What is an ORCID identifier?
An ORCID identifier is a persistent code that uniquely distinguishes researchers from each other. It links all of the publications, grants awarded and positions held for each researcher throughout their career.

Researchers manage their ORCID record and choose which of their research outputs are connected to their ORCID identifier. They also control privacy settings: access for everyone, access only for those they trust, and ‘only me’.

ORCID is updated by users and partner systems. Users may grant Crossref permission to find outputs associated with their ID and, pending approval, automatically update the user’s profile.

Over 7000 journals collect ORCID identifiers from authors and, as of January 2018, 1750 journals require them from at least the corresponding author.

Over 4.8 million researchers have ORCID identifiers; however, uptake in the pharmaceutical industry has been slow.

How does ORCID help researchers and organizations?

- It solves the problem of researchers with the same name being confused for one another.
- It automatically compiles a ‘research CV’ of papers, data, code and other research materials by a particular researcher.*
- It makes outputs more discoverable in specific research fields because the identifier may be used as a search term.
- It provides an API (application programming interface) that can be used to report on company-wide publications (member APIs are also available for more detailed queries).
- It documents the collaboration and funding histories of individual researchers.
- It makes it easier for authors to list their affiliation consistently.

*Please note that older research outputs may need to be added manually to author profiles.
To gauge the usefulness of ORCID as a tool for their publication planning, GSK, a leading pharmaceutical company, ran a pilot within their Vaccines business unit in which internal authors were asked to register for ORCID identifiers.1

“Good initiative; it’s easy to register with ORCID.”

Author feedback

The pilot was a success and external authors will be encouraged to register with and use ORCID in the future.

517 authors employed by the company were invited to participate in the trial.

(67%) of those authors had registered with ORCID within 7 months.

Registration is free and takes approximately 1 minute. Identifiers are permanent and do not need renewing.

1Mysore S, Farrow P, Paglione L et al. Ongoing ORCID implementation within pharmaceutical industry: an Open Pharma and GSK Vaccines Initiative [poster]. Presented at the 14th Annual Meeting of ISMPP, 30 April–2 May 2018, National Harbor, MD, USA.