

News

viXra.org Has Reached 1000 Papers in May 2010

Philip E. Gibbs*

Abstract

In May 2010, viXra.org has reached 1000 papers. It is encouraging to see that a large number of submissions to viXra.org are now marked with comments indicating that they are submitted to or even published in peer-reviewed journals. Indeed the quality of many of the papers has surprised even us. There will always be those who look for the worst paper they can find then hold it up as an indication of how poor viXra.org is. Clearly they are missing the point. In other news, If you need some money to help you carry out your research on fundamental science questions you may be able to apply for a grant. The FQXi is currently [inviting proposals](#) for grants on the "Nature of Time". Initial proposal are required by June 14th 2010.

Key Words: viXra.org, 1000 papers, FQXi, grant opportunity.

May 15, 2010: [1000 Papers on viXra.org](#)

It is less than a year since we launched viXra.org yet today we passed a major milestone when we uploaded the 1000th submission. When we started I had no idea that it would prove so popular, but now I can see that we have just scratched the surface. I now believe there are many more scientists who could be taking advantage of our e-print archive and I hope more of them will start to use it over the next year.

The reaction to viXra.org from the scientific community has been mixed. Those of us who are unable to use arXiv.org have of course welcomed it, but even some who submit regularly to arXiv.org have been submitting to viXra.org as well as a sign of support. On the other hand, some scientists regard viXra.org as a sinbed of crackpottery and send e-mails to those who use it warning them that it could harm their scientific career!

It is encouraging to see that a large number of submissions to viXra.org are now marked with comments indicating that they are submitted to or even published in peer-reviewed journals. Indeed the quality of many of the papers has surprised even us. There will always be those who look for the worst paper they can find then hold it up as an indication of how poor viXra.org is. Clearly they are missing the point.

We have always acknowledged that our open submission policy means that we gather some work of dubious quality. However, we also recognise that our judgement can be wrong. The series of posts here under the heading "[crackpots who were right](#)" is a warning to us all that radical research is often rejected by the scientific community for many years before it is accepted. The 9 cases described so far are just the tip of the iceberg. These are the scientists whose work eventually led to a paradigm shift in their discipline and in several cases the work was recognised with a Nobel Prize,

* Correspondence: Philip E. Gibbs, Ph.D., Independent Researcher, UK. E-Mail: phil@royalgenes.com

though not always for the scientists who made the initial breakthrough. For every scientists who makes such a major advance in science there are many others who take smaller steps. Undoubtedly there must be many other independent scientists whose work was so completely rejected and ignored that it never garnered any recognition and has long been forgotten. Science suffers through such neglect and that is why we think viXra.org is so important.

Let's not forget the work of James Lovelock who discovered the buildup of CFC gasses in the atmosphere while working as an independent scientist. Were it not for his research that was not sponsored by any outside agency, we might not have been able to act fast enough to prevent the destruction of the ozone layer and the ensuing catastrophe that would have brought. Today the chance of such a discovery being ignored is greater than ever. Scientists who work in academic institutions are quicker to reject anything from outsiders. The new ease of communication brought about by the internet means that they are exposed to much more research from all sources. To keep down their workload very few will take the trouble to read anything sent by an outsider. The major journals are obsessed with their impact factor metric and will reject work merely because they think it is not likely to get many citations. It is ironic that in the era of the world-wide wide it is more difficult than ever to gain recognition for scientific research and easier to be ignored and forgotten.

When arXiv.org started in the 90's it was possible for anyone to submit papers. Any "inappropriate" submissions were filtered out by hand. As the volume of submissions increased this process became impractical. the solution should have been to stop filtering altogether and use other systems such as public rating to help readers select the papers they are prepared to read. Instead they introduced a system of endorsement that means submission to arXiv.org now depends on who you know rather than what you write. In theory and authorised endorser should be ready to endorse good work from an outsider, but in practice the effort required for them to evaluate anything from people they don't know (coupled to the threats from arXiv administrators in case they get it wrong) means that almost all work from independent scientists is rejected.

The frustrating part is that many people who could make use of viXra.org still wont. They fear that their work will be seen as a reject from arXiv.org and will not have the credibility it deserves. In fact the worse fate is to submit successfully to arXiv.org and have it sent to the graveyard categories "general physics" or "general mathematics". That is a definitive insult that is intended to remove it from the view of serious scientists. But, neither arXiv.org nor viXra.org are peer-reviewed journals so there is no need for anyone to consider work in either as rejected. The only bad thing that can happen is that a paper is not archived anywhere.

Most papers these days are read either when someone else refers to them, or when someone finds them through a keyword search on Google or another internet search engine. The papers on viXra.org are just as well indexed by Google as those from arXiv.org and we see many paper downloads as a result of such searches. Nevertheless it is disappointing that some specialised search engines do not yet recognise our archive. Google Scholar only include papers from viXra.org if they have been cited or are related to some other paper from another source. SPIRES will apparently include links to papers from viXra.org if the author requests it. Others such as CiteSeer simply will not include us at all. I wonder how many papers viXra.org will have archived before we see a change of attitude.

April 8, 2010: [Open Grants for Research](#)

If you need some money to help you carry out your research on fundamental science questions you may be able to apply for a grant. The FQXi is currently [inviting proposals](#) for grants on the "Nature of Time". This was also the subject of their first essay contest in 2008 and it is curious that they have gone for such a narrow area for their large grants program. Initial proposal are required by June 14th 2010.

They have \$2 million to give out but it is not clear where the money comes from. Previous FQXi grants were funded by the John Templeton Foundation. If the "Nature of Time" does not fit your research program you could apply directly to the JTF for a grant under one of their [active funding priorities](#). These include "Quantum Physics and the nature of Reality", "Foundational Questions in the Mathematical Sciences", "Culture, Biology and Human Uniqueness", etc. For these you have to hurry because they want proposals by April 15th.

The catch with any of these grants is that you need to be backed by an institution to be taken seriously, but it could be worth applying even if you are not affiliated to anything. In the past a few independent researchers such as [Garrett Lisi](#) have been successful.