Web of Science Handbook

Clarivate

Your complete guide to Web of Science coverage

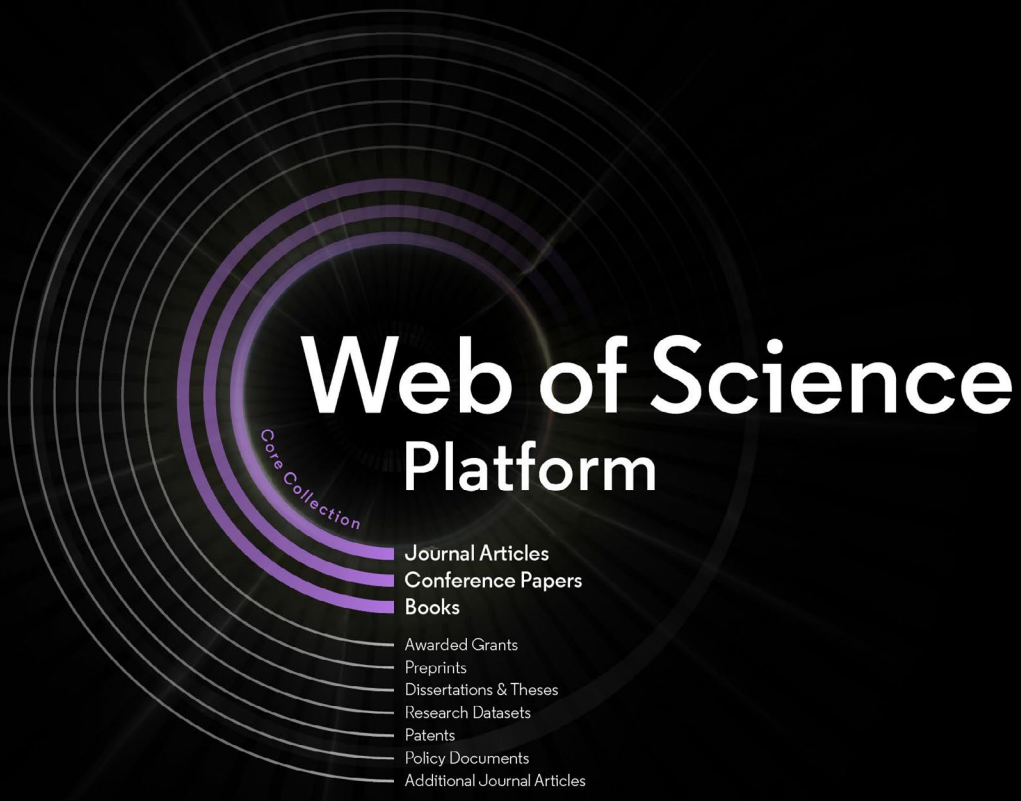
The Web of Science transforms a vast sea of research into an easily navigable, interconnected network. It delivers a robust view of 150 years of research to streamline discovery. Capture diverse research outputs in a single search and uncover new opportunities to advance your topic with billions of links between outputs. Developed in partnership with the research community, the Web of Science continually evolves to meet the changing needs of researchers and scholars. Start learning more about the platform here.

Contents

Web of Science platform

The Web of Science is a multidisciplinary, global research discovery platform. It enables researchers to locate key findings shared by authors along the entire research lifecycle, from early conference papers and preprints to patents and policy reports.

The Web of Science has been revolutionizing search and discovery for over 60 years. Citation indexing, a concept first proposed by Dr. Eugene Garfield at the Institute for Scientific Information (ISI) in 1955, transformed information retrieval and set a series of innovations in motion. Through novel approaches to organizing, structuring, and linking data, the Web of Science has been solving for emerging challenges in scholarly research for decades.



