Overleaf

Collaborative Writing:
What's new at Overleaf in 2021

FCC Week – June 2021

Dr John Hammersley
Co-founder and CEO

www.overleaf.com

Research is increasingly collaborative...

Collaboration networks between researchers in different cities
(built using Scopus data on papers published between 2008 and 2012)

The Worldwide LHC Computing Grid activity captured live by the EGL application in August 2017.
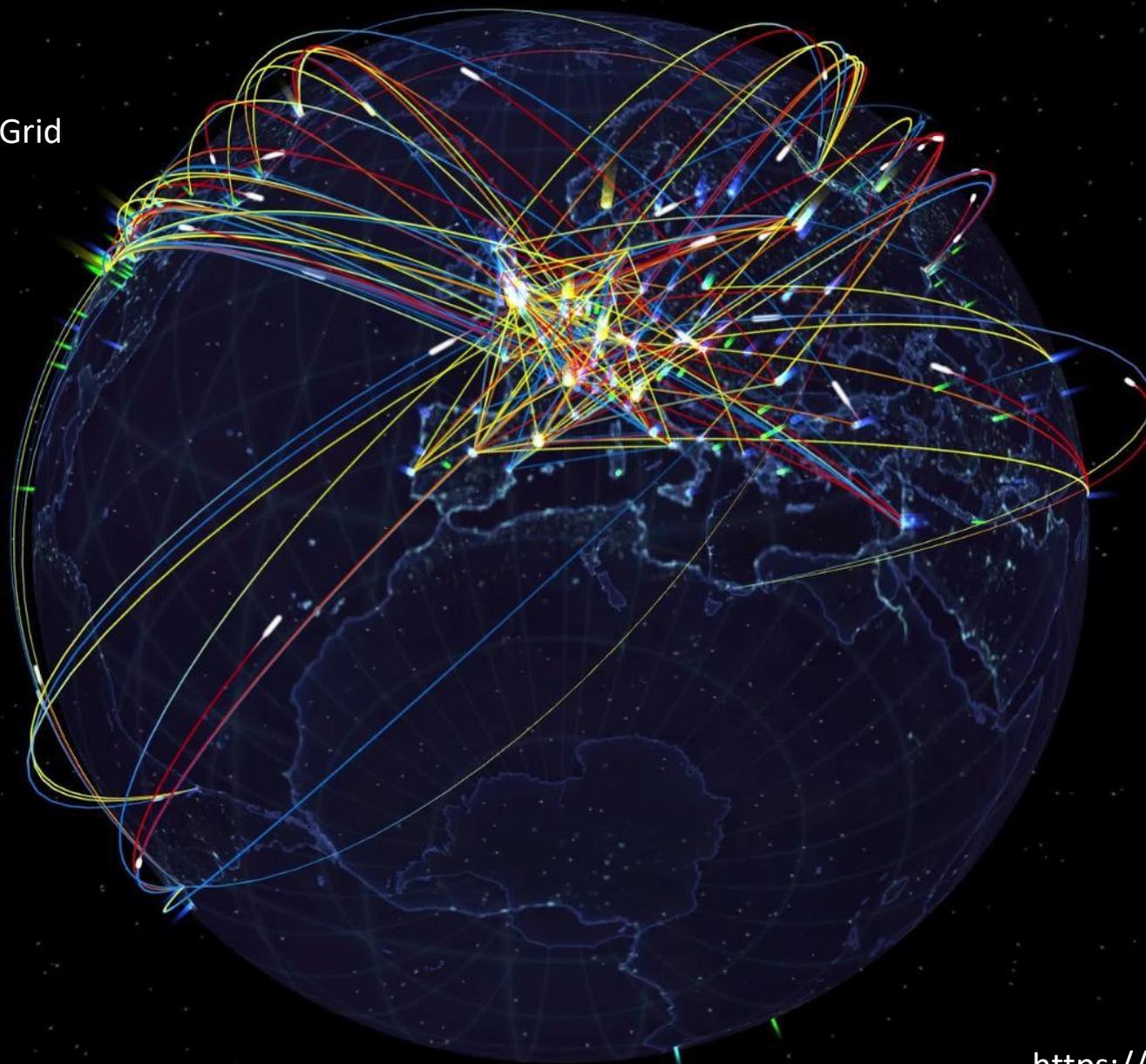
Running jobs: 365644
Active CPU cores: 807139
Transfer rate: 21.54 GiB/sec

This is reflected in research papers being more collaborative...

