OJS Community Priorities Survey Report

PKP Technical Committee

Background:

The [Public Knowledge Project (PKP) Technical Committee](#) invited members of the OJS community to participate in a survey to help us identify and prioritize community development requests from OJS journal editors and managers. The survey asked participants first to score general categories of improvements, and then to evaluate specific features only within the three categories they ranked as most important.

The survey was available on the PKP Surveys LimeSurvey service from 9 February 2021 until 24 March 2021, and we solicited participation through the PKP news blog and social media channels, the PKP Forum, and across a wide range of listservs and networks.
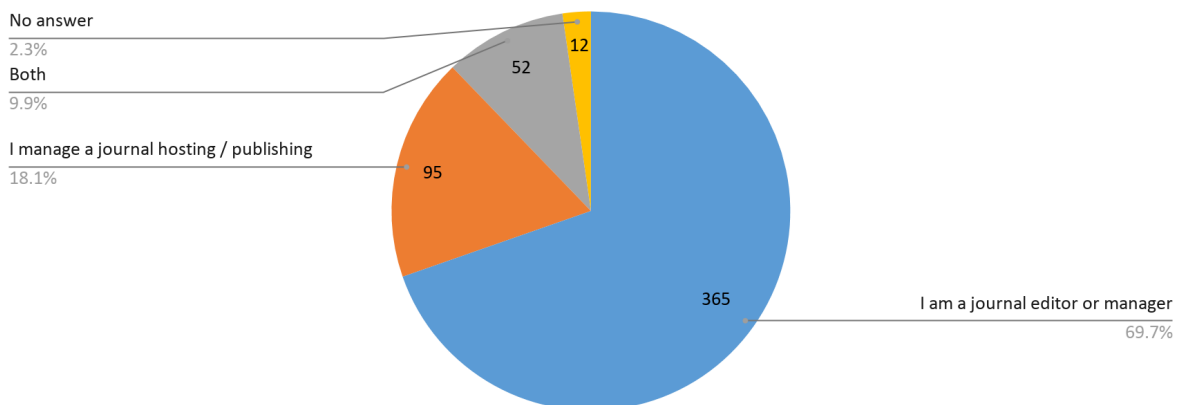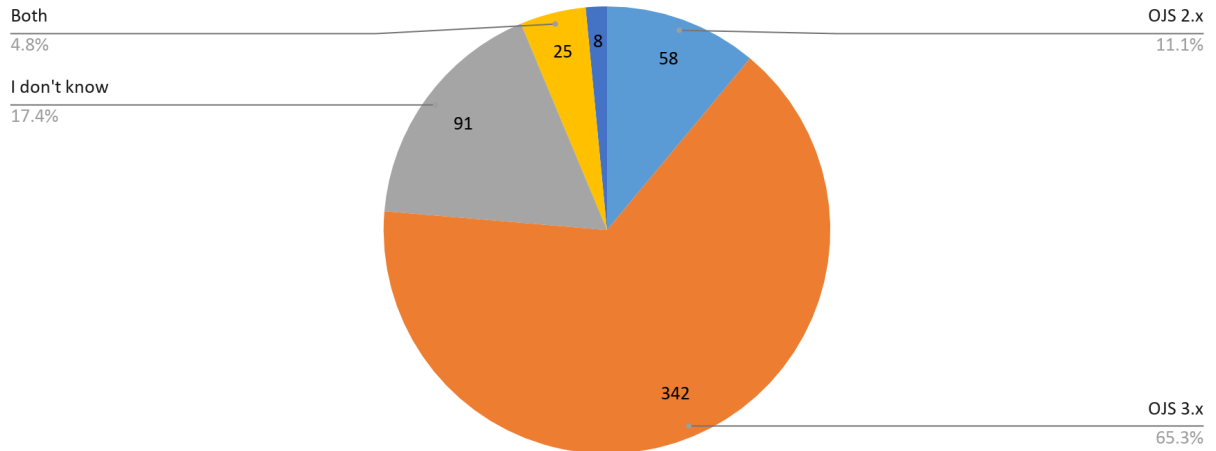
524 respondents completed the survey.

Results

About the respondents

Most of our respondents are journal editors or managers, who are using OJS 3.X. More than half of them have been using OJS for less than 5 years.
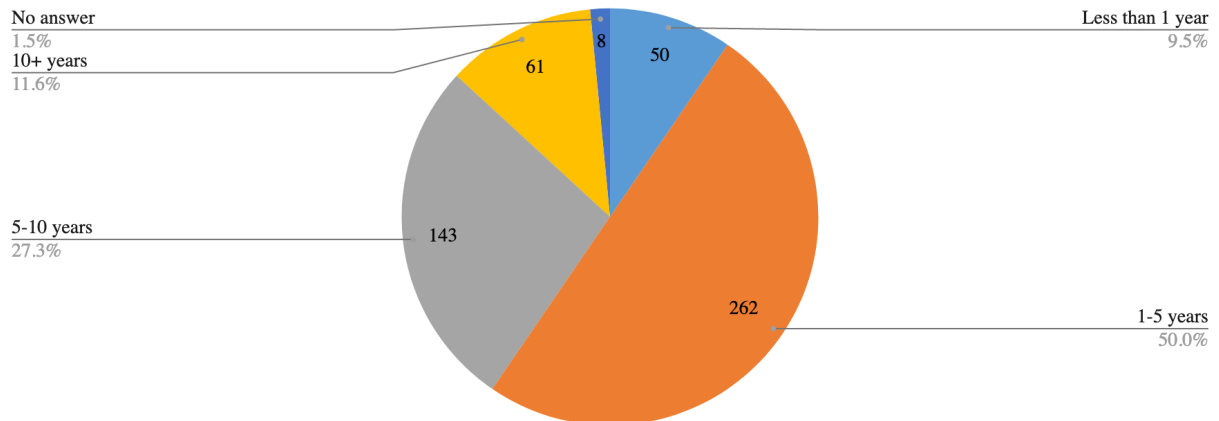
How would you describe your work with OJS?