Web of Science at a glance

271M
records

316K
conferences

2.5M
preprints

3BN
cited references

160K
books

131M
patents

254
subject categories

223K
policy documents

17.9M
data sets and software

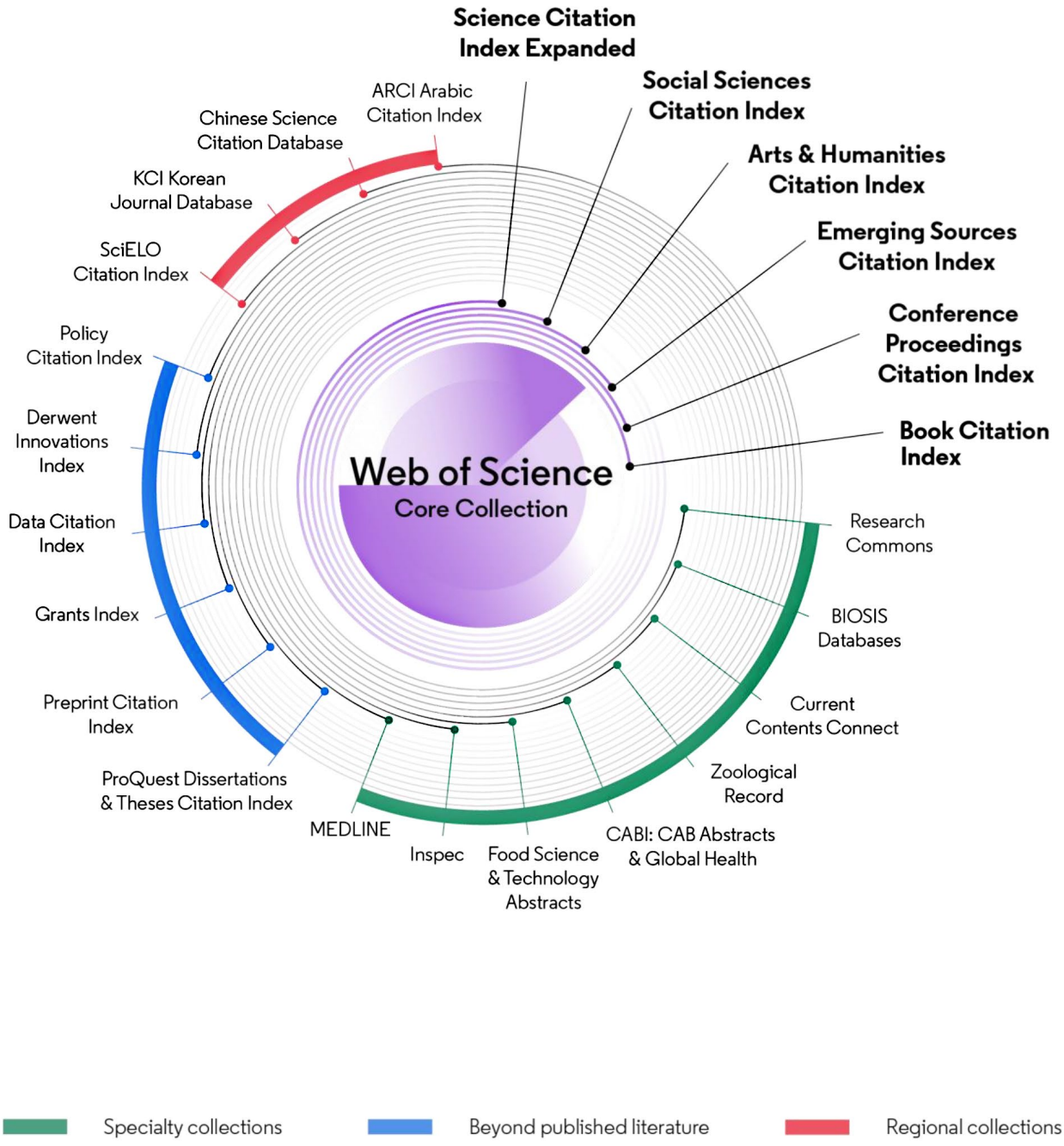
34K
journals

6.2M
dissertations and theses

5.7M
awarded grants

Note: updated August 2025

Figure 1: Collections on the Web of Science platform



Web of Science journal coverage by discipline

The Web of Science platform covers 34,950 active, unique journals. This includes 8,270 fully open-access journals listed on the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ).

