

Science, trust, and preprints

what changes are needed?

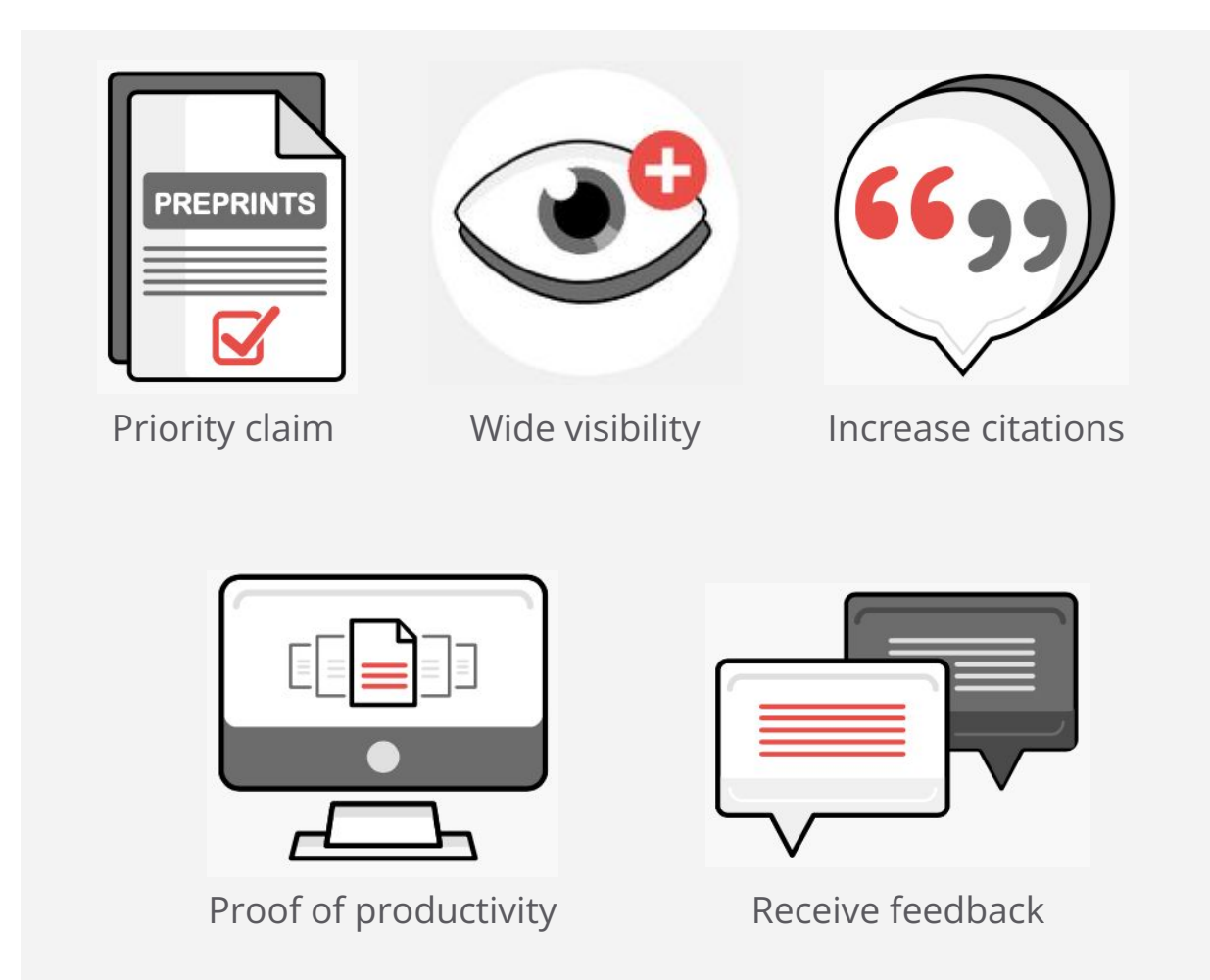
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Preprints adoption in the life sciences increases

