



Using Altmetric Explorer to develop Dissemination Plans

A Guide for Researchers & Institutions

In order for relevant audiences to find, discuss, and further share your work, you must approach dissemination strategically.

Leveraging Altmetric Explorer is one way to inform your dissemination plan.

You can use the Explorer to learn:



1) where engagement with research in your field is happening online,



2) who is talking about research, and



3) which journals are publishing research that receives the most online attention.



Step 1: Identify relevant Field of Research codes

In Altmetric Explorer, most outputs are classified using Field of Research codes, or FoR codes. These codes are assigned at the output level, not the journal level, making this a powerful and specific classification system.

First, use the advanced search to find relevant research by searching for the person, department, or outputs you want to examine.

Or, you can upload a set of identifiers or craft a PubMed strategy.

The screenshot shows the 'Advanced search' interface of Altmetric Explorer. Red annotations highlight key features:

- Advanced search:** A red circle highlights the 'Advanced search' tab at the top left.
- Search for the person, department, or outputs you want to examine:** A red arrow points to the 'Verified Author' field, which contains 'BENILDA ANDERSSON'.
- Alternatively, create a custom search using identifiers like DOIs or craft a PubMed query:** A red arrow points to the 'Add a PubMed query' button at the bottom right.

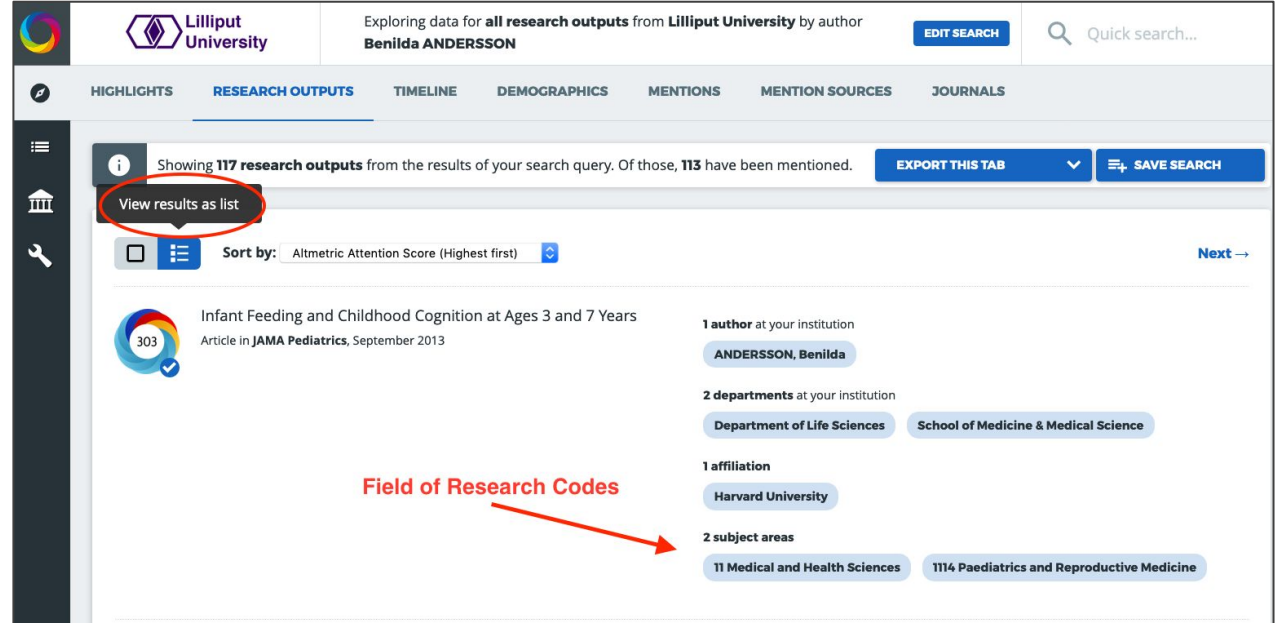
The interface includes various search fields on the left (Verified Author, Verified Department, Publishers, journals, and collections, Publisher Name, DOI Prefix, Journal or Collection, Funder Name, Handle Prefix) and search criteria on the right (Keywords, Subjects for Classification, Affiliation (GRID), Title of Output, Type of Output, Open Access Status, Scholarly Identifiers, ORCID, PubMed Query). A 'Run Search' button is located at the bottom right.