Number of active titles in each broad domain*

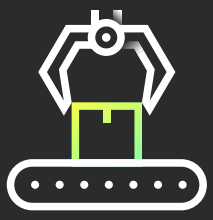
Social Sciences
8,220

Life Sciences
9,134

Physical Sciences
3,953

Arts & Humanities
4,746

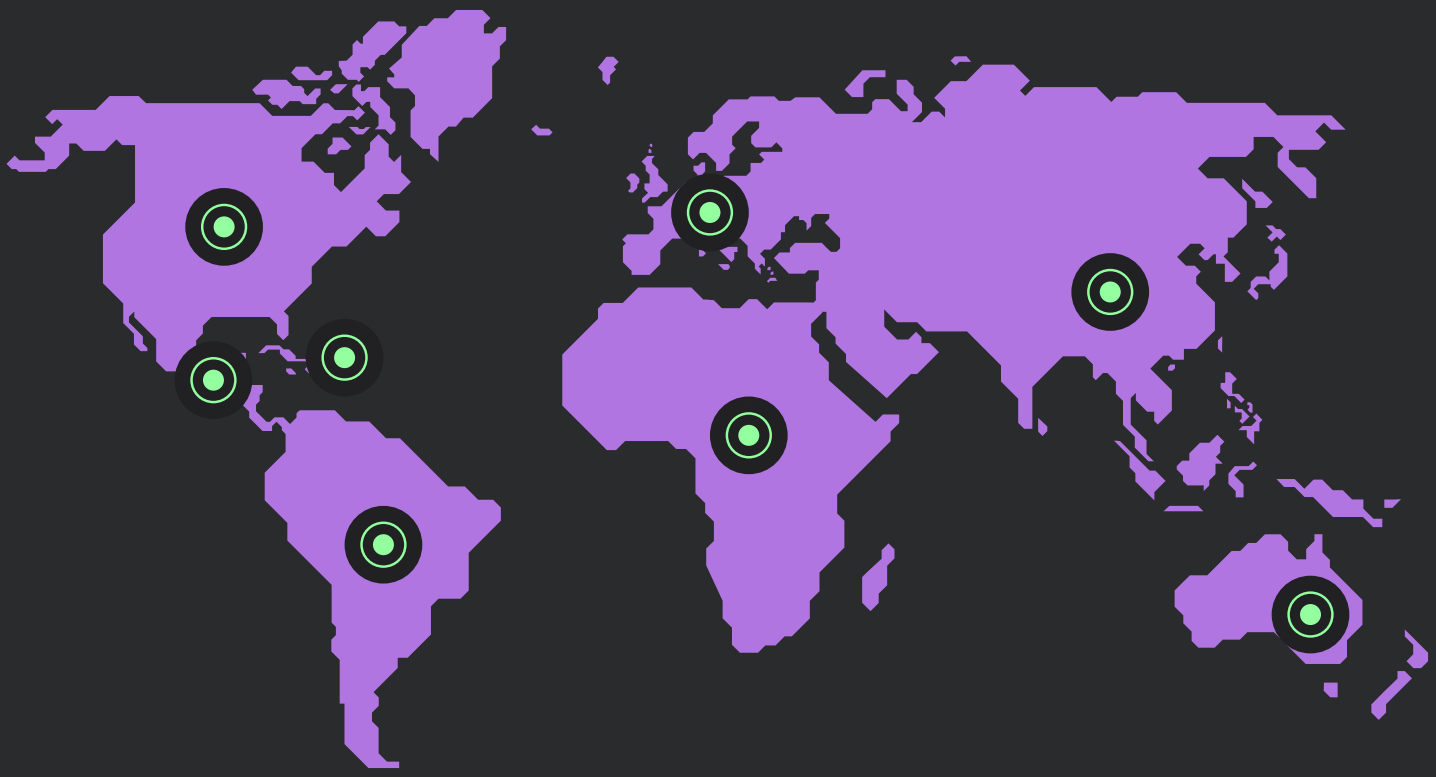
Clinical, Pre-Clinical & Health
6,794



Engineering & Technology
4,435

*Note that ~1,000 titles could not be mapped to disciplines and some titles may be assigned to more than one discipline

Figure 2: Geographic breakdown of journal coverage. Number of active titles on the Web of Science by region*



14,515
Europe

7,625
Asia

7,537
North America

1,810
South America

548
Oceania

486
Africa

289
Central America

93
Caribbean

*Note that ~2,000 titles could not be mapped to a region

Web of Science Core Collection

The Web of Science platform connects independent, regional indexes, world-class specialized indexes, dissertations and theses, research data, patents, preprints, awarded grants, and policy documents to the heart of the platform: **Web of Science Core Collection.**

Web of Science Core Collection is the world's first and most trusted multidisciplinary citation index. It covers journals, conferences and books across the sciences, social sciences, arts and humanities. Backed by a unique, publisher-neutral selection and curation process, Web of Science Core Collection helps you safeguard research integrity and support information literacy by ensuring the quality of sources covered in the database. We combine dependable selectivity with decades of consistent, accurate and complete indexing of the literature to help you find the research you need in an environment you can trust.

Research integrity: Establish a reliable research foundation to ensure the quality of your work.

High-quality data: Make the right research decisions with reliable, accurate information.

Purposeful innovation: Rely on a tool designed with researchers to solve their biggest challenges.

Coverage by the numbers:

22K+
active journals

2.4BN+
cited references

316K+
conferences

97.4M+
records

160K+
books

Breadth of discovery in Web of Science Core Collection

It all started with the Science Citation Index, but Web of Science Core Collection covers so much more today.

Scholarly publishing has grown exponentially in recent years, and staying up to date with the newest findings in a field is critical in today's fast-paced research environment. Web of Science Core Collection offers extensive global coverage of diverse publishing portfolios.

Table 1: Web of Science Core Collection editions

Edition	Subject coverage	Content coverage	
Science Citation Index-Expanded (SCIE)	Sciences	9,400+ journals	Flagship
Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI)	Social Sciences	3,500+ journals	
Arts & Humanities Citation Index (AHCI)	Arts & Humanites	1,800+ journals	
Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI)	Multidisciplinary	9,000+ journals	
Conference Proceedings Citation Index (CPCI)	Multidisciplinary	316,000+ conferences	
Book Citation Index (BKCI)	Multidisciplinary	160,000+ books	

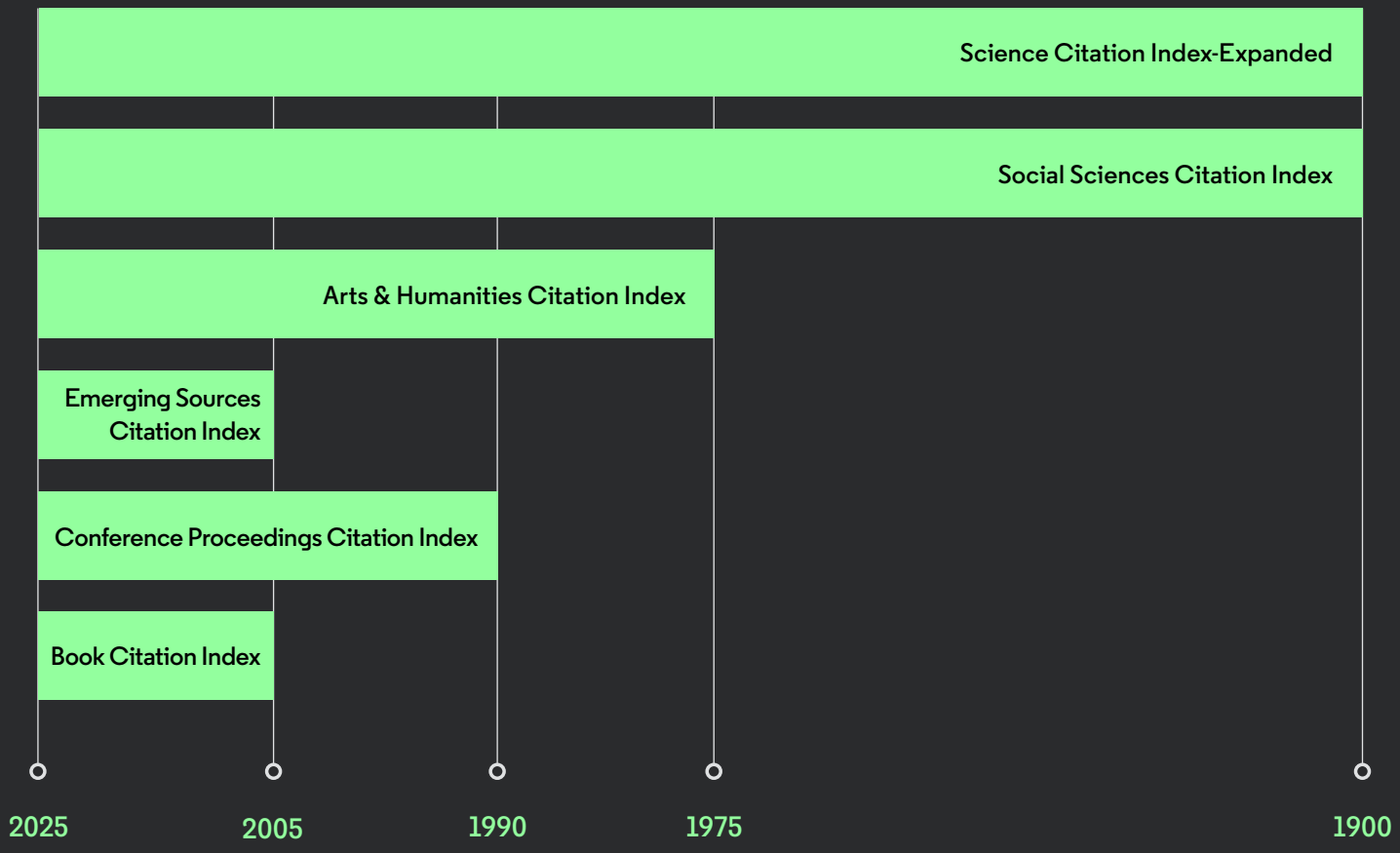
Depth of discovery in Web of Science Core Collection

