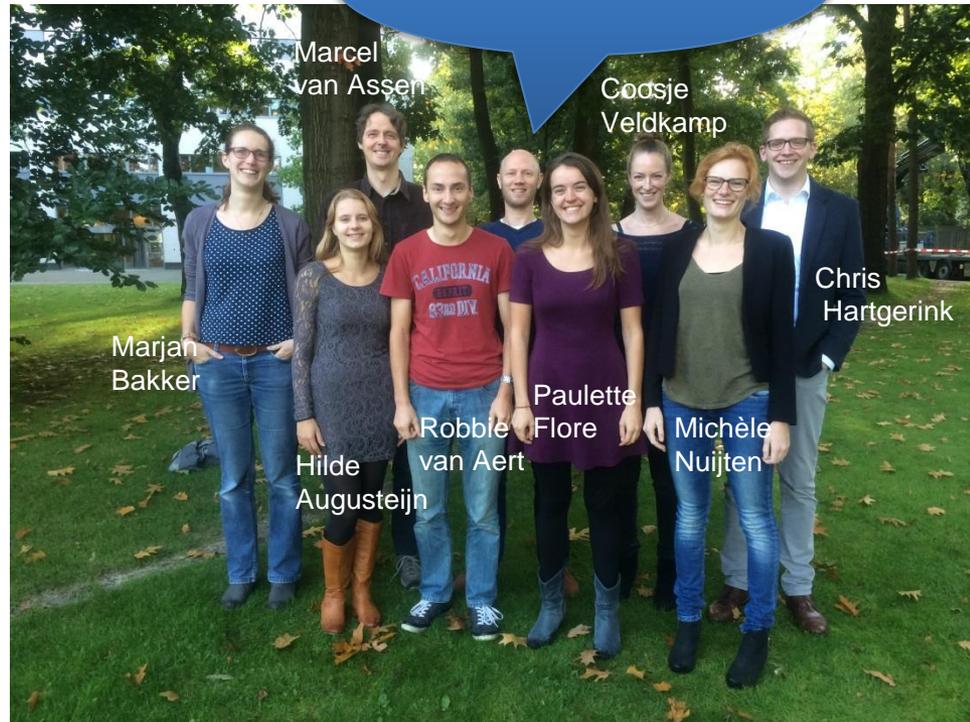


# Conclusions

- QOAM allows various stakeholders to rate the transparency and rigor of (OA) journals
- QOAM subscales are homogeneous (reliable) and show good convergent and predictive validity
- Although many other factors predict quality of peer review of academic journals, QOAM can be used to separate the wheat from the chaff of OA journals

# Metaresearch.nl

Thanks!



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