

A researcher's story

Using the AuthorAID community to set up a journal

Govinda Bhandari, 2014



Govinda Bhandari is the Chief Editor of the International Journal of Environment (IJE). IJE is an open access journal that provides rapid publication of articles in all areas of the environment. Govinda is based in Nepal and has experience working on national and international research projects focusing on environment, natural history and culture.

I discovered AuthorAID in 2013 through a general internet search for research networks. As a founding member of the Environment Professionals' Training and Research Institute in Nepal, I work daily with a great number of national and international environmental experts. When we set up the institute, I was responsible for conducting research and communicating it internationally. As part of this, I started to join various online academic networks and platforms from where I could correct my research work and publish it.

Through the AuthorAID discussion group and news feeds, I received ideas and academic information from people around the world. This got me thinking about how I could make the best use of my experience as an author, reviewer and editorial member. One day, I saw a post on the discussion group from an AuthorAID member who was interested in starting a journal. Reading the replies (which were very supportive with advice and suggestions) inspired me to develop my own concept for a journal - the International Journal of Environment (IJE).

"I have had the opportunity to review a good number of papers for the International Journal of Environment (IJE). I openly praise the initiatives of our Chief Editor and the IJE team for the magnificent work they are doing."

Mehraz Boolaky
Professor of Management and Marketing, Mauritius

I reached out to the AuthorAID community with this idea and received some very positive responses. Knowing that there is an interest is important, however, actually producing and publishing a journal is another matter entirely. When Sioux Cumming, INASP's Programme Manager for Journals Online, replied to my post, she introduced me to Nepal Journals Online (NepJOL). NepJOL is a service to provide access to,

and improve the visibility of, research published in Nepal. It is an online publishing platform for Nepalese journals covering the full range of academic disciplines.

After being introduced to NepJOL, I started to see the benefits of the system and publishing online. I continued to get emails from AuthorAID members enquiring about the progress of the journal. This kept me busy and I spent my time promoting the journal through various emailing lists and discussion groups. As a result, IJE became relatively well-known in a short space of time and received a good number of submissions for the first issue.



Less than six months after posting the idea on the AuthorAID discussion group, the first issue was published with six papers. This number increased four-fold in the second issue with 24 papers being published. A third volume was published in early 2014, less than a year after I first had the idea. This issue included 18 papers with a strong ratio of international to local authors. IJE has received papers from 12 different countries and the large, international editorial board includes members from 24 different countries, including Nepal. The 48 articles that have appeared in IJE have received 4,357 views (as of March 2014) with the average number of views standing at 91.

The International Journal of Environment (IJE) is published by Progressive Sustainable Developers Nepal (PSD-Nepal). It is now indexed in Ulrich, Research Bible, J-Gate and Journal TOCs. Since the publication of the third issue, the editorial board has continued to expand and submissions have increased even further. This growth has helped to ensure that the journal quality remains high - it is a testament to the strong and supportive AuthorAID community of researchers.

AuthorAID is global network that provides support, mentoring, resources, and training for researchers in developing countries. www.authoraid.info

