

The R Journal: status

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The R Journal was created to serve the R community when most authors were academics. Surveying the status of activity in the journal may help in examining how to develop our contribution to the community as it develops.

Introduction

- As the current responsible editor of *The R Journal*, I have the benefit of not only having to think about how the journal can best contribute to the R community, but also having access to the historical submission record.
- It is possible to see some of what has been going on since the journal was created from the earlier *R News* in 2009.
- We continue to owe a large debt of gratitude to authors and reviewers, and trust that we will be able to make our content more accessible to the community.

Submissions 2009–2016

Table 1: Submission outcomes 2009–2016, by year of submission.

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
published	26	26	26	22	31	36	51	58
rejected	11	14	11	24	29	32	53	64
under review	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	19

- Annual submission numbers have grown markedly, but the rate of growth is less than that of the number of CRAN packages.
- Table 1 and Figure 1 show the outcomes of submitted contributed articles by year of submission.
- The proportion of submissions reaching publication has been roughly half since 2012.

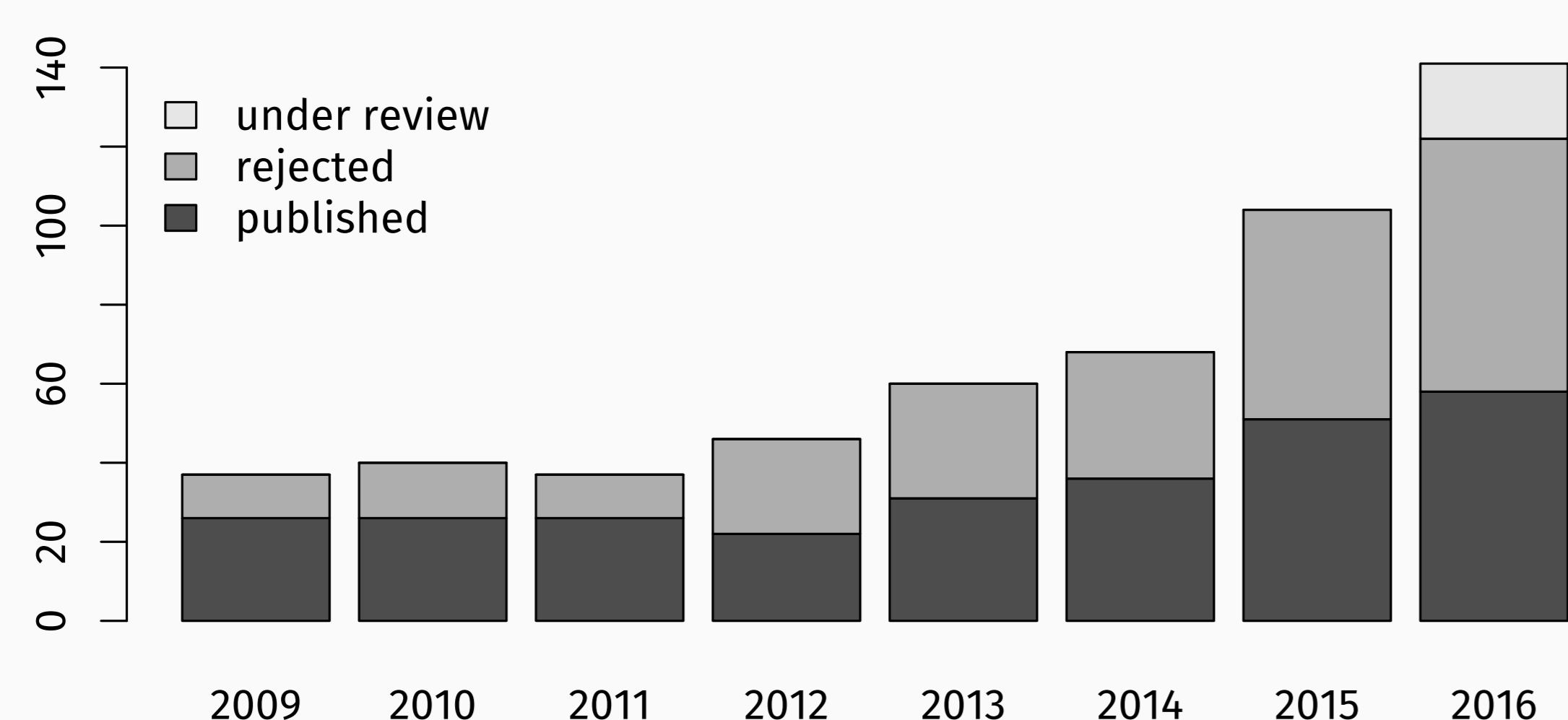


Figure 1: Submission outcomes 2009–2016, by year of submission.

