What is a preprint?
A scholarly manuscript that is made publicly and permanently available through an online preprint server prior to formal publication in a journal.

Preprint landscape
1,382,140 preprints on arXiv (~10,000 per month)
>23,000 preprints on bioRxiv (~2,000 per month)
2,182,281 preprints indexed in OSF
>50% of bioRxiv preprints are later published in >300 different traditional journals
Benefits to authors

- Rapid communication of results *(a few days v 6-18 months)*
- Pre-publication feedback and discussion
- Establishing the primacy of a scientific discovery
- Increased citations / early citations
- Increased visibility
- Ability to immediately share latest work for grant, hiring and tenure committees

Preprints at PLOS

- *2001:* Welcomed manuscripts with publicly posted preprints
- *2016:* Incoming Direct Transfers from bioRxiv to the PLOS journals
- *2018:* Optional posting of PLOS submissions as preprints on bioRxiv
Preprint research

Have you shared this manuscript publicly?

- Yes
- No

7%
Would you post this manuscript as a preprint on bioRxiv? (PLOS ONE)

- Yes: 69.28%
- No: 30.72%
How do preprints fit within existing journal publishing?

- PLOS Pathogens: 79.5%
- PLOS Computational Biology: 75%
- PLOS NTDs: 73%
- PLOS Genetics: 57%
- PLOS Medicine: 73%
Submission

- **Author-supplied PDF.** Appears on bioRxiv as is, giving authors complete control over presentation. Must be 20MB or less.
  - Streamlines submission process for journals that accept initial submission in PDF
- **PLOS-Generated PDF.** Using an external tool, PLOS can generate a PDF suitable for bioRxiv from the individual submission files.
  - PLOS vendors conduct a light QC to ensure that the PDF renders legibly

Internal checks

- Scope
- Inflammatory/defamatory language
- Pseudo-science
- Plagiarism
- Personally identifying information/images
- Copyright
- Potential risk to public health, the environment or endangered species
- Dual use research of concern
**Preprint posting**

- bioRxiv notifies authors when their preprint is available
- No indication that the preprint originated from a PLOS submission
- Authors can post revised versions directly on the bioRxiv site until the work is published in a journal
- Authors can transfer the manuscript to other publishers in case of rejection through bioRxiv Direct Transfer
- Removal of manuscripts and legal issues handled according to bioRxiv standard practice

**Editorial decision-making**

- Email notification of preprint status
- Preprint status displayed on the "Details" screen in Editorial Manager
- Answers to preprint question are included in Editorial Manager-generated PDF
- Editors encouraged to consider comments and feedback available on the preprint in their decision-making process and to incorporate comments in their feedback to the authors
Community feedback

- Enthusiastic social media chatter
- Expressions of support from others in the OA community
- Positive response to #PowerToThePreprint hashtag
- Among researchers there is curiosity and interest but also a need for more information