Explore over a century of research.

Researchers must balance both breadth and depth of research in their studies.

Older research often presents fresh opportunities to advance research today. Directly exploring older research can reveal concepts and developments that have high potential to advance modern topics. Web of Science Core Collection offers a meticulously indexed and interconnected view of research spanning back to 1900, serving as a unique gateway to over 120 years of research.

Figure 3: Full depth of Core Collection editions



What are 'sleeping beauties'?

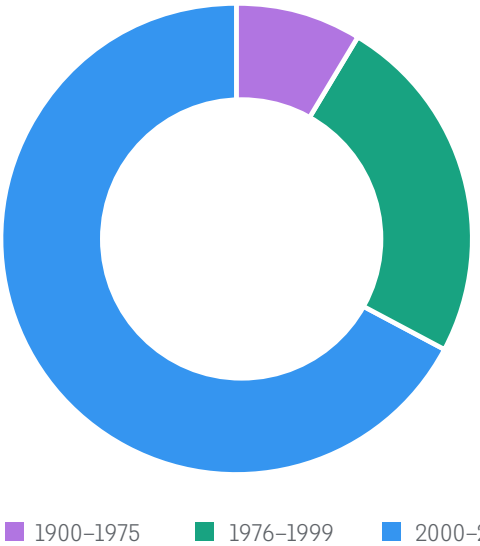
Bibliometric research outlines a phenomenon known as 'sleeping beauties' or delayed recognition. Sleeping beauty papers receive only little to moderate attention, via citation, shortly after publication, but they experience a significant spike in research interest years or even decades after their appearance.

An example in the field of economics

After the stock market crash of 1929 and the subsequent Great Depression, American economist Irving Fisher developed a theory to explain the economic crisis. 'The Debt-Deflation Theory of Great Depressions' was published in the first issue of Econometrica in 1933. It didn't receive much attention at the time, partially because the economic theories of John Maynard Keynes were favored.

However, Fisher's idea started to gain more traction among economists in the mid-1970s and may have influenced the responses of key policymakers during the 2008 financial crisis. A look at the citation pattern of Fisher's article tells the same story. Out of over 1,100 citations from the Web of Science Core Collection, just four occurred before 1980.

Figure 4: Percentage of records in selected publication timeframes



While the majority of content in Web of Science Core Collection is from the 21st century, there is a substantial body of research—over 32%—published before the year 2000.

Source: Web of Science, July 2025

Coverage analysis tip:

Are you comparing coverage across resources? Here are two tips to ensure a fair comparison.

Active versus inactive titles:

Journals change over time. A journal might cease publication after several years, becoming inactive. And our Web of Science editorial team deselects titles that no longer meet our quality evaluation criteria. Databases can report on active titles only or include both active and inactive titles. For example, the Web of Science covers over 34k active journal titles and more than 13k additional inactive journals.

Indexing policy:

The number of titles a source covers is just part of the story. Consider how a content provider indexes that content, too. Do they consistently index journals cover-to-cover the way that Web of Science Core Collection does? If not, you could end up relying on a database with gaps and holes in its coverage.

Web of Science Core Collection editorial selection process

The robust evaluation and curation of our data make the Web of Science Core Collection the world's most trusted publisher-independent global citation database.

Curated by an expert team of in-house editors, the Web of Science Core Collection is a trusted, high-quality, definitive database for journals, books, and conference proceedings. We are guided by the legacy of Dr Eugene Garfield, inventor of the world's first citation index: we remain true to his principles of objectivity, selectivity and collection dynamics, but also adapt and respond to technological advances and changes in the publishing landscape.

Publisher neutral: Our editorial decisions are conducted by our expert in-house editors who have no affiliations to publishers or research institutes — removing any potential bias or conflict of interest.

Category knowledge: Each editor is focused on specific subject categories, enabling them to gain a deep, nuanced knowledge of journals in that field.

In-house curation: Our rigorous process for the Web of Science Core Collection contrasts with that for other databases that rely on algorithmic approaches and/or delegating aspects of editorial decision-making to the research community.