- No answer — 2.3%
- Both — 9.9%
- I manage a journal hosting / publishing — 18.1% (95)
- I am a journal editor or manager — 69.7% (365)
- (52)
- (12)

Which version of OJS are you currently using?

Both
4.8%

I don't know
17.4%

25

8

58

91

342

OJS 2.x
11.1%

OJS 3.x
65.3%

How long have you worked with OJS?

No answer
1.5%
10+ years
11.6%

8

61

50

5-10 years
27.3%

143

262

Less than 1 year
9.5%

1-5 years
50.0%

Ranking of general categories of features

Respondents were asked to rank 7 different general categories of features by dragging and dropping them in order from most important at the top, to least important at the bottom. Those 7 categories included "improvements to":

- Managing the submission list (My Queue, Unassigned, All Active, Archives)
- OJS email functions
- Peer review and editorial decision workflow
- Managing journal articles for publication
- Managing journal issues
- Managing users and their accounts

- Statistics and metrics

How important to you are improvements in the following general categories?

Please drag and drop these items into the empty box in order from MOST important at the top, to LEAST important at the bottom.
Improvements to:

Your choices

| Managing the submission list (My Queue, Unassigned, All Active, Archives) |
| OJS email functions |
| Peer review and editorial decision workflow |
| Managing journal articles for publication |
| Managing journal issues |
| Managing users and their accounts |
| Statistics and metrics |

Your ranking

❷ Please drag and drop these items into the empty box **in order** from MOST important at the top, to LEAST important at the bottom.

Managing the submission list was ranked first most often (144 times), followed by *Peer review and editorial decision workflow* (101) and *Managing journal articles for publication* (100). *Peer review and editorial decision workflow* was ranked second most often (151 times), followed by *Managing journal articles for publication* (78) and *OJS email functions* (62).

The category most often ranked last was *Statistics and Metrics* (131 times) with *Managing users and their accounts* most often ranked second last (109).
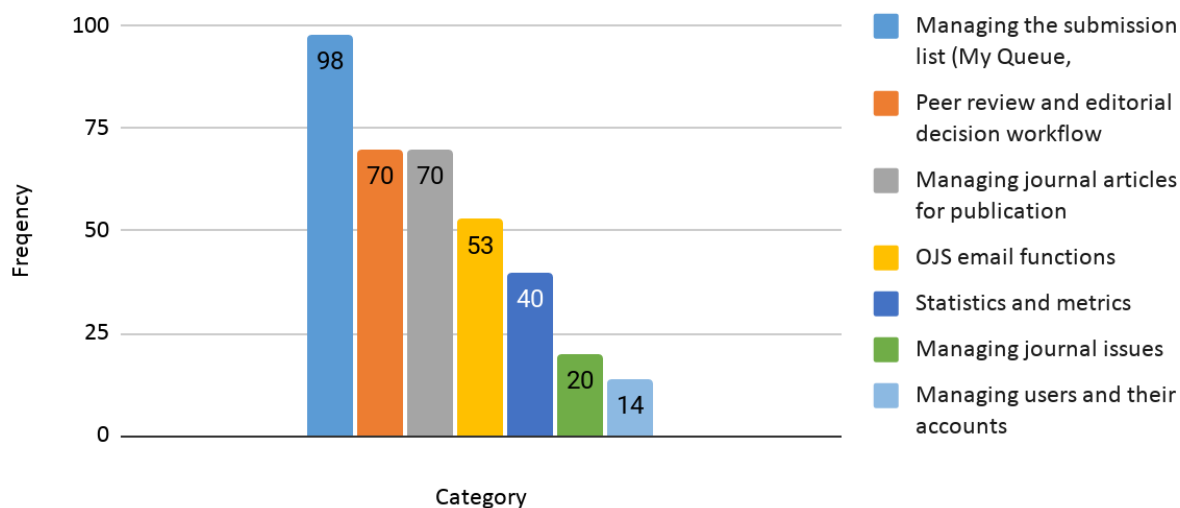
All categories and rankings

Legend:
- Ranked 1st Total=513
- Ranked 2nd Total=509
- Ranked 3rd Total=501
- Ranked 4th Total=479
- Ranked 5th Total=462
- Ranked 6th Total=452
- Ranked 7th Total=446