Proportion of the world's papers produced with more than one international author
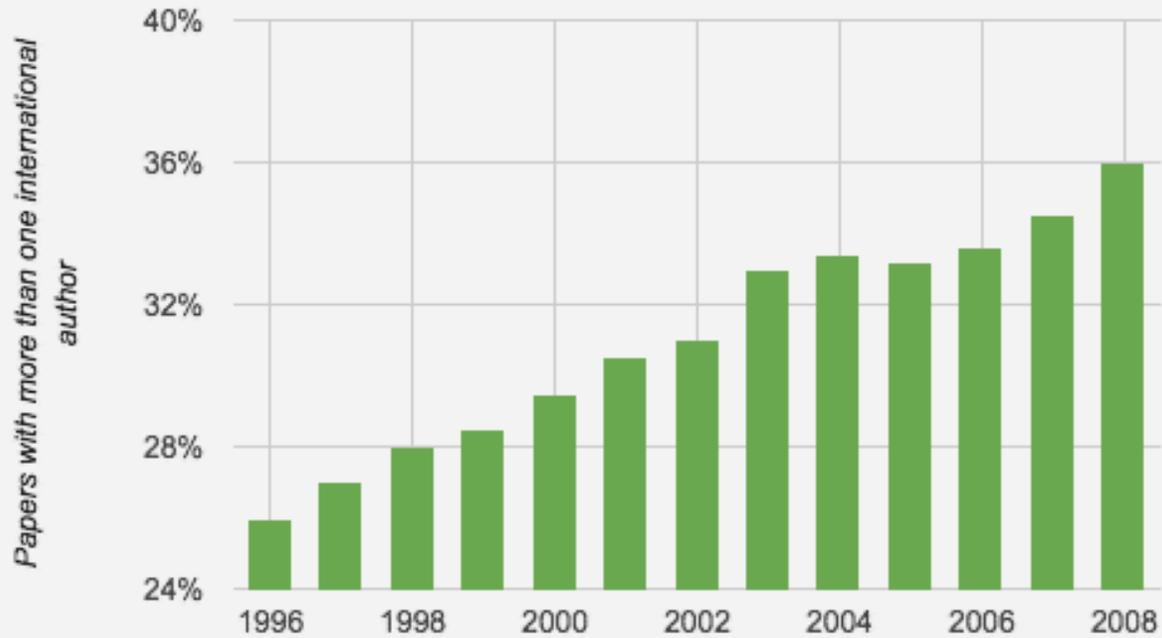
Citations per article versus number of collaborating countries

THE ROYAL SOCIETY

✉ **E-alert**

NATURE | **NEWS**
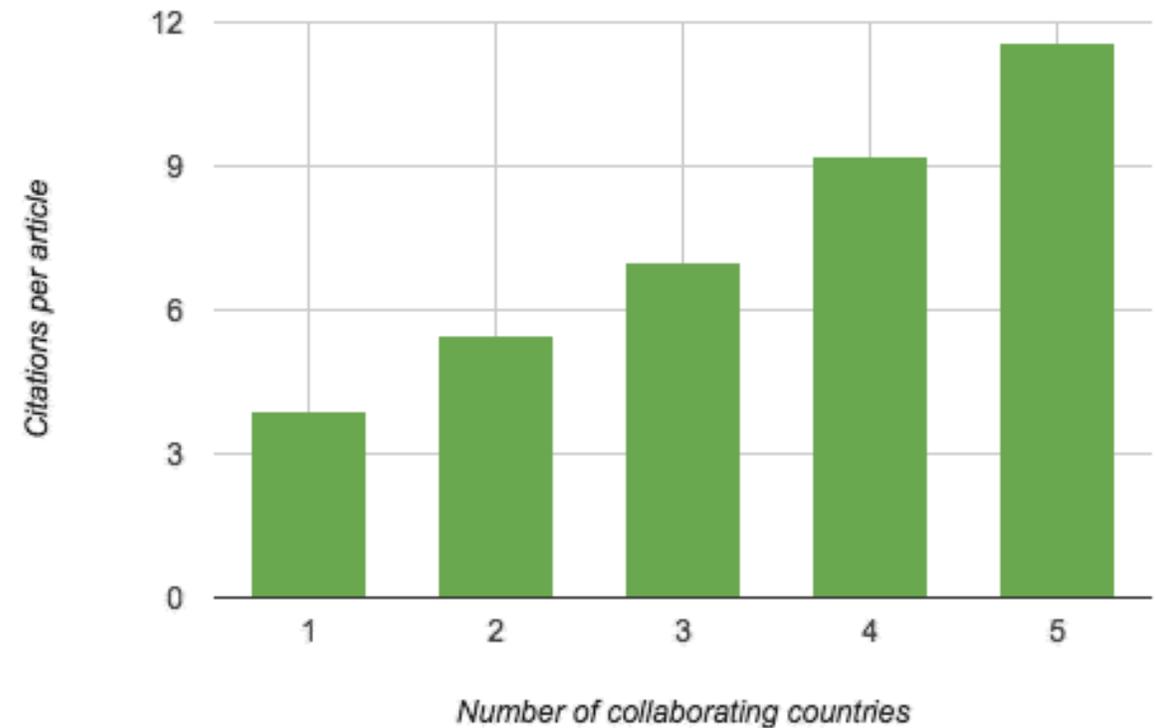
Physics paper sets record with more than 5,000 authors