Figure 5: Description of evaluation steps and criteria

1. Initial triage	2. Editorial triage	3. Editorial valuation	
Quality criteria			**Impact criteria**
• ISSN • Journal title • Journal publisher • URL (online journals) • Content access • Presence of peer review policy • Contact details	• Scholarly content • Article titles and article and abstracts in English • Bibliographic information in Roman script • Clarity of language • Timeliness and/or publication volume • Website functionality/journal format • Presence of ethics statements • Editorial affiliation details • Author affiliation details	• Editorial board composition • Validity of statements • Peer review • Content relevance • Grant support details • Adherence to community standards • Author distribution • Appropriate citations to the literature	• Comparative citation analysis • Author citation analysis • EBM citation analysis • Content significance
Successful outcomes			
Starts editorial triage	Starts editorial evaluation	Enters ESCI and is evaluated for impact	Enters SCIE/SSCI/AHCI
Unsuccessful outcomes			
Submission cannot be completed Re-submission welcome as soon as issues have been resolved	**Failed editorial triage** Our first evaluation: Re-submission welcome as soon as issues have been resolved On consecutive evaluations: Re-submission subject to embargo of at least one year	**Failed editorial quality evaluation** Re-submission subject to embargo of at least two years	**Failed editorial impact evaluation** Entry/continued coverage in ESCI Citation activity is monitored Re-evaluation subject to journal performance

Learn more here: **Editorial selection process | Clarivate**

Web of Science citation network

Over 3bn cited references connect over 240m records across the Web of Science platform.

Citation sources:

Cited references are captured, linked and displayed for the outputs in databases that are considered citation sources. Citation sources feed the citation network across the Web of Science platform.

Meticulously captured cited references are the building blocks of an interconnected citation network, helping you uncover and follow more connection paths between research outputs along the entire lifecycle.

References, times cited counts, and related records:

From a record, you can move backward in time and browse the references cited by the author or creator. You can also move forward in time to see newer articles that cited a paper. Or you can move through records and explore papers that cite some of the same references as the original paper.

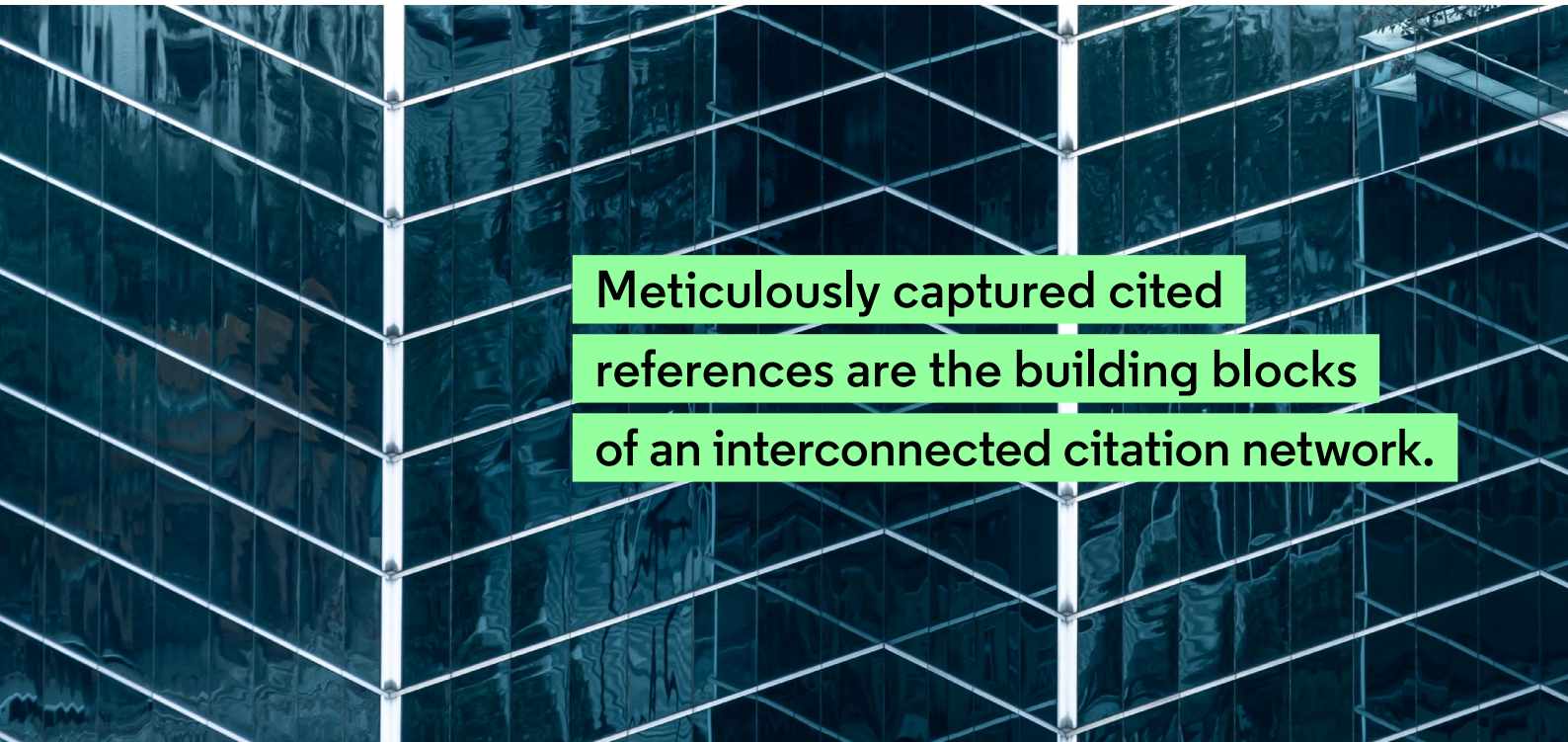
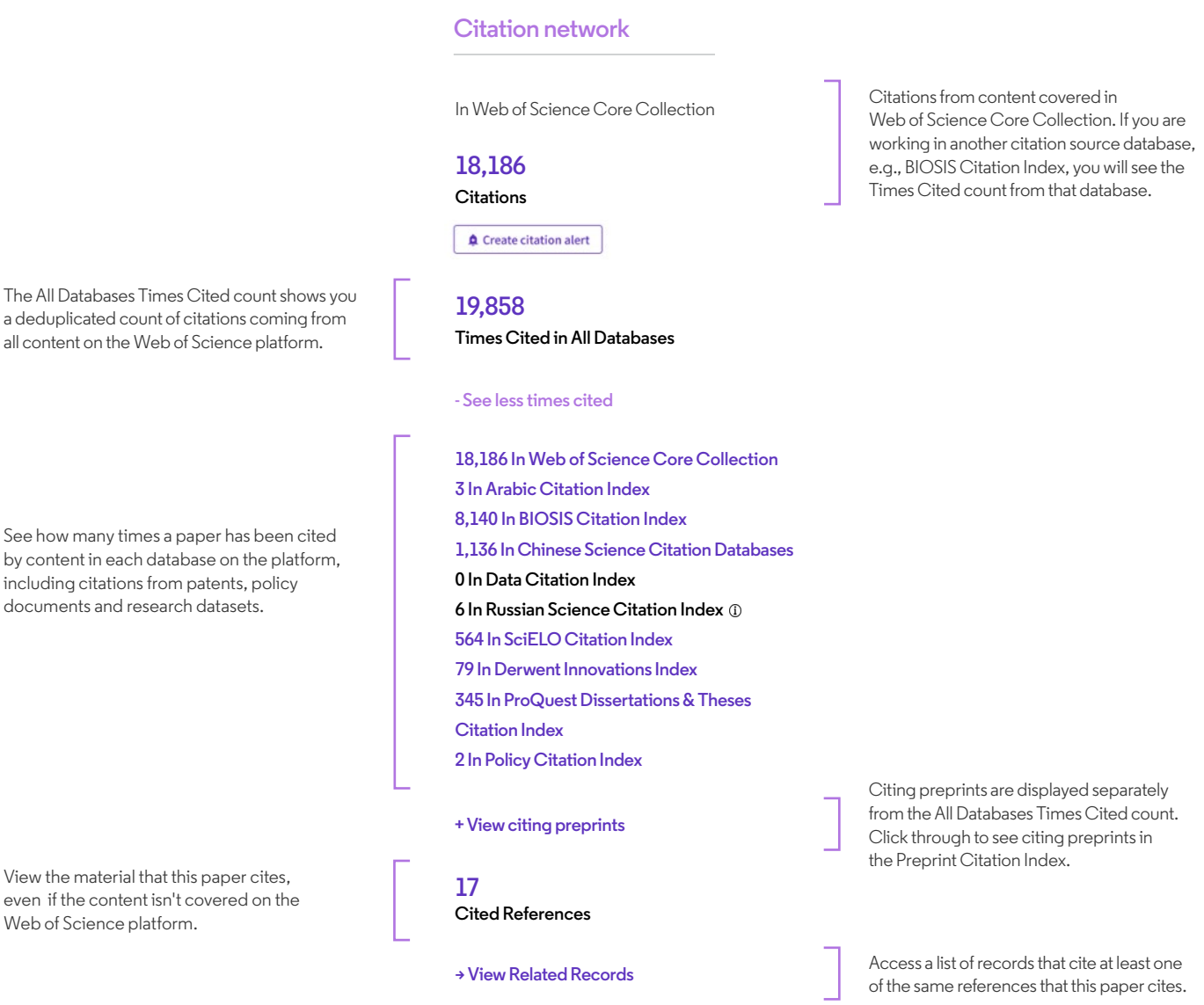