Categories:
- Managing the submission
- Peer review and editorial
- Managing journal articles
- OJS email functions
- Statistics and metrics
- Managing journal issues
- Managing users and their
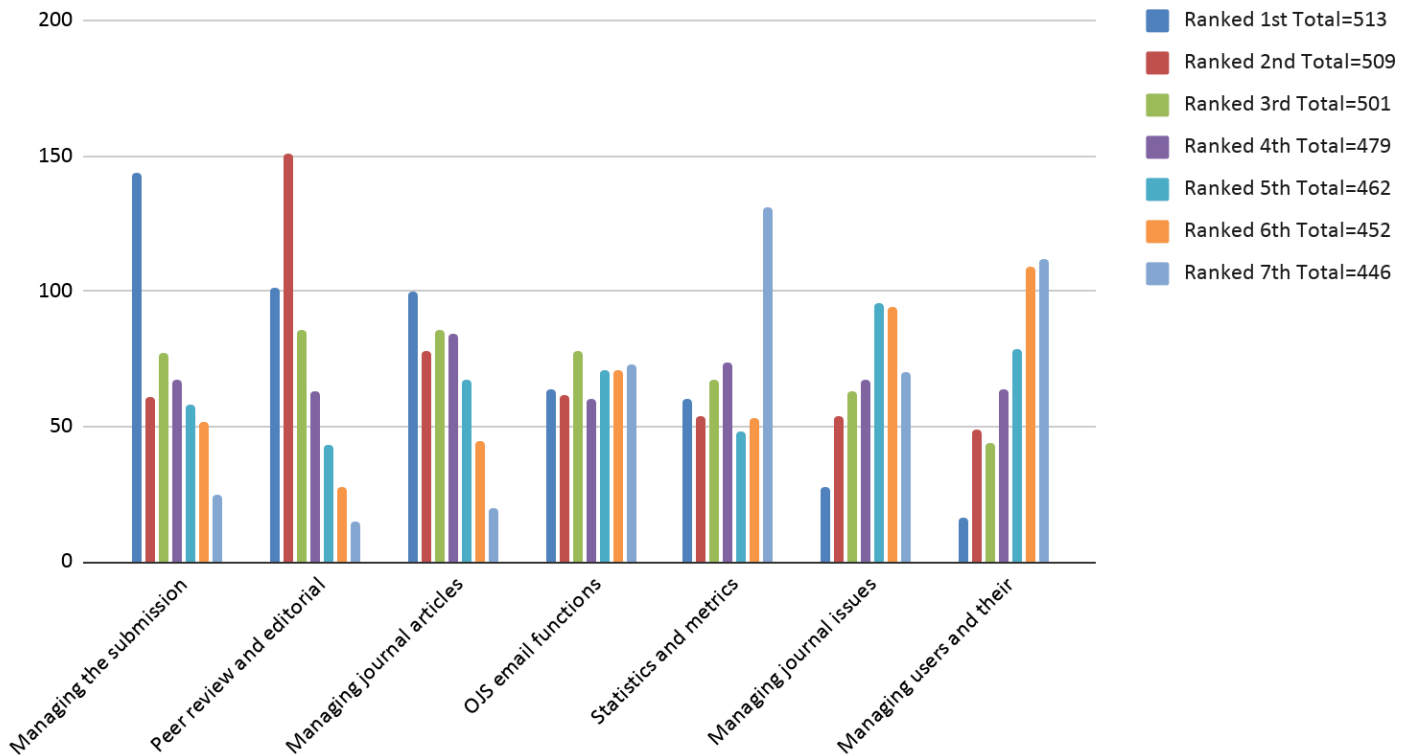
Analyzing responses for different respondent groups yielded very similar results with a few notable exceptions. Those who use OJS 3.X (367 respondents), when asked to rank the most important features, followed the same general trends as above, and ranked *Managing the submission list* as the most important with 98 respondents (26.85%) selecting this, followed closely by *Peer review and editorial decision workflow* (70 respondents 19.18%), and *Managing journal articles for publication* (70 respondents, 19.18%).

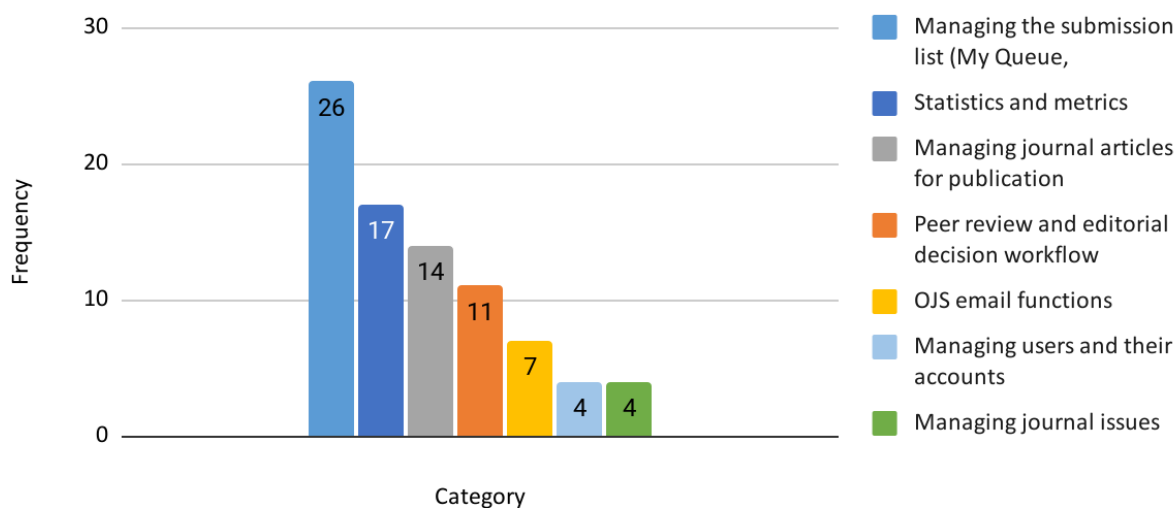## OJS 3.x category ranked most important   N=365

Legend:
- Managing the submission list (My Queue,
- Peer review and editorial decision workflow
- Managing journal articles for publication
- OJS email functions
- Statistics and metrics
- Managing journal issues
- Managing users and their accounts

Frequency (y-axis), values: 98, 70, 70, 53, 40, 20, 14

Category (x-axis)

OJS 2.X users (83 respondents) also ranked improvements to *Managing the submission list* first with 26 respondents or 31.3% selecting it as most important. Notably, 17 respondents, or 20.5% of OJS 2.X respondents surveyed selected improvements to *Statistics and metrics* as their most important feature.

