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EVENT REPORT

Scholarly Engagements During the 7th Annual Conference of the ACSE 2021

Muhammad Sarwar, Secretary/Treasurer, Asian Council of Science Editors, Dubai, UAE

On 21st August 2021, the Asian Council of Science Editors (ACSE) hosted its 7th Annual Conference virtually, which was spotted as a remarkable success. Like every year the organizing committee has chosen a burning theme focusing on the current status and future challenges to Asian Publishing Industry (API) which was “**Pandemic Driven Scholarly Publishing: Ways to Ensure Future Resilience and Sustainability**.” The conference sought to demonstrate the shifting landscape of scholarly publishing especially in Asia and exploring the best possible ways to survive and sustain the legitimacy of Asian publications.

This year the conference agenda was planned strategically having diversified industry & academic experts as speakers to highlight the issues, raising challenges, and possible ways to cope up with these obstacles during the pandemic. In numbers, there were (18) Speakers, (8) Moderators, (4) Panel Experts, and 170+ participants from China, Korea, Japan, Thailand, London, California, United Kingdom, Greece, Turkey, Egypt, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Nigeria, Pakistan, India, Iran, Australia, Malaysia, Argentina, Indonesia, and Turkey.

The conference was sponsored by **Platinum Sponsors** (Science Alert, Asian Network for Scientific Information & Trend MD), **Gold Sponsors** (Science International, Asian Digital Library, ASCI Database), and **Silver Sponsors** (SciONE, LiveDNA & Journal's Pedia). Also, the event gained exceptional support and contribution from its collaborators from Industry and academia including; AIPI, AASSA, RCCIIT, NCT, ICP | UOK, FUI, IINAMEI, J4R, ISMPP, AMWA, and EMWA.

Proceedings:

The conference day kicked off with a welcome address by Prof. Dr. Gazi Mahabubul Alam, Chief Advisor of the

ACSE, who declared the conference officially open, which was followed by four sessions of speakers as described below:

Session I:

Moderated by Prof. Dr. Rubina Hanif, Director, NIP, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, Pakistan; the session included four industry experts as shown below who delivered informative talks regarding various aspects of scholarly communication, publication and editorial evaluation during pandemic. The experts also shared their valuable experiences which were highly appreciated and enjoyed by the conference participants.

1. *Editorial Evaluation & Peer Review: Questionable Practices During Pandemics*
Prof. Dr. Kaiser Jamil
Vice-President of the ACSE
2. *Pandemic Preparedness: Scholarly Communications and Countermeasures*
Prof. Dr. Zabta Khan Shinwari
Director, The ACSE
3. *Publishing Innovation: How Do International Publishers Use New Marketing Tools for Journal Development*
Charley Miao
Regional Director, The ACSE & TrendMD
4. *Pros and Cons: Scholarly Communications and Social Media's Engagement during Pandemic*
Prof. Dr. Gazi Mahabubul Alam
Professor of Education Policy and Economics
University Putra Malaysia, Malaysia

Session II:

Moderated by Prof. Dr. Zabta Khan Shinwari and Prof. Dr. Kaiser Jamil, the session comprised of four publishing

experts who shared new technical tools to facilitate the publishing community as shown below:

1. *Way Out to Promote a Journal in Post-Pandemic*
Haibao Xue
Director of Business Development, Asia Pacific, Compuscript
2. *Research in Social Sciences: COVID to Post-COVID Transformation*
Prof. Dr. Rubina Hanif
Director, NIP, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad
3. *TrendMD: Boosting Readership & Citation of Scholarly Publications*
Ms. Tash Brown
COO, TrendMD, USA
4. *COVID-19 Pandemic and Adaptive Publishing Patterns in Indonesia*
Dr. Finarya Legoh
Head of International Relation & Funding, Indonesian Academy of Sciences (APII)

Session III

Moderated by Prof. Dr. Muhammad Aslam and Prof. Dr. Mona M. El-Husseiny, the session concluded 5 academic experts, sharing their side of stories and opinions in facilitating the pandemic-driven scholarly publishing. The details of the session were:

1. *Preserving Research Quality: What needs to be changed in Technical Journals?*
Dr. B. Nageswara Rao
Professor, Koneru Lakshmaiah Education Foundation, India
2. *Research Publications during a Pandemic: Making Scholarly Journals more Reliable Sources of Information for Non-Science Audiences*
Prof. Mohammed Aliyu Paiko
Editor, Science Alert
3. *Pandemic Driven Plagiarism and Predatory Journal cases: What needs to be done?*
Dr. Ch. M. Junaid Nazar
Head of Nephrology Section, World Academy of Medical Science
4. *Challenges and Opportunities for Open Access Publishing during Pandemic in India*
Dr. Jani Dilip Batukray
Associate Professor, Government Engineering College Dahod, Gujarat, India

5. *Scholarly Publishing in the Pandemic Era and the Emergence of Artificial Intelligence- Assisted Tools*

Habeeb Ibrahim Abdul Razack

Research Scholar, Faculty of Medicine & Health Sciences, Universiti Putra, Malaysia

Session IV

Moderated by Charley Miao and Pippa Smart, this session gained the majority of the editor's attention as the session speakers shared solutions, industry tools, and techniques to cope up with the rising real-time challenges for the daily routine of editors and publishers. The session details were:

1. *Sustainable Academic Goals: Reducing Dependencies to Commercial Publishing*
Dr. Dasapta Erwin Irawan
Institut Teknologi Bandung, Indonesia
2. *Pre-Submission Peer Review: Enhancing the Efficacy of Journal's Reviewing Process*
Dr. Sam T. Mathew
Researcher & Medical Communications Expert, India
3. *JATS and JATS4R: Its Importance in Publishing Workflows and the Dissemination of Information in the Scholarly Ecosystem*
Melissa Harrison
Chair, Steering Committee, JATS4R
4. *Supporting Sustainability in Editorial Work through the EASE Environmental Manifesto*
Prof. Dr. Joan Marsh
MA Ph.D. Deputy Editor, The Lancet Psychiatry
5. *Preprints and Peer Review: Recommendations to Protect Public Trust in Medical Science*
Dikran Toroser
Director, Publications Group Lead, Takeda | ISMPP, AMWA, and EMWA

On completion of interesting talks by industry experts and academic professionals, the conference moved forward with an exciting yet informative panel discussion entitled "Distraction, Modernism, and Creativity: Ways to Generate and Implement new Thoughts in Scholarly Publishing". The panelists of the discussion were top industry experts including **Charley Miao** (Regional Director, The ACSE & Trend MD), **Prof. Dr. Gazi Mahabubul Alam** (Chief Advisor, the ACSE), **Pippa Smart** (Research Communication and Publishing Consultant PSP Consulting, Oxford, UK) and

Muhammad Sarwar (Secretary & Treasurer, The ACSE). The panelists have a scholarly engagement with the participants while discussing the modes of distraction, how to adapt modernism, and what creative ways have been introduced lately to facilitate, support & sustain scholarly publishing.

After this engaging panel discussion the conference day moves forward with the closing remarks and recommendations by Prof. Dr. Gazi M. Alam with a thank you note to all of the sponsors and collaborators of the 7th ACSE Annual Conference. Dr. Alam also highlighted the

interesting industry initiatives inclusive of but not limited to; Boosting Readership by Trend MD, Pre-Submission peer review strategies by Dr. Sam. Mathew, JATS & JATS4R in publishing workflows, EASE environmental manifesto, and Joint Position Statement by AMWA, EMWA, and ISMPP to ensure and retain trust in publications.

The conference officially declared closed with greetings among speakers, moderators, and conference participants followed by group photos.