Figure 6: Citation network panel explained



Beyond published literature

Capture developments along the entire research lifecycle in a single search. Uncover more emerging research for literature reviews. Locate data sets and studies to validate research. Start incorporating technical information disclosed exclusively in the patent literature. And showcase how scholarly research contributes to policy documents.

Data Citation Index

Launched in 2012, the Data Citation Index provides descriptive records for data objects and links them to literature articles on the platform. Data Citation Index aims to provide a clearer picture of the full impact of research output and serve as a significant tool for data attribution and discovery. The database presents records for data studies, data sets and software from hundreds of repositories around the globe.

17.9M+
records

453
repositories

1900
backfile depth

Derwent Innovations Index

Derwent Innovations Index facilitates rapid, precise patent searching. It lets you conduct patent and citation searches of inventions in chemical, electrical, electronic, and mechanical engineering. Standardized patent metadata enhances discovery of prior inventions, and patents are grouped by invention into patent families to save you time when reviewing results.

Other databases on the platform supplement the patent coverage found in Derwent Innovations Index, such as BIOSIS databases, FSTA, and Inspec.

60
patent issuing authorities

131M+
patent documents

68M+
patent families

Preprint Citation Index

Preprint Citation Index connects a multidisciplinary collection of preprints to the Web of Science citation network to help you monitor emerging topics and evaluate the quality of preprints with ease. It aggregates preprints from five leading repositories: arXiv, bioRxiv, chemRxiv, medRxiv and Preprints.org.

5
repositories

2.5M+
records

41M+
indexed cited references

ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Citation Index

ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Citation Index integrates ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global into the Web of Science platform, adding metadata records for dissertations and theses from universities worldwide.

Capture more early career research in your discovery and improve literature reviews. Mutual subscribers of Web of Science and PQDT Global can link out to access full text on the ProQuest Platform.

