5 questions and answers about ORCID iD: Distinguishing yourself as a researcher

Richard Bradly Harris and John Zepernick, MS

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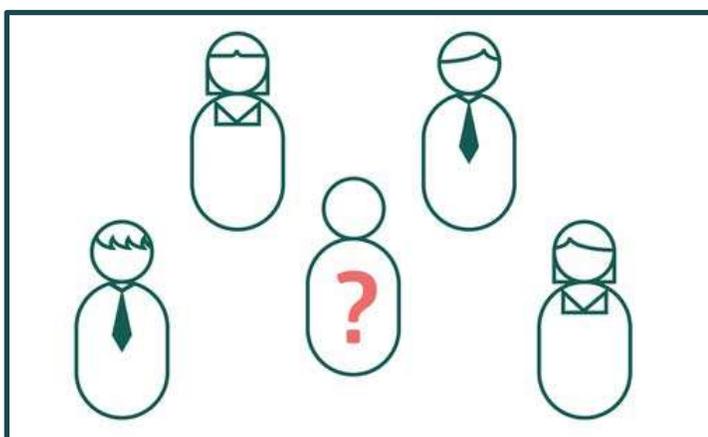
As researchers, we work toward various goals, such as improving patient care, curing diseases, advancing technology, exploring nature, and developing theories and ideas to make sense of our world. In these efforts, it is important that researchers receive recognition for their work and control their professional information.

However, controlling your identity and information is not always easy. Perhaps you have a common name, your name has changed after marriage, or your name is displayed differently across various publications, websites, and other systems.

The ORCID (Open Researcher and Contributor) iD has been developed as a solution to these problems. Similar to how DOI (digital object identifier) provides a unique, persistent identifier for publications, ORCID iD does the same for researchers. Your ORCID iD makes it easy to let people know who you are.

In this article, we answer 5 common questions about ORCID iD and how it can help you in your research.

1. What is an ORCID iD?

An ORCID iD is a unique, persistent identifier that makes it easier to link your identity and publications, ensuring that you are credited properly for your work (including **peer reviews you complete**). Over the last decade, adoption of ORCID by

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publishers, funding organizations, and research organizations has become more widespread. Chances are, if you are looking to publish, your target journal will allow you to associate your ORCID iD with your manuscript — if it doesn't outright require you to do so.

After you've created an ORCID iD, your profile will function as a catalogue of all of your publications, professional biography, professional network and social links, and more. For an example of how your ORCID profile might represent you, see **https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1825-0097**.

2. Why sign up for an ORCID iD?

- **An ORCID iD is free and easy to sign up for.** You can create your own iD in just a few minutes on the **ORCID website**.

- **ORCID is becoming more widely adopted and supported.** ORCID is **supported** by over 1100 publishers, funders, and other organizations invested in the research industry across the globe, and has over time become accepted and established within the academic community.

- **An ORCID iD is increasingly becoming required for publication.** Many journals and publishers require or at least recommend authors to provide an ORCID iD at submission. This is a good thing — as more and more publishers enable authors to link their ORCID iD to their work, it becomes that much easier for authors to associate their professional output with their professional identity.

- **Your ORCID profile can show a range of professional activities, not just your published works.** Your ORCID profile can highlight your wider efforts and contributions to the research community in relation to **peer review activities** and **membership and volunteer activities** (e.g., as a member of an editorial board or committee, or as conference organizer or panel leader).

- **Your ORCID iD can distinguish you and your work from that of other researchers with the same name.** As pointed out in a recent *Nature* article by **Sheherazade and Ardiantiono**, ORCID codes can be especially helpful for researchers in certain cultures who use one name, not a first and last name, to ensure their work is clearly credited to them.
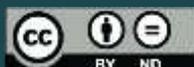
3. What organizations require an ORCID iD?

Many journals request that authors provide their ORCID iD on manuscript files or within the online submission system. In recent years, however, the number of journals that outright require an ORCID iD has increased. Often journals and publishers require an ORCID iD for only the corresponding author, but some, such as JMIR Publications and *ScienceOpen,* require an ORCID iD for all named authors.

Today, over 7,000 journals are already collecting ORCID iDs from corresponding authors, up from over 1,500 in 2017. And this number is only going to increase. At the end of 2015, the ORCID website published an open letter where publishers can pledge their commitment to requiring ORCID iDs for authors. Within a year, 25 publishers and scholarly associations had signed this letter, 16 of whom had already implemented this requirement by the end of 2016. Now, over 90 publishers and journals have signed, including some of the largest in the industry, such as PLOS, Springer Nature, Wiley, and SAGE Publications. This list is being updated all the time (with new signatories as recently as August 5, 2020). You can view the full list of signatories **here**.

Publishers aren't the only organizations that have started to implement ORCID. In fact, many funders now recommend or require the use of ORCID iDs in their grant application systems. A list of funders that have issued a policy or statement related to ORCID requirements can be found on the **ORCID website**.

There is strong support for the adoption of ORCID iDs by publishers and other professional societies within the academic community. A **2015 survey** reported as high as 72% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that ORCID requirements would be beneficial for the research community (compared with 21% neutral responses and only 7% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing).

4. How do I get an ORCID iD?

Simply follow this **link** and complete the form there. Remember the username and password that you set because you will need them to manage your ORCID profile (e.g., to update your information or to manage your visibility settings), and also to link your ORCID iD within some online submission systems.

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5. How do I associate my ORCID iD with my work?

You'll most often associate your iD with your manuscript during the submission process. For example, ScholarOne, a popular online submission platform used by many journals, requires authors to actually log into ORCID from within the system itself, securely linking their ORCID iD with their ScholarOne account.

Some journals will request that authors also list ORCID iDs on the title page of the manuscript file. For example, the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA), Seventh Edition* requests that authors list ORCID iDs in a footnote on the title page, including the iD symbol followed by a hyperlink to the ORCID record.

The **ORCID site itself** strongly encourages the use of the iD symbol and provides guidelines for displaying it on the manuscript. There are three ways to do this.

- The iD icon followed by the full iD URL formatted as a hyperlink (as used in APA style):
  Josiah Carberry ⓘ **https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1825-0097**

- The iD icon alone, formatted as a hyperlink to the iD URL:
  Josiah Carberry ⓘ

- At the very least, ORCID guidelines recommend including the full iD URL on the title page, formatted as a hyperlink:
  Josiah Carberry **https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1825-0097**

While many journals will allow you to add ORCID iDs to your manuscript at any time during revision or even at acceptance, be aware that some journals allow them only at initial submission. For example, the **Instructions for Authors of *PNAS*** state the following (emphasis ours):

"***Author Affiliation:*** Include department, institution, and complete address, with the ZIP/postal code, for each author. Use superscripts to match authors with institutions. Multiple affiliations are allowed. Authors are strongly encouraged to supply their ORCID. **For proper authentication, authors must provide their ORCIDs at submission and are not permitted to add ORCIDs on proofs.**"

Concluding remarks

ORCID iD has grown from 50,000 users in 2012 to more than **9.7 million today**, and it is becoming an essential part of the research and scholarly publication. We hope

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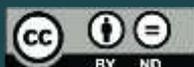
that the information in this article will be helpful, especially for researchers who are new to ORCID iD.

If you have any questions about ORCID or any other part of the research and publication process, **we are here to help**.

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