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Studying scientific activity from large-scale usage data

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Summary

Science is of significant importance to our society, but we understand very little of the processes that lead to scientific innovation. In this presentation I will provide an overview of our work on large-scale usage data as an early indicator of scientific activity. The MESUR project has in the past 2 years aggregated a large-scale collection of the usage data recorded by some of the world's most significant publishers, aggregators and institutional consortia. The resulting data set has been analyzed to reveal the structural properties of scientific activity in real-time. I will highlight some of our recent work on producing detailed maps of science that reveal how scientists navigate between online scholarly resources. The results indicate that it may be possible to detect or predict the emergence of innovation from temporal changes in the structure of scientific activity. This work underpins efforts to arrive at a more accurate, pro-active evaluation of scientific impact.

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