



# Early Career Researcher and Scholarly Communication: Publication Pressure, Open Access and How can Libraries Support?

**Dr Rafael Ball**

Director ETH Library and Collections

02.05.2023, Basel

# Outline

1. Thesis
2. General conditions for young scientists
3. Transformation of the publication system
4. Support by libraries

# 1. Thesis

Strong pressure on young scientists:

- quantitative
- qualitative

Thesis: Libraries are able to relieve the pressure on Early Career Researchers

## 2. General Conditions for young Scientists

- Working conditions
  - fixed-term contracts
  - limited number of academic positions
- Publish or Perish/Least Publishable Unit
  - pressure for high quantity publishing
  - competition for high performance indicators
  - high rejection rates for highly ranked journals
  - journals require spectacular findings

## 2. General Conditions for young Scientists

- High pressure to publish more during doctorate
  - Marketing pressure
    - rise of competition on attention
    - obligation: «publication presence» in social media
    - second- and third publications of a single finding
- *«awareness mentality»*

→ leads to «mass publication»

## 2. General Conditions for young Scientists

number of scientific publications:

6

per minute

8,500

per day

3,000,000

per year



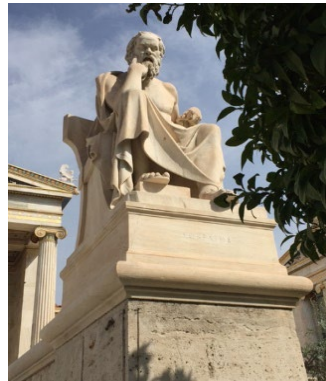
# 3. Transformation of the Publication System: Paradigm Shifts in Scholarly Communication

First paradigm shift:

Oral vs. written  
communication



Plato (428-348 bc)



Aristotle (384-322 bc)

Second paradigm shift:

Gutenberg's  
movable-type  
printing



Third paradigm shift:

From print to  
electronic (working  
and) publishing



# 3. Transformation of the Publication System

- Shift towards gold/platinum OA
    - search for suitable gold/platinum journal
  - Need to acquire funding through
    - research funders
    - the own institution/community
    - third parties as foundations/library
- Formal effort and pressure on top of research efforts

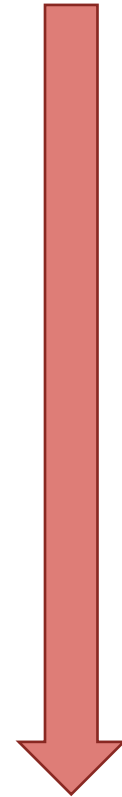


# 4. Support by the Library: CHANCES

- **Advisory structures**
  - support in understanding highly diverse and extensive guidelines of research funders
  - identify funding opportunities
- **Financial support**
  - finance APCs
- **Supply appropriate publications organs**
  - within the library
  - accessible through the library

## 4. Support by the Library: LIMITATIONS

- Finding the “right” access to ECRs
- Content subject limits
- Financial limits
- Political involvement in policy on national/international/university-level
- Library as “extended arm” of funders



Resume



Let's take the challenge!

Thank you for your attention!

Dr Rafael Ball  
Director of ETH Library  
[rafael.ball@library.ethz.ch](mailto:rafael.ball@library.ethz.ch)

ETH Library  
Rämistrasse 101  
8092 Zurich, Switzerland

[www.library.ethz.ch](http://www.library.ethz.ch)