

A New Day and a Bright Future

Jeffrey E. Janis, MD, FACS

It took amazing foresight in 2012 to understand how the world could change when the seeds for the idea of spinning off a sister journal to *PRS* were planted. It then took an incredible amount of fortitude (and a ton of collaboration) to launch *PRS Global Open*, plastic surgery's first open access journal, in 2013. Since then, open-access publishing has progressed by leaps and bounds (see Fig. 1), and the world has become more familiar with all of the advantages of publishing in high-quality, open access journals—and the uncertainty prompted by requests from them.

Now, I know we all get a ton of emails out of left field, with requests for us to review, publish, or serve on editorial boards for open access journals—most of which we never knew existed. Because of this, open access has garnered mixed optics at times, largely due to the unscrupulous practices employed by “predatory journals” that exploit open access author fees for profit, and publish papers with little to no peer review.^{1,2} It is safe to say, in no uncertain terms, however, that despite the challenges, legitimate open access is here to stay and truly is the future of medical publishing.³

Although the traditional subscription model paradigm has certain advantages, it is disseminated only to those who have subscriptions—typically through annual dues and organizational membership, or access to institutional libraries that can provide reprints and downloads for free. However, the rest of the world that lacks that membership or access remains unable to benefit from the high-quality, peer-reviewed research generated on a daily basis. This is where open access comes in, providing a truly global reach that is important for several reasons. In plastic surgery, in particular, we tend to work as a multidisciplinary field, oftentimes in collaboration with other specialties. However, those specialists do not have access to our information unless they have a paid

subscription or an institutional affiliation. With *PRS Global Open*, multidisciplinary teams can publish and all disciplines can benefit, thanks to free access. Most importantly, the public also has access to this information; *so the readership is truly the world's population*—not limited only to physicians and surgeons. This is a very powerful megaphone for one's scientific work, and a force multiplier beyond imagination.

Another benefit of open access is that there are faster turnaround times within the publication and production cycle. Historically, it could take up to, or even over, a year between submission and publication in some traditional medical journals. Open access journals can eliminate much of that wait by omitting the print publication times to create, distribute, and ship hard copies. If there is a silver lining or lesson learned from the current COVID-19 pandemic, it is that information moves extremely quickly and there is a premium on high-integrity processes by which scientific publications can undergo the scrutiny of peer review and ultimately get in the hands of the reader.^{4,5} Under traditional subscription model averages, most publications would be out-of-date, if not irrelevant, by the time they made it to readers' hands. *PRS Global Open* averages approximately 35 days from acceptance to publication. No wonder, then, that it has experienced 40% growth in submissions year over year (most of them directly to *PRS Global Open*) and continually proves itself an invaluable benefit to the specialty. This prime asset helps build the collective knowledge on which we act as clinicians, putting best practices into the hands of our doctors and subsequently impacting delivery of best care to our patients.

As I take the reins as the Editor-in-Chief of *PRS Global Open*, I want to first acknowledge the shoulders on which we all stand, and wholeheartedly thank Rod Rohrich, MD, James Stuzin, MD, the amazing editorial board of *PRS Global Open*, and every one of the incredibly hard-working editorial staff under the direction of Aaron Weinstein, Senior Managing Editor. Acknowledgement is also due to the past and current leadership of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons, who have all been invaluable leaders for our specialty, and who put their faith in me as the next Editor-in-Chief to build upon the strong foundation established by my predecessors.

From the Department of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center, Columbus, Ohio.

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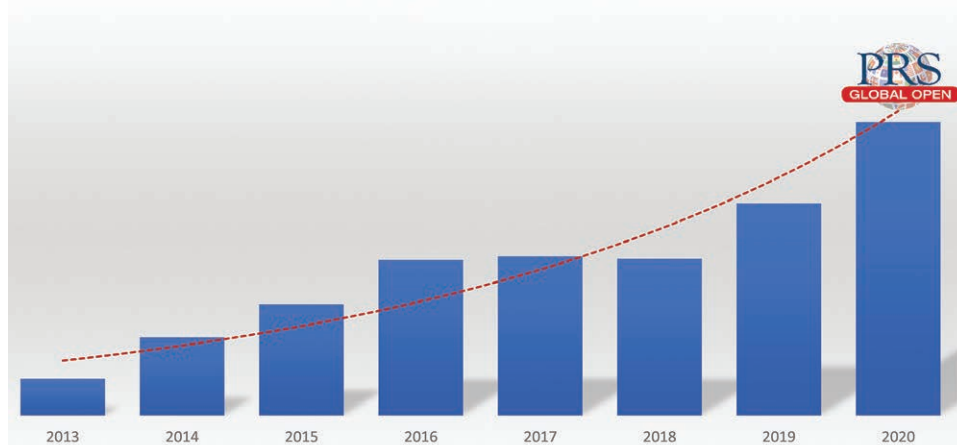


Fig. 1. Growth trends in the published content of *PRs Global Open* from 2013 to 2020. In 2020, *PRs Global Open* published 275% more studies than in its first full year of publication (2014).

In short, my pledge and mission is to bring this journal to the next level. We have assembled a truly all-star cast, with 2 officially appointed co-editors, Albert Losken, MD, from Emory University in Atlanta, Ga., and Amanda Gosman, MD., from the University of California San Diego, Calif. We will design a more robust editorial infrastructure to ensure that we provide lightning-fast turnarounds while maintaining the integrity of the peer-review process at all levels. We will prioritize articles that have clinical impact and improve patient safety—especially those that have video associated with them, as that is increasingly how people learn. It's not just the description of technique, but the demonstration of technique, that will help crystallize and solidify understanding. We will promote increased podcasts through Damian Marucci, MD and others, to help disseminate this information and continue to expand the social footprint of our journal.

You will see many changes in the future—whether that is as an author, reviewer, editor, or reader—but it will be clear, positive, and palpable. On behalf of the entire team, we look forward to serving the world as a true ambassador of plastic surgery. We have a bright future ahead of us!

Jeffrey E. Janis, MD, FACS

Department of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery
Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center
915 Olentangy River Road, Suite 2100
Columbus, OH 43212

E-mail: jeffrey.janis@osumc.edu

Twitter: @jjanismd

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