OJS 2.x category ranked most important   N=83

Legend:
- Managing the submission list (My Queue,
- Statistics and metrics
- Managing journal articles for publication
- Peer review and editorial decision workflow
- OJS email functions
- Managing users and their accounts
- Managing journal issues

Frequency (y-axis), values: 26, 17, 14, 11, 7, 4, 4

Category (x-axis)

Ranking orders do not appear to vary dramatically based on answers to the question "How long have you worked with OJS?". Improvements to *Managing submission list* was consistently ranked first across all year ranges, with *Peer review and editorial decision workflow* and *Managing journal articles for publication* also ranked high.

One minor outlier we identified is that In the 5-10 years group the third rated feature is *OJS email functions* - but this represents only 24 responses, and the next closest category is *Peer review and editorial decision workflow* with 21 responses.

5-10 year respondents - category ranked most important   N=140
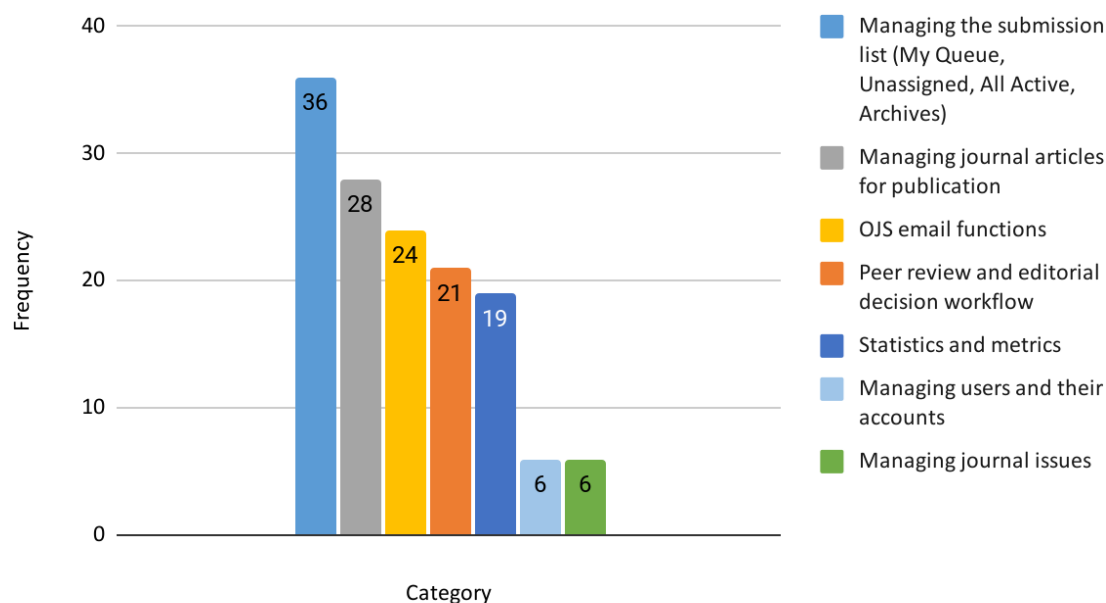
There were no significant differences in category rankings between those who described themselves as managing a journal hosting/publishing program or as journal editors or managers.

Detailed responses

For the three categories of improvements they ranked **most** important, each respondent was then asked to review a list of specific features, and consider how strongly they agreed with the statement: "This feature is important for my work." Agreement was measured with a five-point scale: Strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, and strongly disagree.

We've provided the responses for each of the three categories that most respondents ranked as most important. We also grouped the responses as agree (strongly agree and agree), neutral (neither agree nor disagree), and disagree (disagree and strongly disagree) to more easily see differences between features.

1. Managing the submission list (My Queue, Unassigned, All Active, Archives)

For this category, respondents were asked to indicate how strongly they agreed that the following features were important for their work:

- Filter submission list by more criteria (for example, assigned editor, review stage, last activity date, reviewers, language and issue
- Sort search results in the submission list (for example, by date or alphabetically)
- Show assigned editors in submission list
- Show review round in submission list
- Search submission list by subtitle
- Restore last view of submission lists when loaded
- Return to previously searched results
- Allow editors to customize submission list results by saving filter settings
- Differentiate between "reviewer response overdue" and "review overdue"
- Check for duplicate submissions within the same journal

Improvements to managing the submission list (My Queue, Unassigned, All Active, Archives)

For each of the features below, please consider how strongly you agree with the statement: "This feature is important for my work"

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No answer
Filter submission list by more criteria (for example, assigned editor, review stage, last activity date, re-viewers, language and issue)	○	○	○	○	○	●
Sort search results in the submission list (for exam-ple, by date or alphabetically)	○	○	○	○	○	●
Show assigned editors in submission list	○	○	○	○	○	●
Show review round in submission list	○	○	○	○	○	●
Search submission list by subtitle	○	○	○	○	○	●
Restore last view of submission lists when loaded	○	○	○	○	○	●
Return to previously searched results	○	○	○	○	○	●
Allow editors to customize submission list results by saving filter settings	○	○	○	○	○	●
Differentiate between "reviewer response overdue" and "review overdue"	○	○	○	○	○	●
Check for duplicate submissions within the same journal	○	○	○	○	○	●

❷ This feature is important for my work: strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, strongly disagree, no answer

Filtering the submission list, showing the review round, sorting search results, showing assigned editors, differentiating between review responses, and checking for duplicates all demonstrated strong agreement.

Allowing editors to customize submission lists, returning to previously searched results, restoring the last view, and searching submission list by subtitle scored lower, with the latter the only item with more disagree responses than agree responses.

