


Mindsponge thinking in Times Higher Education

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One of the website creators – Dr. Quan-Hoang Vuong – was invited to give his opinion in *Times Higher Education* on how early career researchers (ECRs) can play a critical role in reforming the “already-weary peer review system” [1]. The opinion is greatly influenced by his [recent scientific communication piece](#) in *Learned Publishing* – a journal of the Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers [2].

[The Times](#) (est. Jan. 1, 1788) publishes [Times Higher Education](#) as a magazine focusing specifically on news and issues related to tertiary education. Notably, THE has released one of the world’s most widely followed university rankings every year since 2004: The Times Higher Education World University Rankings (i.e., THE World University Rankings).



Logo of THE World University Rankings, illustrated by Times Higher Education (THE) (Public Domain); https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:THE_World_University_Rankings.png

In his opinion piece, [Vuong proposes an idea contrary to the mainstream view of “perfect peer review”](#). That is supporting young researchers to peer-review and edit journal

submissions as a way of training and creating positive changes and continual innovations for the publishing systems. He took Albert Einstein and Isaac Newton – two great people that made breakthroughs in science in their twenties – and his experiences of training mentees as examples demonstrating the potential that ECRs can create.

What is more interesting is that the opinion genuinely reflects the core ideas of mindsponge theory on the learning and updating processes of human minds [3,4]. Anyone must begin as a novice before becoming an expert. Thus, expecting an abundance of editors and reviewers while not giving inexperienced ones a chance is unwise.

References

[1] Vuong QH. (2022, Sept. 11). Early career researchers can help fix peer review delays. *Times Higher Education*. <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/blog/early-career-researchers-can-help-fix-peer-review-delays>

[2] Vuong QH. (2022). The editor: A demanding but underestimated role in scientific publishing. *Learned Publishing*, 35(3), 418-422. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/leap.1466>

[3] Vuong QH. (2022). *Mindsponge theory*. AISDL. <https://books.google.com/books?id=OSiGEAAAQBAJ>

[4] Vuong QH, Nguyen MH, La VP. (2022). *The mindsponge and BMF analytics for innovative thinking in social sciences and humanities*. De Gruyter. <https://books.google.com/books?id=EGeEEAAAQBAJ>

