

NOTEWORTHY

COWARDS

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Michael Eisen recently commented on Bluesky on the scientific societies



Michael Eisen
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Y'all are just noticing that scientific societies are obsequious cowards on everything except preserving their publishing cash cows?

4. Februar 2025 um 19:50  Alle können antworten · [Übersetzen](#)

<https://bsky.app/profile/mbeisen.bsky.social/post/3lhepxmuym22y>

I commented that this is a déjà vu from spring 2020 when scientific societies didn't want to sacrifice their second cash cow – the conference fees. A few minutes later I had some doubts if this wasn't a cheeky remark but here is what I found out rather quickly.

<https://elifesciences.org/articles/57032>

Suggests that funding bodies should reimburse researchers for canceled travel, even if cancellations are voluntary – so the money stays with the organizers

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s40620-023-01723-8>

Reducing costs and expanding access can be achieved through tiered registration fees based on income or professional status also for online events – although there are only minimal costs for the society.

<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC7229876/>

Complaint of dramatic effects on scientific societies.

<https://www.propublica.org/article/medical-conferences-didnt-cancel-exposing-doctors-who-treat-high-risk-patients-to-coronavirus>

A kidney care company did not cancel its conference even as the coronavirus spread. One attendee has been diagnosed, prompting fears that it will spread among doctors and patients.

<https://www.papercurve.com/post/the-medical-conference-is-dead-long-live-the-medical-conference>

Medical societies responded particularly slowly and conservatively to sudden, strict event curtailment. After all, there was no way of knowing just how quickly the coronavirus would spread, nor how long it would take us to get a handle on it, medically speaking.

<https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/medicine/articles/10.3389/fmed.2021.726037/full>

Among 33 conferences analyzed, 13 (39.4%) were conducted as scheduled, nine (27.3%) were canceled, eight (24.3%) were postponed to 2021 or 2022, and three (9.1%) were delayed but conducted in 2020.