Managing the submission list - this feature is important for my work-
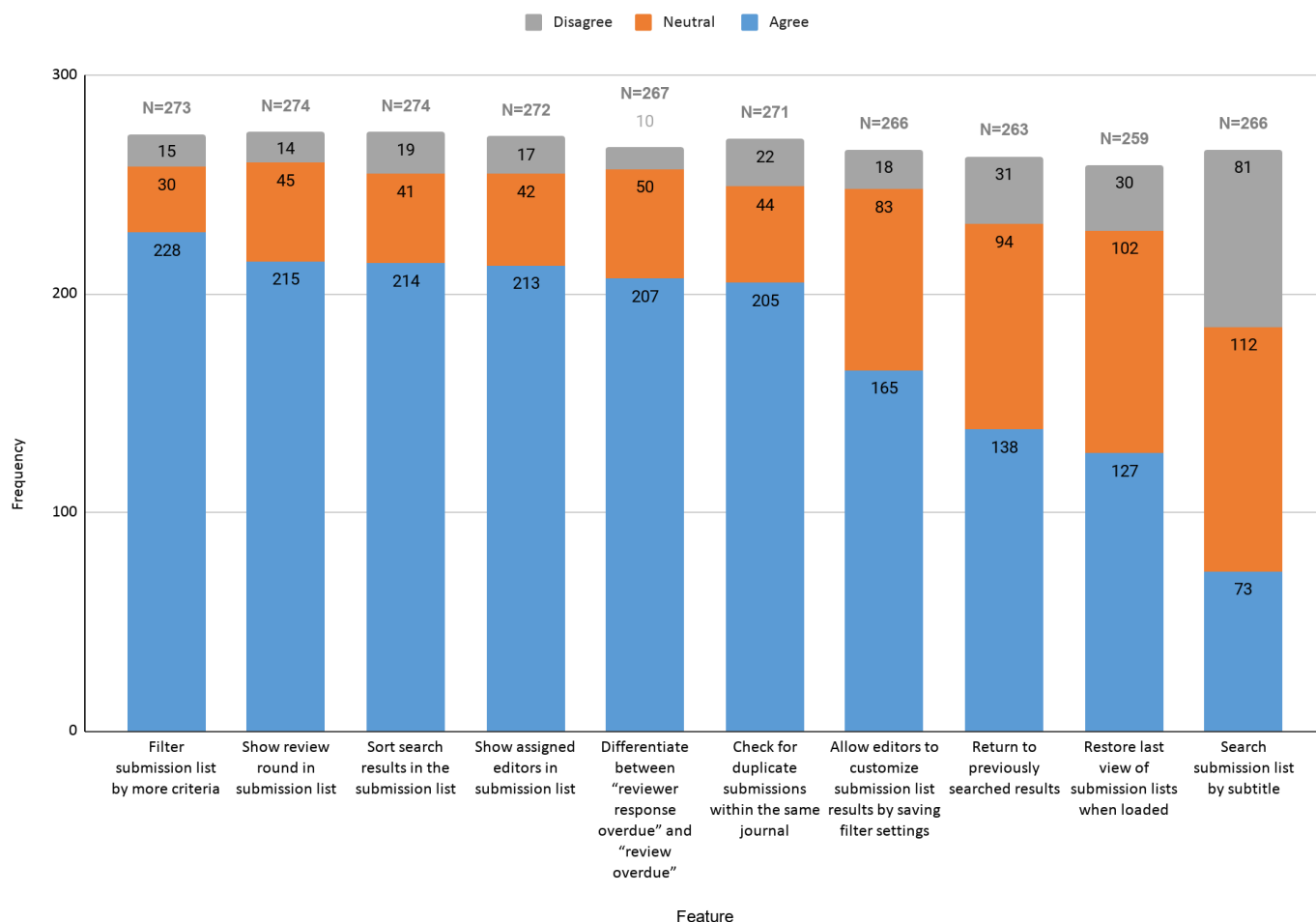
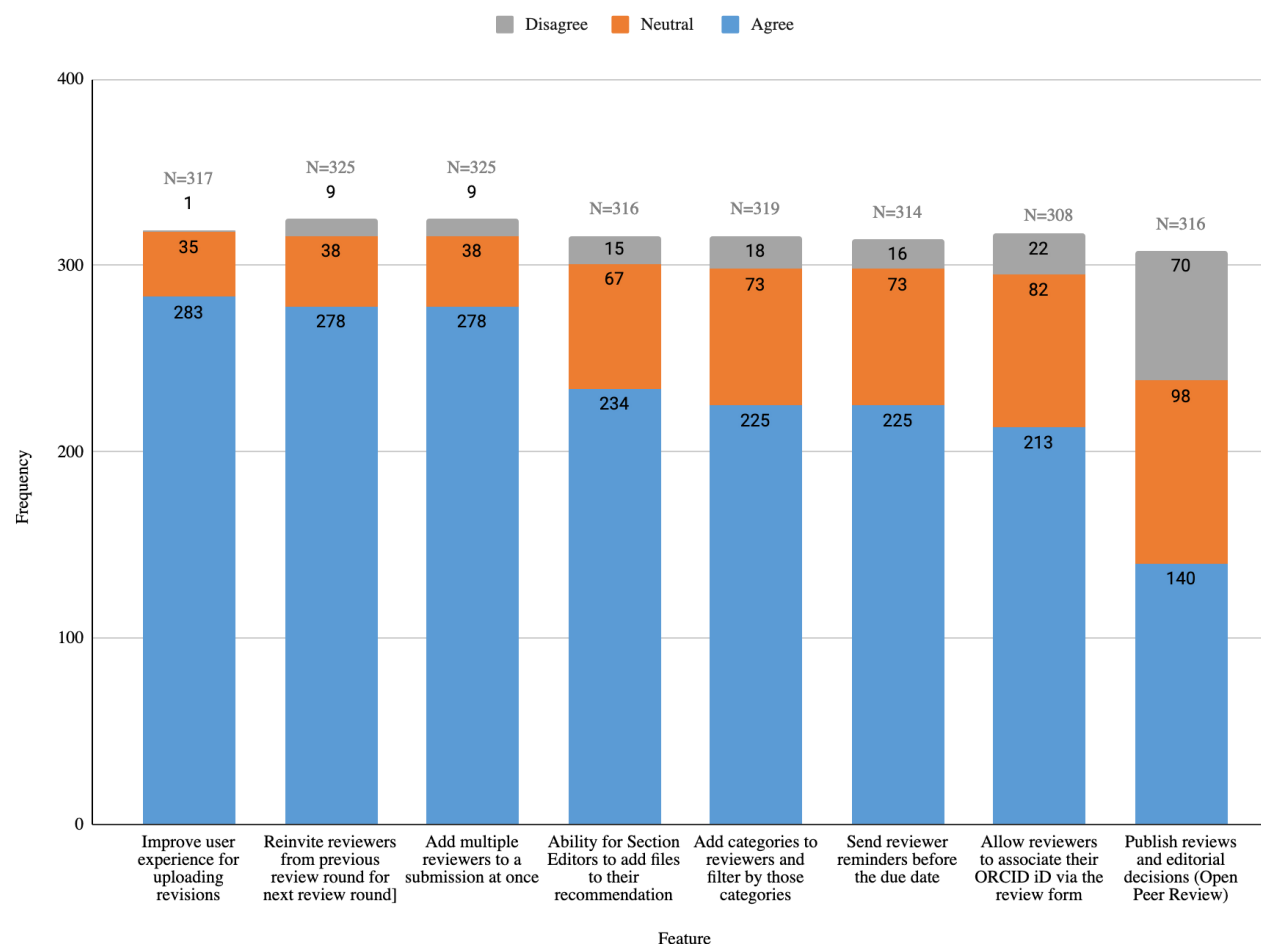2. Peer review and editorial decision workflow

