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STM Solutions builds collaboration platform to safeguard research integrity

STM Solutions, the operational arm of STM (The International Association of Scientific, Technical and Medical Publishers) today announced that it has started the development of a powerful new platform to detect integrity issues in manuscripts submitted for publication to scholarly journals.

“This collaboration hub will provide a cloud-based environment for publishers to check submitted articles for research integrity issues. In this environment publishers can collaborate with other parties to develop and operate screening tools for the benefit of the entire scholarly ecosystem”, explained Joris van Rossum, the newly appointed Product Director for this initiative.

The platform will significantly improve publishers’ capabilities to detect and remedy research integrity issues before publication, empowering the STM publishing industry to advance high-quality, trusted research.

Recent years have seen a significant increase in research integrity issues. A striking example are so-called ‘paper mills’, fraudulent organizations that produce counterfeit manuscripts submitted to academic journals. Increasingly advanced technologies are used in the process to fabricate, plagiarize, and manipulate text, images, and research data. This is placing a large burden on publishers, editors, and reviewers, who call for reliable, state-of-the-art technology solutions to detect misconduct like this and support the editorial decision-making process.

The collaboration platform will be built on an architecture that ensures that publishers maintain full control over the content, safeguarding privacy and confidentiality. Critically, by working with content from multiple publishers, the system will be able to detect issues that transcend single submissions, journals, or publishers.

The platform will be developed in collaboration between publishers and STM Solutions. STM Solutions was established earlier in 2021 to develop and manage forward thinking shared infrastructures and collaborative services to support the scholarly communications community.

Chris Graf, Director of Research Integrity of Springer Nature, who will be chairing the governance board overseeing the development of the platform, commented: “Research integrity is important not just to combat fraud, but also to help support researchers make sure their work is reliable, precise and reproducible. This is an important initiative supporting both authors and publishers

as we work together to ensure the scientific record can be trusted. Springer Nature looks forward to participating”

Antonia Seymour, CEO of IOPP commented: “Like all publishers, IOPP is increasingly confronted with research integrity issues, like duplicate submissions and the manipulation of images and data. Tackling these issues takes time, effort, and expertise. We are excited about this initiative, as it allows publishers of all shapes and sizes to address these issues in a collaborative way.”

Hylke Koers, CIO of STM Solutions, said: “Tackling systematic manipulation of the publication process falls perfectly into the mission of STM Solutions, which is to develop shared solutions and infrastructure for the STM publishing industry for the benefit of the wider research community”. Philip Carpenter, STM’s Interim CEO added: “This new initiative to safeguard ethics, quality and integrity is at the heart of STM’s renewed mission of advancing trusted research.”

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About STM

STM is the leading trade association for academic and professional publishers worldwide. At STM we support our members in their mission to advance global research. We have over 140 members based in over 20 countries around the world who collectively publish 66% of all journal articles and tens of thousands of monographs and reference works. As academic and professional publishers, learned societies, university presses, start-ups and established players we work together to serve society by developing standards and technology to ensure research is of high quality, trustworthy and easy to access.

About STM Solutions

STM Solutions leads on the development and operation of forward-thinking shared infrastructure and collaborative services to support STM members and the wider scholarly communications community. STM Solutions is a wholly owned subsidiary of STM and is accountable to the STM Board.