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Review of The Directory of Open Access Journals

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Review of Directory of Open Access Journals - <http://www.doaj.org>
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One of the concerns with open access scholarship is the ability to be able to identify quality sources from those that are more dubious. The Directory of Open Access Journals was launched in 2003 with the purpose of increasing the visibility of open access scholarly journals, and maintains a list of accepted OA journals on its website. Currently there are over 11,000 journals in the directory from over 300 countries. Beyond providing a clearinghouse for vetted scholarly journals, DOAJ also informs the OA community by providing high quality resources covering the definitions of open access and its many issues. The site has also added to the profession by creating its own best practices to help define what it means to be quality open access material, and by maintaining a transparent process by which it adds and deletes journals from the directory.

For researchers, DOAJ categorizes each journal by subject using the Library of Congress classifications. Keyword search is also available for the over 7,000 journals searchable at the article level. The journal entries provide information on the publisher, country of publisher, language, date added to DOAJ and other relevant information. Article level journals also provide “table of contents” information for individual issues.

To have a journal added to the Directory, publishers must fill out an application, and adhere to guidelines informed by the Open Access Scholarly Publishers Associations “Code of Conduct” <http://oaspa.org/membership/code-of-conduct/> and DOAJ’s own “Principles of Transparency and Best Practice in Scholarly Publishing” <https://doaj.org/bestpractice>. A volunteer staff reviews each application before acceptance, and the site is constantly adding and removing journals based on whether they adhere to these criteria. The sites FAQ also address its position on “predatory” journals, and the process by which you can alert them of questionable journals. The Directory also takes the step to certify journals that “achieve a high level of openness, adhere to Best Practice and high publishing standards” (<https://doaj.org/faq#seal>) by affixing a Seal of Approval so researchers can identify them within the site.

DOAJ’s Best Practices along with other information on the website help inform the appropriate creation of OA journals, and help to maintain a level of acceptable quality that is sometimes lacking in OA. Their Open Access Information page <https://doaj.org/oainfo> provides an overview on open access, and information for publishers and authors interested in producing open access content.

In Short: The DOAJ is an excellent resource for researchers wanting to identify high quality open access resources in their particular disciplines and subject area. It also provides publishers and authors with examples of best practices for the OA publishing model.

Recommendation: Highly recommended

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