For this category, respondents were asked to indicate how strongly they agreed that the following features were important for their work:

- Allow reviewers to associate their ORCID iD via the review form
- Reinvite reviewers from previous review round for next review round
- Add multiple reviewers to a submission at once
- Add categories to reviewers and filter by those categories
- Improve user experience for uploading revisions
- Send reviewer reminders before the due date
- Publish reviews and editorial decisions (Open Peer Review)

In this category, improving the user experience for uploading revisions, re-inviting reviewers from previous rounds, and adding multiple reviewers at once all scored highly.

Publishing reviews and editorial decisions (Open Review) shows the least level of agreement for this category.

Peer review and editorial decision workflow - this feature is important for my work

Disagree ■ Neutral ■ Agree ■

Feature	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	N
Improve user experience for uploading revisions	283	35	1	N=317
Reinvite reviewers from previous review round for next review round]	278	38	9	N=325
Add multiple reviewers to a submission at once	278	38	9	N=325
Ability for Section Editors to add files to their recommendation	234	67	15	N=316
Add categories to reviewers and filter by those categories	225	73	18	N=319
Send reviewer reminders before the due date	225	73	16	N=314
Allow reviewers to associate their ORCID iD via the review form	213	82	22	N=308
Publish reviews and editorial decisions (Open Peer Review)	140	98	70	N=316

3. Managing Journal Articles for Publication

For this category, respondents were asked to indicate how strongly they agreed that the following features were important for their work:

● Conversion of XML articles into other formats, such as PDF
● Improve support for media files, such as images, audio and video
● Display article full-text on the article landing page
● Allow authors to compare metadata before and after copyediting
● Creation of JATS XML articles
● Adding attribution caption for cover images for articles and issues
● Display articles in XML format

- Make reference lists multilingual-capable

In this category conversion of XML articles into other formats, improving support for media files, and displaying article full-text on the article landing page all floated to the top, while the remaining items scored similarly.

