

## Message From The Chair: Publication Survey

At the Members' Meeting in National Harbor I was pleased to see the general interest and engagement on publication matters. Last December, in a [message from the chair](#) [1], I informed you about the details of the agreement that we made with Elsevier regarding Icarus and the formation of a Publications Subcommittee. That Subcommittee has assembled a survey that we would like you to take.

Shortly, you will be sent a link from the AAS SurveyMonkey account inviting you to take the survey. I encourage you to take some of your time to respond so that the DPS Committee can get a strong sense of your ideas and desires regarding our strategy for planetary publication matters and how it might evolve in the future.

The Publications Subcommittee has written up a brief overview and background for the survey that you can find below. Look for the survey coming in the next couple of days.

Jason W. Barnes  
DPS Chair

### **History**

Academic Press first published Icarus in 1962. The DPS was formed in 1970, and became affiliated with Icarus in 1975. Since Icarus was published for more than a decade before DPS involvement, the intellectual property that is Icarus originated under Academic Press. Harcourt acquired Academic Press in 1969, which was in turn purchased by Reed Elsevier in 2000; Elsevier now publishes Icarus.

The fact that the DPS does not own the primary journal in which its members publish, review, and edit the content is very different from the DPS's parent organization, the American Astronomical Society, which owns the Astrophysical Journal, the Astronomical Journal, etc. Some similar scholarly societies own and operate journals (e.g. the American Geophysical Union publishes JGR and GRL).

### **Changing Circumstances**

The Division was happily associated with Icarus for many decades, but the Internet has changed perspectives on academic publishing. A part of the process that came under scrutiny was the retention of copyright by the publishing companies. This scrutiny and analysis gave rise to the Open Access movement about a decade ago. Issues about Open Access have been raised in past DPS Members meetings, but no consensus was arrived at.

### **Changes for NASA-Funded Research**

NASA plans to adopt a policy requiring papers and research based on NASA-funded research to be deposited in a publicly accessible NASA online archive within one year of publication.

How does that impact Icarus papers? Well, it depends. If all authors of a paper are civil servants, then Elsevier can't (and doesn't now) claim copyright of the paper, and it can be easily and legally submitted by its authors to this new NASA archive. But if even one author of an Icarus paper is not a civil servant, then the copyright must be transferred to Elsevier, which then owns it and it cannot legally be deposited in NASA's archive. Elsevier's solution is for the author to pay an Open Access fee (currently \$2,750) making the published article Open Access under an author-selected Creative Commons license so that it can now be legally placed in the NASA archive. This is an extra publication cost, but the ROSES-2015 and 2016 documents indicate that Open Access fees, like page charges, may be included in proposals as allowable charges on a grant, so should be requested in future proposal budgets.

### **The Committee Contemplates**

By 2011, the DPS Committee felt that its relationship with Icarus should be re-evaluated, especially

regarding what more the DPS could get out of its connection with Icarus, so discussions were started with Elsevier, which sparked discussion about the more general nature of the relation of the Division to scientific publishing. Soon, knowledge of the Open Access movement and its impact on publishing was more widespread among the Committee and DPS members in general.

Beyond Open Access issues, there are concerns about Elsevier's actions on the global stage that seemed to prioritize Elsevier profits over scholarship. Elsevier desired to control more of the editorial process than they had traditionally done with Icarus. Beyond that, the DPS Committee contemplated how the Division might benefit if it had more ownership and control of our scientific journal.

### **2015 Agreement with Elsevier**

The Committee had much information but it was unclear what course should be taken, so it decided not to make any bold moves. The DPS would stay with Icarus for the time being and sign an agreement with Elsevier effective October 1, 2015. The agreement automatically renews every three years, if neither party objects.

### **The Future**

During the last year, the DPS Committee was concerned about its relationship with Elsevier and seriously considered the implications and possibilities of ending the relationship. But it did not feel that it had a sufficient sense of the membership's concerns to make that decision or navigate between various options in the wake of such a decision.

DPS members have voiced concern about our relationship with Elsevier over the years, but in order for the Committee to chart a way forward, they must feel confident about the sense of the membership at large, and that is why you will be receiving an invitation to take a survey that covers these topics, please respond and let your voice be heard.

## **Footer**

- [Reports](#)
- [Photos](#)
- [History](#)
- [Bylaws](#)
- [Giving](#)

**Source URL:** <https://dps.aas.org/news/message-chair-publication-survey>

### **Links:**

[1] <https://dps.aas.org/news/message-chair-icarus-agreement-reached>