Step 1: Continued

Once you run your search, toggle to the Research Outputs tab and view the results as a list. This provides at-a-glance information about the subject areas these outputs are classified in using FoR codes.

Make note of which subject areas seem most relevant or occur most frequently.



The screenshot displays the Lilliput University Research Outputs interface. The top navigation bar includes tabs for HIGHLIGHTS, RESEARCH OUTPUTS (selected), TIMELINE, DEMOGRAPHICS, MENTIONS, MENTION SOURCES, and JOURNALS. The main content area shows search results for Benilda ANDERSSON, with 117 research outputs displayed. A red circle highlights the 'View results as list' button. Below this, the 'Sort by' dropdown is set to 'Altmetric Attention Score (Highest first)'. The first result is 'Infant Feeding and Childhood Cognition at Ages 3 and 7 Years', an article in JAMA Pediatrics, September 2013, with an Altmetric score of 303. To the right of the article, a list of associated institutions and subject areas is shown: 1 author (ANDERSSON, Benilda), 2 departments (Department of Life Sciences, School of Medicine & Medical Science), 1 affiliation (Harvard University), and 2 subject areas (11 Medical and Health Sciences, 1114 Paediatrics and Reproductive Medicine). A red arrow points to the 'Field of Research Codes' section, which lists the subject areas.

Exploring data for all research outputs from Lilliput University by author Benilda ANDERSSON

HIGHLIGHTS RESEARCH OUTPUTS TIMELINE DEMOGRAPHICS MENTIONS MENTION SOURCES JOURNALS

Showing 117 research outputs from the results of your search query. Of those, 113 have been mentioned. EXPORT THIS TAB SAVE SEARCH

View results as list

Sort by: Altmetric Attention Score (Highest first)

Next →

303

Infant Feeding and Childhood Cognition at Ages 3 and 7 Years
Article in JAMA Pediatrics, September 2013

1 author at your institution
ANDERSSON, Benilda

2 departments at your institution
Department of Life Sciences School of Medicine & Medical Science

1 affiliation
Harvard University

2 subject areas
11 Medical and Health Sciences 1114 Paediatrics and Reproductive Medicine

Field of Research Codes



Step 2: Craft a search strategy using FoR codes

Next, you will use the FoR codes you identified in Step 1 to create a new search strategy.

Go back to the Advanced Search, clear your previous search, and check the 'Full Altmetric database' box. Simply begin typing the code(s) in the 'Subjects' search bar; suggestions will auto-populate. Enter multiple codes if appropriate.

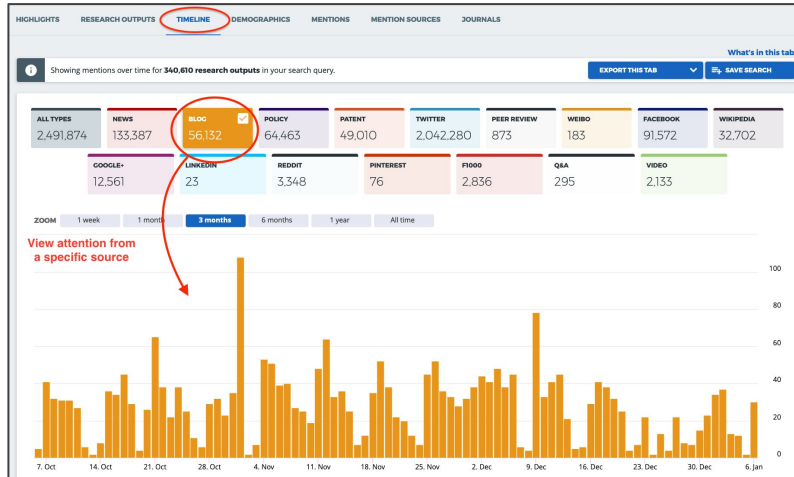
You can now begin to examine how research in this particular area is discussed online.

