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KNOWLEDGE UTILIZATION AND OPEN SCIENCE POLICIES: NOBLE AIMS THAT ENSURE QUALITY RESEARCH OR "ORDERING DISCOVERIES LIKE A PIZZA"?

Abstract

Open Science has been a rising theme in the landscape of science policy in recent years. The goal is to make the knowledge from publicly-funded research findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable (FAIR) for use by other researchers. Knowledge utilization policies aim to efficiently make scientific knowledge beneficial for society at large. This paper demonstrates how Astronomy aspires to be open and transparent given the criteria for high research quality, which aim to push knowledge forward and to communicate the findings clearly. However, the use of quantitative metrics in research evaluation puts pressure on the researcher, making it difficult to take the extra time to publish data and results in a transparent manner, given that astronomers are rewarded based on the quantity of papers published, rather than their quality. This paper explores the current level of openness in Astronomy and the effect of incentives due to funding, publication practices and indicators. The paper concludes with some recommendations on how policies such as making science more "open" have the potential to contribute to scientific quality in Astronomy.