Managing Articles - This feature is important for my work

Disagree ■ Neutral ■ Agree
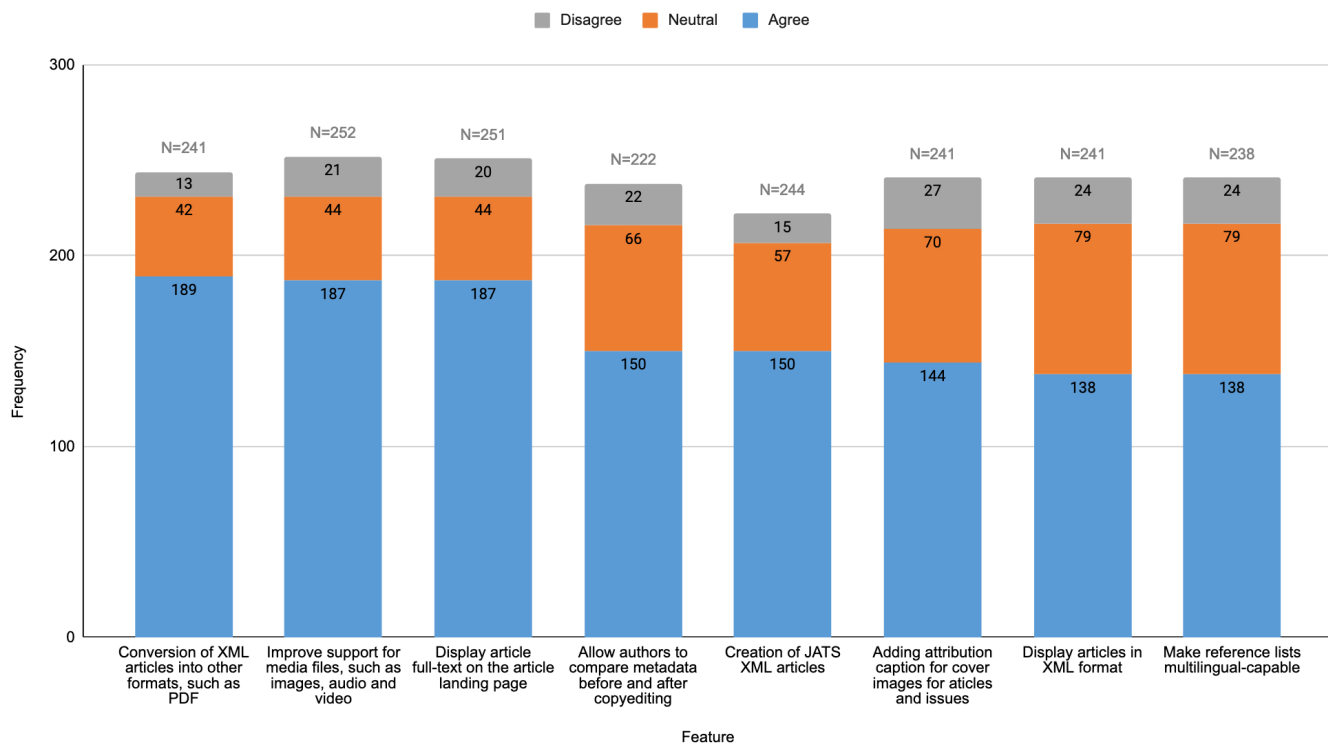
Notable responses from other categories

While we haven't completed detailed analysis for the lower ranked categories there are a few notable features that saw very high numbers of "strongly agree" and "agree" responses within the category.
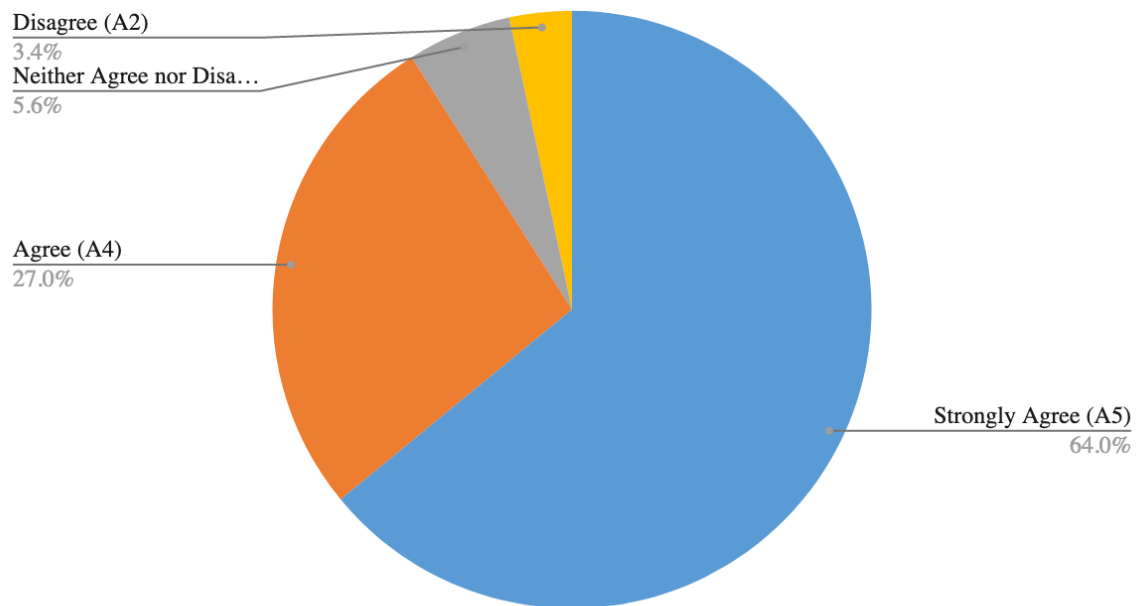
For example, in the *Improvements to OJS email functions* category, more than 90% of the 196 respondents for that question agreed that improving email selection, draft, preview and sending during workflow was important for their work.