The screenshot shows the 'Advanced search' interface. At the top right, there is a 'CLOSE' button. Below the title, there are two checkboxes: 'Full Altmetric database' (checked and circled in red) and 'My institution only' (unchecked). A red text box says 'Check the box to search to full database.' Below this, there are several search fields: 'My institution', 'VERIFIED AUTHOR', 'VERIFIED DEPARTMENT', 'Publishers, journals, and collections', 'PUBLISHER NAME', 'DOI PREFIX', and 'JOURNAL OR COLLECTION'. Each field has a 'WHAT IS THIS?' link. The 'SUBJECTS (FOR CLASSIFICATION)' section is highlighted with a red box and contains two selected codes: '05 ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES' and '0705 FORESTRY SCIENCES'. Below these codes, a list of suggestions is shown, including 'ecolo', '0501 Ecological Applications', and '0602 Ecology'. A red text box with arrows pointing to the 'VERIFIED DEPARTMENT' and 'SUBJECTS' fields says 'Enter codes by name or number here. Results will auto-populate.' At the bottom, there are buttons for 'CANCEL', 'CLEAR FIELDS', and 'RUN SEARCH'.



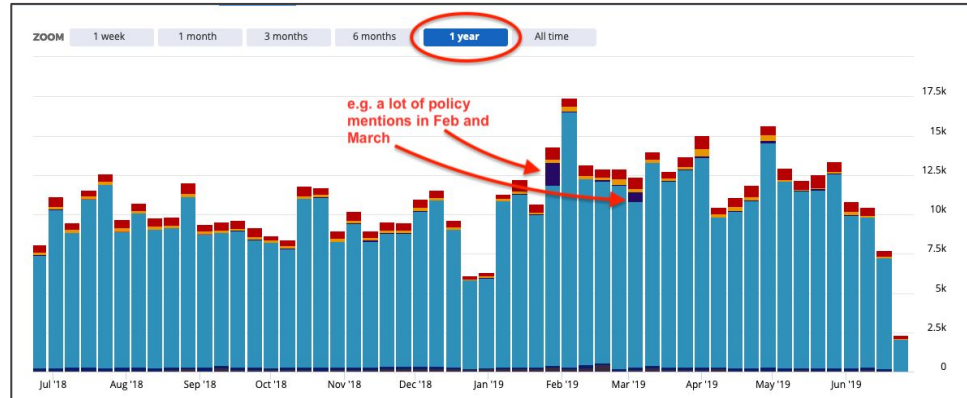
Step 3: Explore the Timeline tab

Try starting in the Timeline tab to get a visual of where the most voluminous attention is occurring and which sources you might be interested in exploring further in Step 4.



Experiment with different time limits

Experiment by limiting to different source types



Step 4: Explore the Mentions Sources tab

The Mention Sources tab makes it quick and easy to see exactly which sources and people (e.g., specific tweeters, news outlets, policy sources, and more) have mentioned research the most. In this example, we are looking at research in the field of Environmental Sciences.

Exploring data for all research outputs from the full Altmetric database within the 05 Environmental Sciences subject area




HIGHLIGHTS RESEARCH OUTPUTS TIMELINE DEMOGRAPHICS MENTIONS **MENTION SOURCES** JOURNALS

▼ Add source 🔍 Search for attention sources (e.g., Policy, News, Blogs)

Show mention sources between any time and any time Show mention sources from 🔍 Search for a country APPLY RESET

Showing 434,060 mention sources with 2,385,703 mentions of research outputs from the results of your search query. EXPORT THIS TAB SAVE SEARCH

Sort by: Total mention count Next →

| | | |
|---|---------------------------|--|
|  National Academies Press Policy source United States | 10,726 mentions | View all mentions ▼ Show recent mentions |
|  Analysis & Policy Observatory (APO) Policy source Australia | 9,880 mentions | View all mentions ▼ Show recent mentions |
|  Phys.org News outlet United Kingdom | 8,263 mentions | View all mentions ▼ Show recent mentions |

Number of times a source has mentioned research in the field of Environmental Sciences



Step 5: Add filters, explore mentions, export to CSV

In the Mention Sources tab, you can filter by source type. Choose a source from the dropdown menu, or you can type in a particular source of interest, such as World Health Organization, Washington Post, or even a specific Twitter handle, e.g. @altmetric.

You can also limit by date or show mentions from a specific set of countries. Remember, you can always save a search or export data to a CSV.

The screenshot displays the Lilliput University Altmetric interface. The top navigation bar includes tabs for HIGHLIGHTS, RESEARCH OUTPUTS, TIMELINE, DEMOGRAPHICS, MENTIONS, MENTION SOURCES (selected), and JOURNALS. The main content area shows a search bar with a dropdown menu for 'Add source' (circled in red) and a search input field. A red arrow points to the search input with the text 'Choose source from dropdown, or type in a source.' Below the search bar, there are filters for 'any time' and 'Show mention sources from' with a search input. The main list of research outputs includes:

- Microbiome Digest - Bik's Picks** (Blog) with 1,884 mentions. Buttons: View all mentions, Show recent mentions.
- ACW Observer** (Blog) with 1,753 mentions. Buttons: View all mentions, Hide recent mentions (circled in red).