- The increasing numbers of received submissions indicate increasing activity in our community, and the admission of new and attractive packages to CRAN and Bioconductor.
- This success does however place increasing burdens on reviewers and editors.
- For this reason, submissions presenting packages with insufficient context or comparisons with other existing packages will be diverted to other channels or rejected more frequently than has been the case.

Published contributed articles

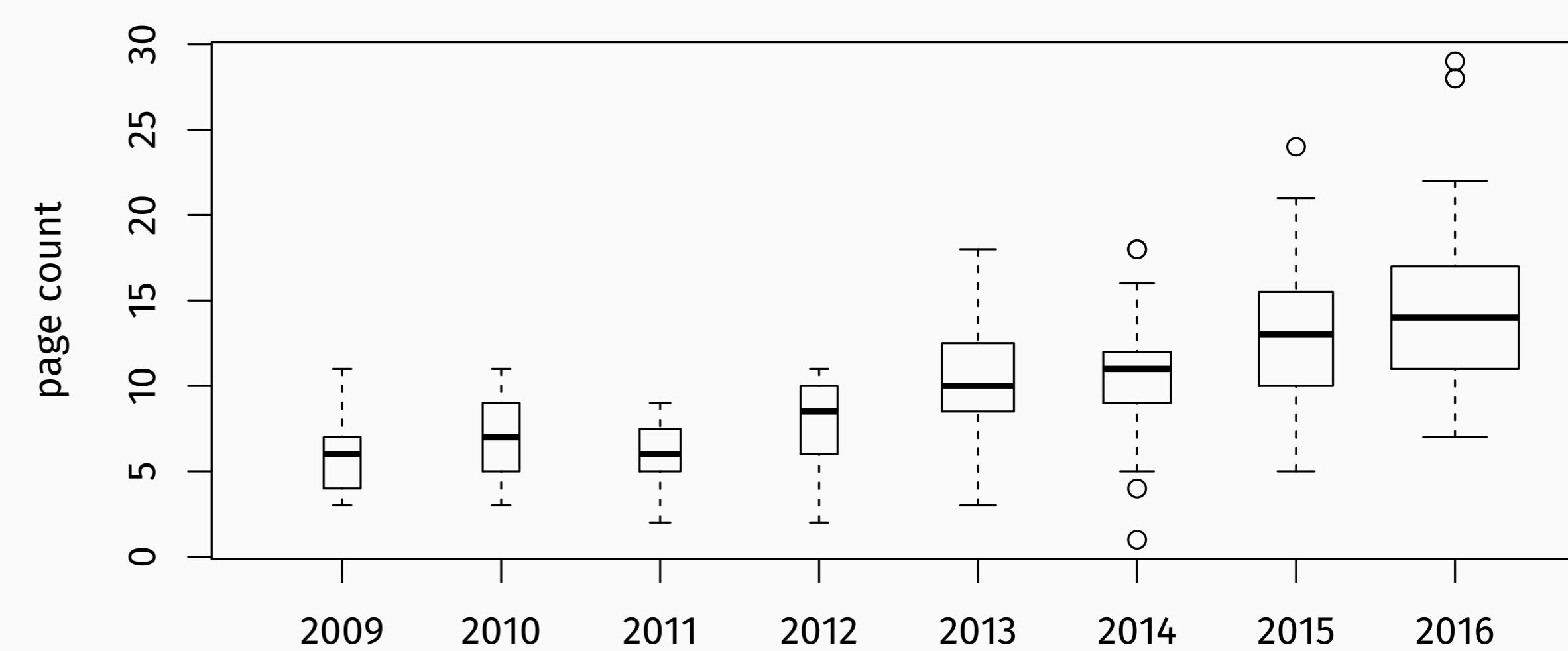


Figure 2: Published contributed articles 2009–2016, by year of publication; box width proportional to numbers of articles.

- Not only has the number of submissions increased, but the length of published articles has also increased (see Figure 2).
- The apparent jump from 2012 to 2013 may be associated with the change from a two-column to a single column format, but page counts have risen.