Improve email selection, draft, preview and sending during workflow

Strongly Disagree (A1)
1.0%
Neither Agree nor Disa…
5.1%

Agree (A4)
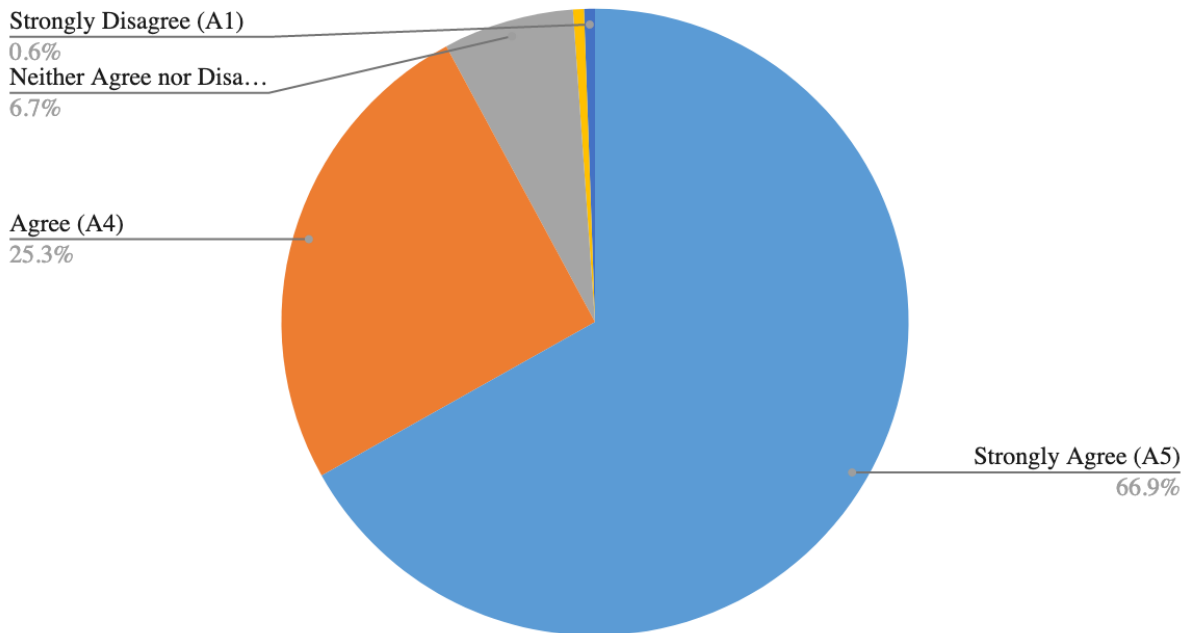34.7%

Strongly Agree (A5)
58.7%
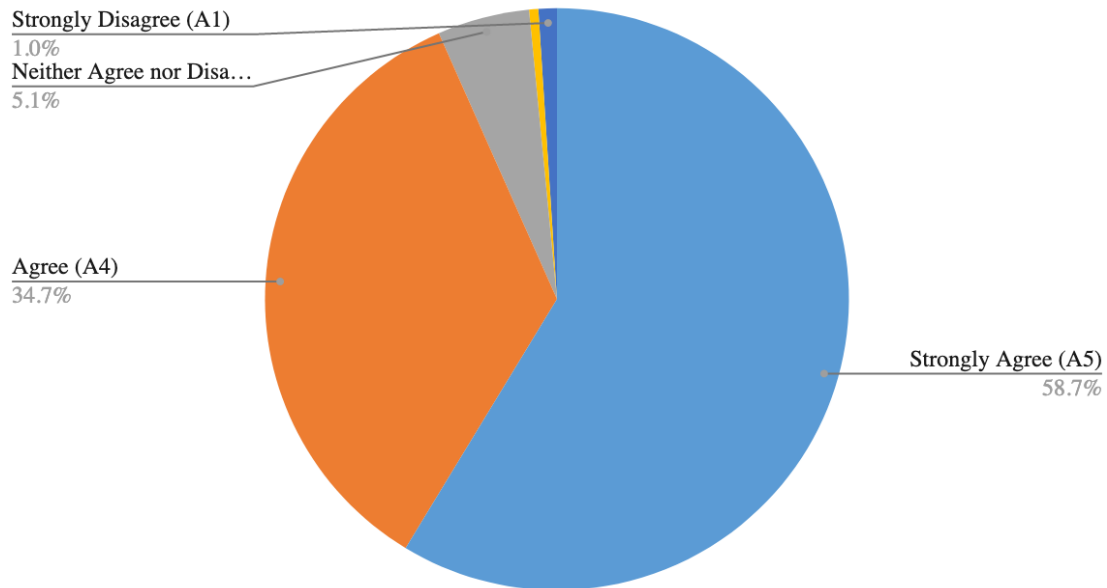
In the *Improvements to statistics and metrics* category, there was similar strong agreement both for providing authors with statistics for their own publications and tools for journals to share reports and statistics.

Providing authors with statistics for their own publications

Disagree (A2)
3.4%
Neither Agree nor Disa…
5.6%

Agree (A4)
27.0%

Strongly Agree (A5)
64.0%

Tools for journals to share reports and statistics

Strongly Disagree (A1)
0.6%

Neither Agree nor Disa…
6.7%

Agree (A4)
25.3%

Strongly Agree (A5)
66.9%

Next steps

The Technical Committee was very pleased with the high levels of engagement from the PKP community, and we would like to thank the 524 respondents who took time to complete the survey and rank and rate the features and provide comments. The responses do seem to indicate that there is strong shared agreement amongst respondents that improving functionality around managing the submission list, peer review and editorial decision workflows, and managing journal articles for publication are the most important general categories of the options presented. While analysis of the free-text comment fields remains to be completed, we anticipate that these comments will enhance our understanding of these results, and may provide some insights into other desired features. We recognize that there are many ways we could improve on the design and implementation of the survey, but feel confident that these initial findings provide one body of reliable evidence to help guide and inform future decision making.

We've provided the data and our initial analysis to PKP and are pleased to see that our findings align closely with much of the other user feedback collected by PKP in many different ways over the years. The top three categories of improvements identified in the survey overlap with priority areas for PKP's feature development, including submission tracking and discovery, review assignments and revision, and XML/Full text production tools. We hope that data collected in this survey will provide some further insights to the PKP development team in balancing areas of effort, and can also provide evidence as needed in support of grant and funding opportunities.

We would like to present our survey results to the community via a webinar or community call in summer 2021, and would like to continue working with PKP to find ways to facilitate community feedback and engagement moving forward. Once we've aggregated and anonymized the survey results, we will share them with the community as an open dataset.

Submitted on behalf of the [PKP Technical Committee](#) by:

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