Below the ACW Observer entry, a preview of a recent mention is shown for the article 'Papers on California wildfires' published by ACW Observer on 2018-11-18 at 6:16 PM UTC. The preview includes the article title, a brief description, and a list of cited research outputs:

- Warming and Earlier Spring Increase Western U.S. Forest Wildfire Activity** (Article in Science, August 2006)
- Large wildfire trends in the western United States, 1984-2011** (Article in Geophysical Research Letters, April 2014)

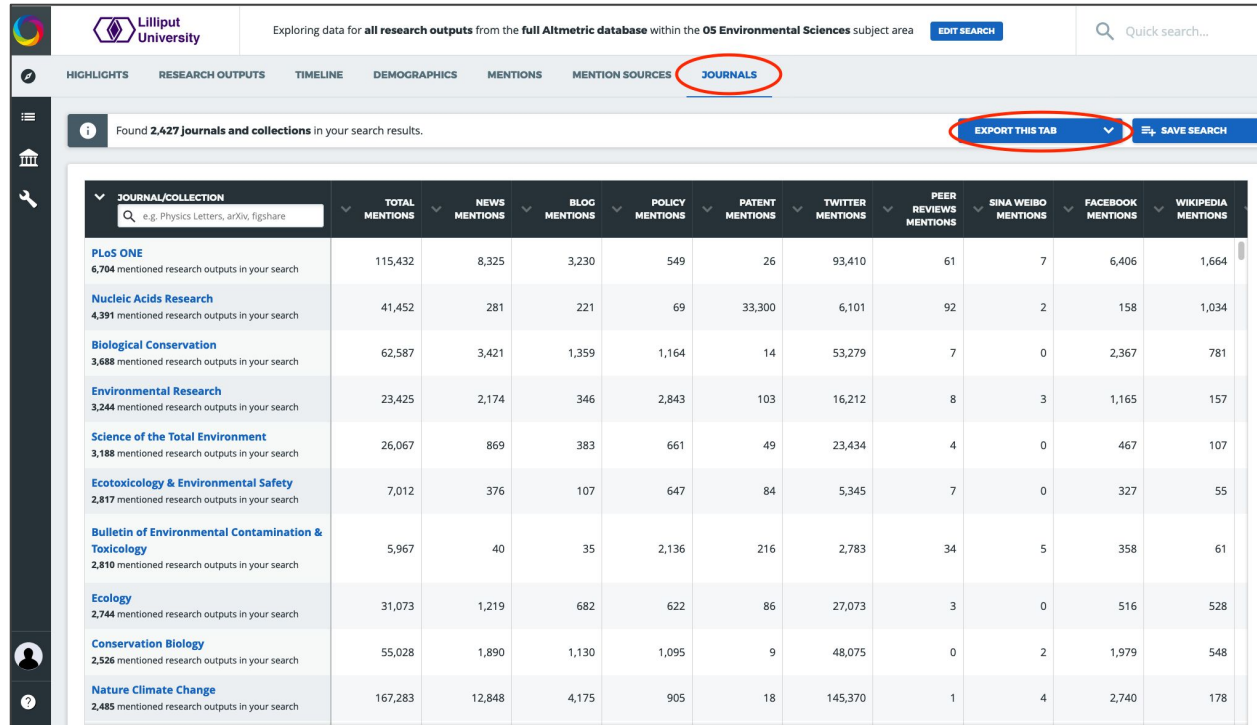
At the bottom of the interface, there are buttons for 'EXPORT THIS TAB' and 'SAVE SEARCH' (both circled in red).

Step 6: Explore Journals tab

Finally, you can explore the Journals tab to see where this research is being published and which journals get the most attention online.

Simply toggle to the Journals tab in Altmetric Explorer and experiment with sorting by different mention types, e.g. policy, patent, news, etc.

The left-hand column lists the journal titles and will change as you sort in different ways. Consider exporting to CSV for further analysis.



Exploring data for all research outputs from the full Altmetric database within the 05 Environmental Sciences subject area

Found 2,427 journals and collections in your search results.