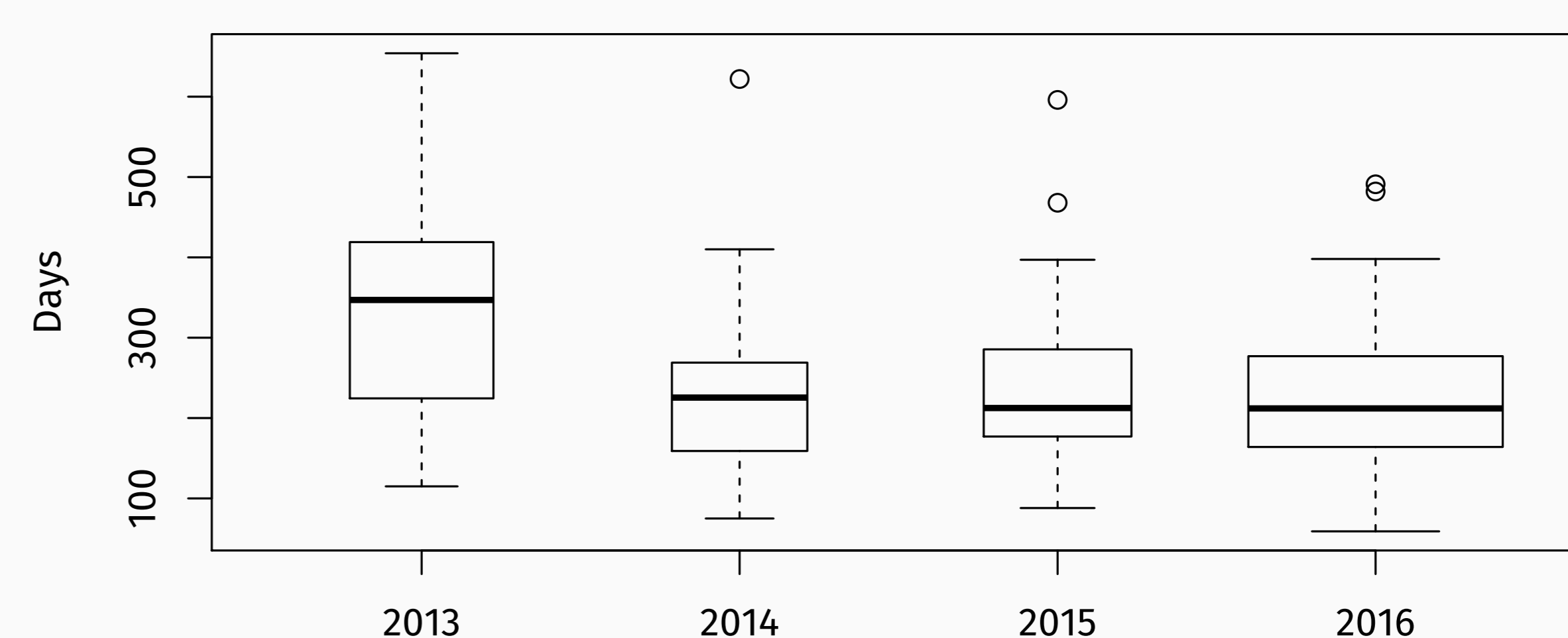


Figure 3: Days from acknowledgement to acceptance and online publication 2013–2016, by year of publication; box width proportional to numbers of articles.

- Excellent work done by our generous reviewers and my very hard-working predecessors and especially Michael Lawrence last year, is evident in holding median times from receipt to publication online to a little over 200 days, as Figure 3 shows.
- Using **gender** and **genderizeR**, it is also possible to use author given names to try to monitor author diversity; affiliation location has not yet been successfully examined.
- Table 3 shows that there remains plenty to do to reflect the strengths of our community adequately.

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
female	5	9	8	6	10	18	27	32
male	32	30	33	27	62	55	55	121
unknown	3	5	3	3	7	4	9	10

Table 2: Authors of published articles 2009–2016, by year of publication.

Short term plans

- In addition to re-framing the description of the kinds of articles we invite authors to contribute to our journal, work has been done on our website.
- Its appearance has been brought into line with that of the main R project website, and articles are reached through “landing” pages containing the abstract and citation information as well as listings of CRAN and Bioconductor packages cited in the article.
- So far very few contributed articles associate themselves directly with CRAN Task Views, so these are inferred from cited CRAN packages and listed.
- Further progress in helping to make work published in our journal more accessible is planned.