Benefits of preprints

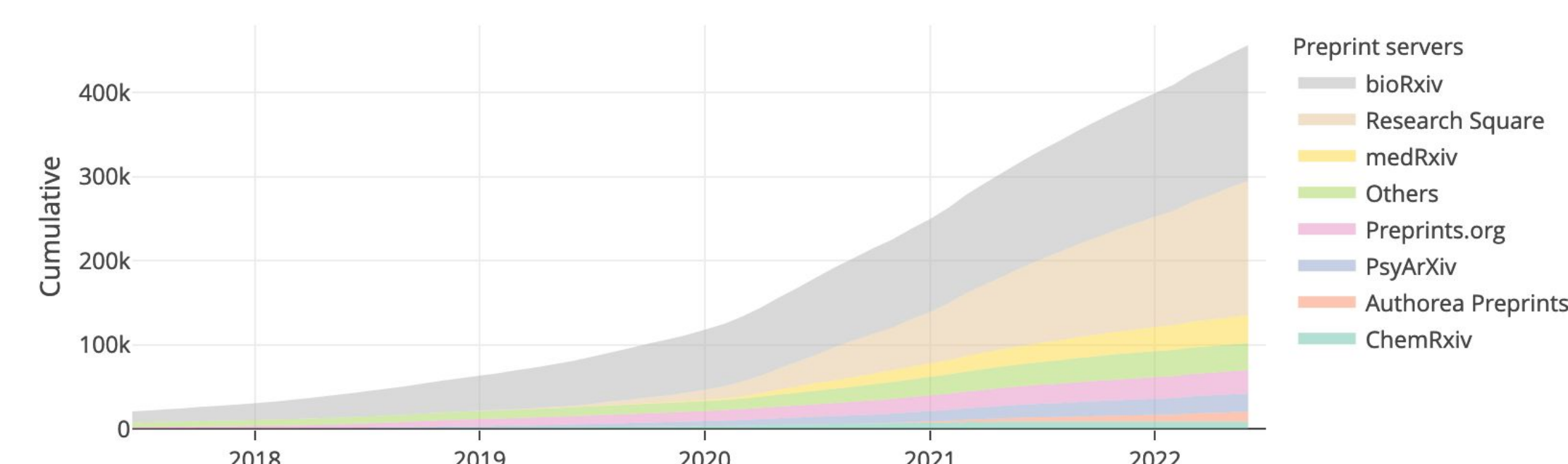
A **preprint** is a scientific manuscript uploaded by the authors to a public preprint server



Adapted from <https://asapbio.org/preprint-info>

Growth of preprints in the life sciences

The uptake of preprints in the life sciences has increased significantly, preprints comprised 9% of new literature loaded to Europe PMC in 2021, up from 2% in 2018



To support preprint adoption, open discovery services, such as Europe PMC, **aggregate preprints** from different platforms and make them searchable alongside peer reviewed journal articles

Europe PMC

- Global, open, free resource for life science articles and preprints
- Partner of PubMed Central USA
- Repository of choice for 37 international funders

475,000 preprints from **24** different platforms discoverable in Europe PMC

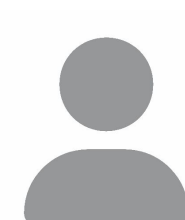


Designing open tools to help build trust in preprints

Changes to preprint records



How do I know which version to cite, what changes have been made, and whether conclusions still stand before I use the data in my own work?



Article status monitor tool

1. Enter preprint IDs to check for updates

PPR531139, 10.1101/2022.03.15.484404, 10.21203/rs.3.rs-37901/v3, PPR511195

<https://europepmc.org/ArticleStatusMonitor>

2. Get a list of preprint updates

1 Published preprint

1 New preprint version

1 Withdrawn preprint

1 Removed preprint

3. Learn more about the preprint update

⚠ This article is a preprint. A journal published article is available.

ⓘ This preprint has been withdrawn by the author(s). [View this record on the preprint server](#) for more information.

Preprint version history ▾

- Version 3 [04 Sep 2020]
- Version 2 [15 Jul 2020]
- Version 1 [26 Jun 2020]

Challenges

Preprint versions

- **Reusing same identifier (DOI) for new preprint versions** – very difficult to record version history
- **Citing incorrect preprint version** – problematic if an older preprint version has been cited and the conclusion or data have changed

Preprints and journal articles

- **Title and authors can change from preprint to publication** – hard to match and link the two
- **Journal articles are rarely linked to preprints** – if an article has been retracted it will not be indicated on the corresponding preprint page

Withdrawals/removals/deletions

- **Currently no way to indicate withdrawals/ removals via centralised service** (Crossref) – difficult to identify withdrawn/ removed preprints
- **The reason for withdrawal/removal is rarely provided** – difficult to know whether original conclusions and data were at fault
- **Cases of preprint deletion** – where the preprint has been cited, citations will lead to a 404 page

Opportunities

Preprint authors

- Familiarise yourself with preprint server policies before preprinting
- When citing a preprint, check for newer versions
- Provide a reason for preprint removal or withdrawal
- Where possible notify the preprint server about the published version

Preprint platforms and tools

- Closer integration of preprints with citation managers – notifications of new versions, withdrawals/removals when citing the record
- Clear policies on preprint removal/withdrawal/deletion for authors

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