EXPORT THIS TAB

| JOURNAL/COLLECTION | TOTAL MENTIONS | NEWS MENTIONS | BLOG MENTIONS | POLICY MENTIONS | PATENT MENTIONS | TWITTER MENTIONS | PEER REVIEWS MENTIONS | SINA WEIBO MENTIONS | FACEBOOK MENTIONS | WIKIPEDIA MENTIONS |
|--|----------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| PLoS ONE 6,704 mentioned research outputs in your search | 115,432 | 8,325 | 3,230 | 549 | 26 | 93,410 | 61 | 7 | 6,406 | 1,664 |
| Nucleic Acids Research 4,391 mentioned research outputs in your search | 41,452 | 281 | 221 | 69 | 33,300 | 6,101 | 92 | 2 | 158 | 1,034 |
| Biological Conservation 3,688 mentioned research outputs in your search | 62,587 | 3,421 | 1,359 | 1,164 | 14 | 53,279 | 7 | 0 | 2,367 | 781 |
| Environmental Research 3,244 mentioned research outputs in your search | 23,425 | 2,174 | 346 | 2,843 | 103 | 16,212 | 8 | 3 | 1,165 | 157 |
| Science of the Total Environment 3,188 mentioned research outputs in your search | 26,067 | 869 | 383 | 661 | 49 | 23,434 | 4 | 0 | 467 | 107 |
| Ecotoxicology & Environmental Safety 2,817 mentioned research outputs in your search | 7,012 | 376 | 107 | 647 | 84 | 5,345 | 7 | 0 | 327 | 55 |
| Bulletin of Environmental Contamination & Toxicology 2,810 mentioned research outputs in your search | 5,967 | 40 | 35 | 2,136 | 216 | 2,783 | 34 | 5 | 358 | 61 |
| Ecology 2,744 mentioned research outputs in your search | 31,073 | 1,219 | 682 | 622 | 86 | 27,073 | 3 | 0 | 516 | 528 |
| Conservation Biology 2,526 mentioned research outputs in your search | 55,028 | 1,890 | 1,130 | 1,095 | 9 | 48,075 | 0 | 2 | 1,979 | 548 |
| Nature Climate Change 2,485 mentioned research outputs in your search | 167,283 | 12,848 | 4,175 | 905 | 18 | 145,370 | 1 | 4 | 2,740 | 178 |



Leveraging Altmetric Data

So what do you actually do with this information? How can it inform your dissemination strategy? Disseminating research beyond just the publishing process is new to many people, so let's take a look at some ideas and examples.



Twitter

- Twitter is a hotbed for research communication in some fields, but not all! Use Altmetric data to see if Twitter will help you reach your intended audiences.
- Discover Twitter accounts that are actively and frequently posting in your field. Create an account and follow these potential influencers. Engage with them, i.e. re-tweet their content and comment on their posts. They'll be more likely to follow you and reciprocate.
- Find and connect with potential collaborators, e.g. experts, public groups, patient advocacy groups, societies, funders, government officials, etc.
- See which journals have an active Twitter presence (and therefore might help you in the dissemination process).



Leveraging Altmetric Data



News

- Stay on top of where research in your field is being discussed in mass media.
- Work with your communications office or marketing department to reach out to relevant media sources.
- Discover new or niche news outlets discussing your field.



Blogs

- Using Altmetric data, find popular blogs in your research area and start by reading them to get an idea of what blogging looks like in your field.
- Write lay summaries of your work. Blogs don't necessarily have to be filled with creative prose. You could create a blog that contains summaries of your work that is intended for broad consumption. This can make your work more accessible to the public, funders, etc.
- Bloggers need a vacation too! Offer to write a guest blog post or to collaborate with a blogger on a post.



Leveraging Altmetric Data



Journals

While social media, blogs, and news outlets are great ways to share your work far and wide, the primary method of dissemination is still via journals, but not all journals receive the same amount of attention online.

Use Altmetric Explorer to gain insight into which journals are most frequently cited in policy documents, patent applications, and other sources. This can help you assess which journals provide author support and aid you in deciding where to submit publications in the future.



Continuing the Conversation

Strategic dissemination can seem like a daunting task, but Altmetric Explorer can help you save time by making it easier to discover and subsequently engage in these conversations.

If you'd like to discuss this guide and learn more, contact Patty!



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