The Evolution of the Publication Process: How OnScientia Is Dismantling Structural Barriers for Researchers



Dr. Mathias Kunze, Editor-in-Chief of OnScientia, on dismantling structural barriers for researchers. License this photo

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Months of waiting for a first decision are common in scholarly publishing. OnScientia's model takes effect before a manuscript even exists.

"The duration and unpredictability of conventional peer review procedures place a considerable burden on researchers, particularly in the early stages of their careers."— Dr. Mathias Kunze

MIAMI, FL, UNITED STATES, October 27, 2026 / EINPresswire.com / -- Lengthy peer review procedures, rejections on formal grounds, and the narrow disciplinary focus of many journals frequently shape the path to scholarly publication. OnScientia – International Journal of Business, Law & Health addresses these systemic obstacles with a publication model that ensures transparency, reliability, and predictability even before a manuscript is written.

The scale of these obstacles is well documented. According to data from the SciRev platform, authors receive an editorial decision based on peer review an average of 13 weeks after first submitting a manuscript. Only 19 percent of authors receive this decision within one month. The situation is particularly severe for rejected manuscripts: their authors learn of the rejection after an average of 16 weeks, four weeks later than authors whose manuscripts are ultimately accepted. Because a manuscript remains exclusively bound to the respective journal for the entire duration of peer review, it cannot be submitted elsewhere. Only after rejection may it be submitted to another journal. Yet even a rejection based solely on editorial screening often takes considerable time. Huisman & Smits examined this in a study published in the journal Scientometrics. According to their findings, one third of all journals take more than two weeks for such a decision, and one sixth take more than four weeks. In their evaluation, the authors of the study identify inefficient editorial processes as a significant factor. Doctoral candidates in publication-based doctoral programs are particularly affected: because their dissertations rest on previously accepted

publications, every delay in peer review directly impedes their progress toward the degree.

Against this background, OnScientia has developed a publication model that supports researchers as early as the conceptual phase through its Topic & Research Pre-Assessment. The Editorial Board evaluates the topic, research approach, methodology, and expected results of a planned research project in advance, free of charge and without obligation, before the manuscript is even written. Researchers thus learn at an early stage whether their research approach and the soundness of their research design meet the journal's requirements. A research project need not be confined to a single area of business, law, or health. While many journals focus exclusively on individual disciplines, OnScientia brings these disciplines together in one scholarly journal. Researchers can therefore submit empirically grounded articles both within a single field and across fields. In addition, mandatory classification according to JEL, JEL-K, and MeSH makes these articles accessible to readers in all three fields. The editorial team verifies these classifications as part of the desk compliance check during submission. This review also covers consistency with the journal's scholarly profile and the formal presentation of the manuscript. Formal deficiencies do not lead to rejection. Instead, authors receive their manuscript back for revision and may then resubmit it to the process. After successful completion of the desk compliance check, the manuscript is reviewed by two independent external reviewers in a double-blind process. The assessment is based on the Author Guidelines, under which the empirical foundations, the methodological approach, the validity of the research findings, and the scholarly contribution are evaluated consistently. To ensure this consistency, all reviewers complete an internal certification program before their official appointment. On the basis of both reviews, the Editor-in-Chief makes the first decision no later than six weeks after submission: acceptance, minor revision, major revision, or rejection of the manuscript. Authors also always receive the reasons for the decision.

"The duration and unpredictability of conventional peer review procedures place a considerable burden on researchers, particularly in the early stages of their careers," said Dr. Mathias Kunze, Editor-in-Chief of OnScientia. "Our aim is therefore to systematically reduce these uncertainties, in particular through the evaluation of research projects before the manuscript is written, through openness to interdisciplinary research, through the correction of formal deficiencies instead of rejection, and through a binding first decision within six weeks. Scholarly quality and predictability are not mutually exclusive; they reinforce each other."

OnScientia's publication model shows how structural obstacles in scholarly publishing can be reduced through early evaluation, interdisciplinary openness, and binding decision timeframes. While the free Pre-Assessment evaluates planned research projects before the manuscript is written, the opportunity to correct formal deficiencies reduces the risk of avoidable rejections. The six-week limit for the first decision provides predictability without restricting peer review. In this way, OnScientia combines preventive quality assurance, standardized review criteria, and reliable timelines. For researchers in publication-based doctoral programs in particular, this can help reduce publication-related delays.

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