

Two market places for academic journals compared: [QOAM](#) and the [Journal Browser](#).

### **Similarities.**

Both services offer information about price and quality of academic journals, thus aiming to support authors to make well informed decisions of where to submit their article.

### **Differences.**

#### *Quality information*

- A. The default quality indicator of the Journal Browser is Citescore, recently developed by Scopus (owner Elsevier) as a variant of the Journal Impact Factor (Web of Science, owned by Thomson Reuter). Both indicators rely on average journal citation scores, though their outcomes differ strikingly. For example, Citescore gives Elsevier a boost and the Nature Publishing Group (of Elsevier's main competitor SpringerNature) a major setback.  
<http://eigenfactor.org/projects/posts/citescore.php> and <https://www.cwts.nl/blog?article=n-q2y254>.
- B. In QOAM quality information is solely based on academic crowd sourcing. Libraries use Base Score Cards to judge the transparency of a journal's web site with respect to the editorial board, peer review, governance and work flow. Currently, QOAM has 5000 of these cards. Authors are solicited to share their experience with a journal via Valuation Score Cards. Already 3000 did. Based on these two indicators journals are SWOT-categorized: Strong, Weaker, Opportunity (for publishers) and Threat (to authors).

#### *Price information*

- C. The Journal Browser gives the prices resulting from the recent Dutch offsetting deals with classical subscription publishers (a 100% APC discount for corresponding authors of a licensed institute). No APCs are mentioned for OA journals or hybrid journals.
- D. QOAM produces the publication fee an author really paid (last question in the Valuation card) and the price quoted on a publisher's web site (last question in the Base card). Finally, it reflects the discounts effectuated via international offsetting deals, memberships and other licenses.

#### *Other differences*

- E. The Journal Browser comprises all 33.000 current journals (OA, hybrid and subscription). QOAM focusses on 24.000 journals that offer open access publishing.
- F. The Journal Browser is national, QOAM is international.

### **A market place**

An author looking for a journal to publish in will, after a selection for discipline, primarily be interested in the quality of a journal. The Journal Browser offers a citation based index for this. Manipulable as they are, these metrics are controversial. The introduction of Elsevier's Citescore as alternative to the Journal Impact Factor is just the latest example of this. On top of that, most young OA journals do not have such an index anyway. For example, BioMed Central journals - also SpringerNature owned! – lack a Citescore. When it comes to prices, the Journal Browser limits its price information to the (100%) discounts for journals included in the Dutch offsetting deals. These deals have only been settled with the biggest classical publishers.

In short, the Journal Browser is not a level playing field. QOAM is.

28 May 2017.

Leo Waaijers (co-founder of QOAM).