6.2M+
records

4K+
universities

60
regions

Grants Index

The Grants Index integrates curated data from Pivot-RP with carefully indexed funding data from Web of Science Core Collection to present standardized data for awarded grants from funding agencies around the globe. Researchers can use awarded grant information to build a more thorough understanding of previous successes in their field by funder.

300+
funding agencies

5.7M+
awarded grants

Policy Citation Index

The Policy Citation Index adds records for policy briefs, reports, issue briefs and working papers from hundreds of think tanks, research organizations and advocacy groups to the Web of Science. At launch in 2025, it integrated ProQuest Policy File Index content into the Web of Science. It will continue to grow as content is directly sourced from additional organizations.

Some databases on the platform include selected coverage of non-journal literature that may include policy-related documents, such as CABI: Cab Abstracts and Global Health and Inspec.

500
sources

223K+
policy documents

Spotlight on regional collections

Stay connected to research progress around the globe.

Incorporate more regional perspectives with collections that widen coverage of prominent publications in several geographies. Apply local research findings to global challenges and locate key opinion leaders publishing around the world.

Chinese Science Citation Database:

Track Chinese research trends, top authors, institutions, journals, and more with the Chinese Science Citation Database on the Web of Science. Search content in Chinese or English to locate articles in the core science and engineering journals published in Mainland China. Trace interactions between national and international research communities, discover pockets of activity and centers of excellence, and identify qualified collaborators and experts.

Clarivate partnered with the Chinese Academy of Sciences to host the Chinese Science Citation Database on the Web of Science platform.

1,340
journals

6.6M+
records

1989
backfile depth

SciELO Citation Index

Discover open access research published in Latin America, Spain, Portugal, the Caribbean, and South Africa. Discover new insights, search in several languages, and link to open access full text.

SciELO, the Scientific Electronic Library Online, is a program of the São Paulo Research Foundation for the cooperative publishing of open access journals on the internet. It is supported by the National Council of Scientific and Technological Development and is a partnership with the Latin American and Caribbean Center on Health Sciences Information.

1,466
journals

1M+
records

2002
backfile depth

KCI — Korean Journal Database

KCI Korean Journal Database enables researchers to search and view critically important regional content with international impact. Search content in Korean or English and uncover new research contributions published in South Korean journals.

The KCI Korean Journal database is managed by the National Research Foundation of Korea.

2,865
journals

2M+
records

1980
backfile depth

ARCI Arabic Citation Index

The Arabic Citation Index makes Arabic journals more accessible to researchers worldwide by connecting Arabic scholarly content to the global Web of Science citation network.

Indexing Arabic publications provides local scientific communities with the ability to contribute to national, regional, and international research efforts — facilitating collaboration and extending the Arabic academic footprint.

Funded by the Egyptian government and built by Clarivate, the Arabic Citation Index is searchable in both Arabic and English.

586
journals

179K+
records

2015
backfile depth

Spotlight on specialty collections

Clarivate specialty collections:

BIOSIS databases

Explore a complete view of life sciences research, pinpoint relevant information quickly and investigate our changing world with resources built by experts, for experts. Coverage of serials plus selected conferences, books and patents help you conduct broad literature and precision searches of life sciences research.

BIOSIS databases include Biological Abstracts, BIOSIS Previews and BIOSIS Citation Index. Biological Abstracts covers 22M+ original research articles from 4,625 journals and serials, whereas BIOSIS Previews and BIOSIS Citation Index cover additional scientific content.

5,740
journals

33M+
records

1926
backfile depth

Zoological Record

Zoological Record is the world's oldest continuing database of animal biology and authoritative taxonomic record. Findings from serials plus meetings, reviews, newsletters and more are collated to deliver renowned animal biology coverage for specialists.

3,788
journals

4.8M+
records

1864
backfile depth

Research Commons

A standalone collection of journal output from open metadata sources to help you widen your lens and conduct broader searches that include more social sciences, arts and humanities content and research from the Global South.

32M+
records

2015
backfile depth

Hosted specialty collections:

Take a deeper dive into the literature of a research domain with third-party content.

CABI: CAB Abstracts and Global Health

Advance research on pressing global and local challenges with an expanded view of applied life sciences topics and public health research and policy.

CAB Abstracts is the most comprehensive source of international research information in agriculture, the environment and related applied life sciences. Focus your searches with specialized indexing and vocabulary applied to journals, books, abstracts, published theses, conference proceedings, bulletins, monographs, and technical reports.

Global Health is the definitive international public health database. Gain instant access to research dedicated to national, regional, and international public health topics and capture key medical and health literature not covered by other databases.

CAB Abstracts and Global Health databases are built by the Centre for Agriculture and Bioscience International (CABI) and can be hosted on the Web of Science platform.

8,922
journals

15M+
records

1910
backfile depth

Inspec

Monitor the fast-paced research on hot technology topics with a resource focusing on engineering, physics and computer science fields. Accelerate breakthroughs with Inspec, a scientific and technical database with precise, expert indexing for subject-specific and interdisciplinary research in the fields of engineering, physics and computer science.

Updated weekly, Inspec provides data from journals, conferences and other sources including books, reports, dissertations and videos.

Inspec is built by The Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) and can be hosted on the Web of Science platform.

4,364
journals

26M+
records

1898
backfile depth

MEDLINE

Connect biomedical research to the expansive Web of Science citation network.

MEDLINE is the premier bibliographic database from the U.S. National Library of Medicine (NLM), covering biomedicine and life sciences topics vital to biomedical practitioners, educators, and researchers.

Discover relevant research with wide biomedical coverage and leverage specialized indexing, such as MeSH terms, for precise, accurate searching. Connect papers to the robust Web of Science citation network to streamline citation searches for systematic reviews and capture a wider range of available evidence.

5,272
journals

39M+
records

1950
backfile depth

FSTA — Food Science & Technology Abstracts

Investigate topics relating to every aspect of the food chain with a resource that covers pure and applied research in food science, food technology, and food-related nutrition.

Discover trustworthy scientific articles, patents and other information and conduct comprehensive literature searching in food science and related fields with FSTA.

Trusted by researchers, scientists, students and government bodies in 158 countries across the globe, FSTA is the definitive way to search over fifty years of historic and emerging research in the sciences of food and health.

FSTA is built by International Food Information Services (IFIS) and can be hosted on the Web of Science platform.

1,442
journals

2M+
records

1969
backfile depth

Web of Science XML data and APIs

With flexible options for delivering Web of Science data outside of the platform, you can conduct large-scale data analysis and assessments and populate your research information management systems and business intelligence dashboards with ease.

Web of Science APIs

A suite of APIs support simple and complex searching of Web of Science data, helping researchers and analysts efficiently define and retrieve the data they need for their project.

Custom extractions

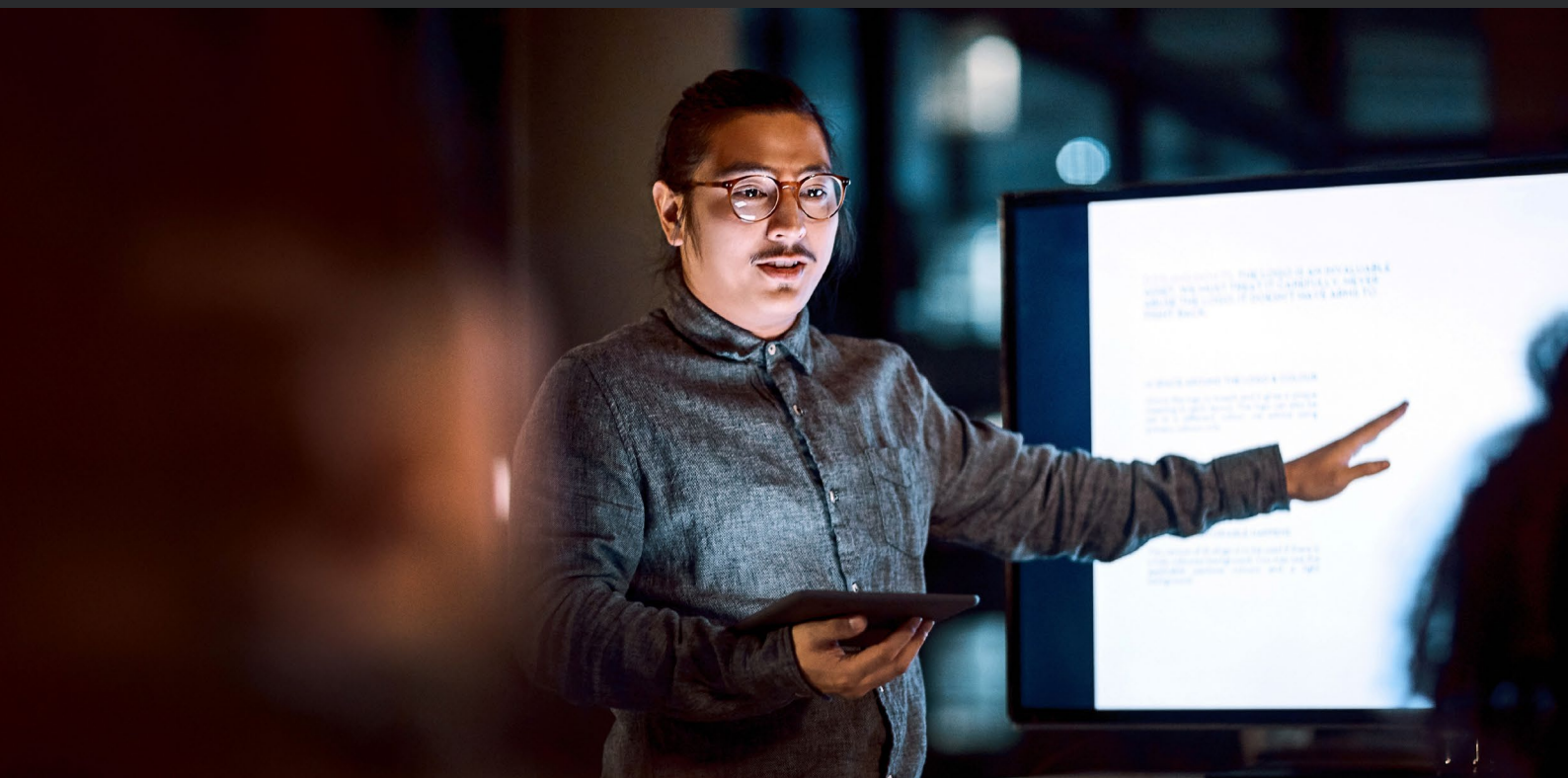
Bespoke data deliveries include data and files that are customized to meet your specific needs. Or save time with pre-defined analytics, such as Citation Reports.

Standard XML feeds

Raw underlying Web of Science metadata for several editions/ databases from 1900 to today supports your large-scale projects.

Ad-hoc XML datasets

Custom slices of raw underlying Web of Science metadata support targeted research activities involving smaller-scale datasets.



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About Clarivate

Clarivate is a leading global provider of transformative intelligence. We offer enriched data, insights & analytics, workflow solutions and expert services in the areas of Academia & Government, Intellectual Property and Life Sciences & Healthcare. For more information, please visit **clarivate.com**.

Contact our experts today:

clarivate.com