Detector teams at the Large Hadron Collider collaborated for a more precise estimate of the size of the Higgs boson.

Davide Castelvecchi

15 May 2015

But collaboration can be frustrating...

- Multiple versions of the same document
- Long email chains
- Formatting & typesetting
- Maintaining references
- Long revision cycles
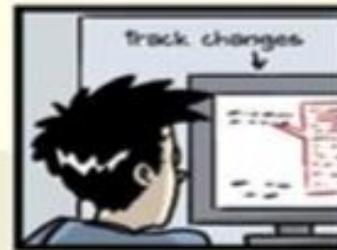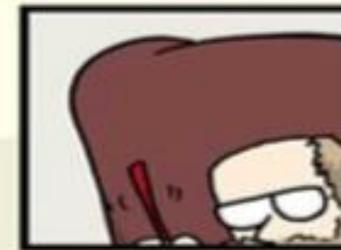
The more people involved, the greater the chance of creating many conflicting versions of a document, all held in silos...
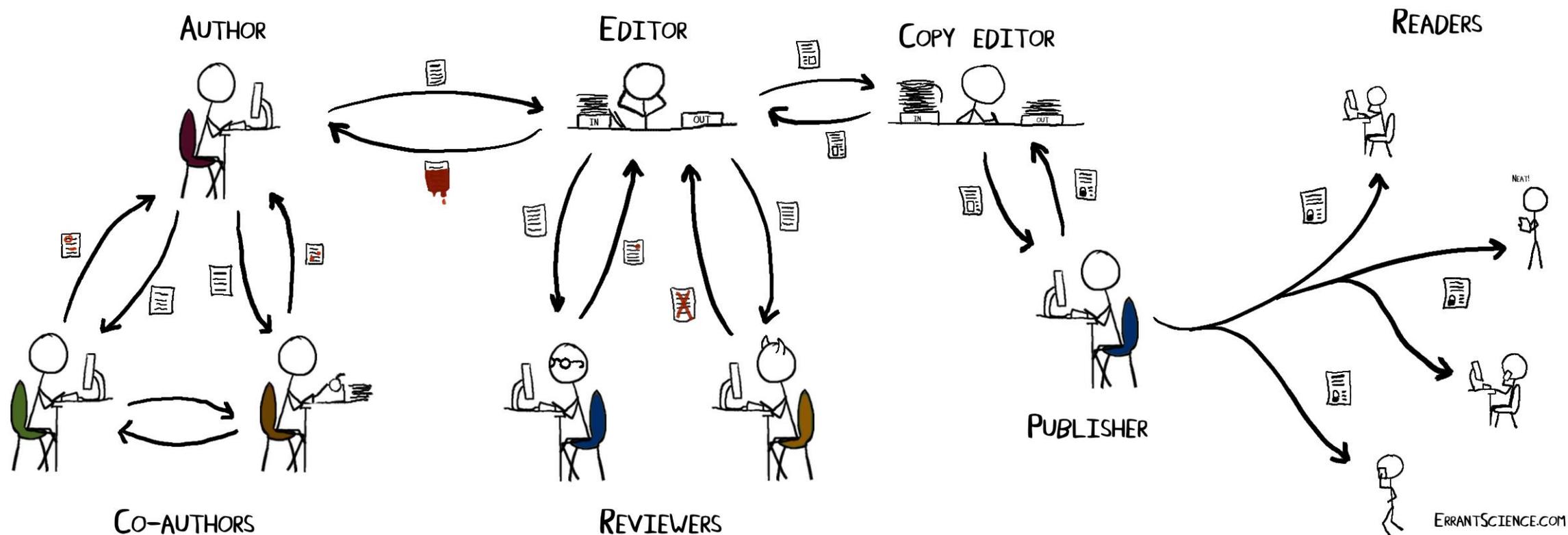
# Overleaf helps by putting the document at the centre, so everyone always has access to the latest version
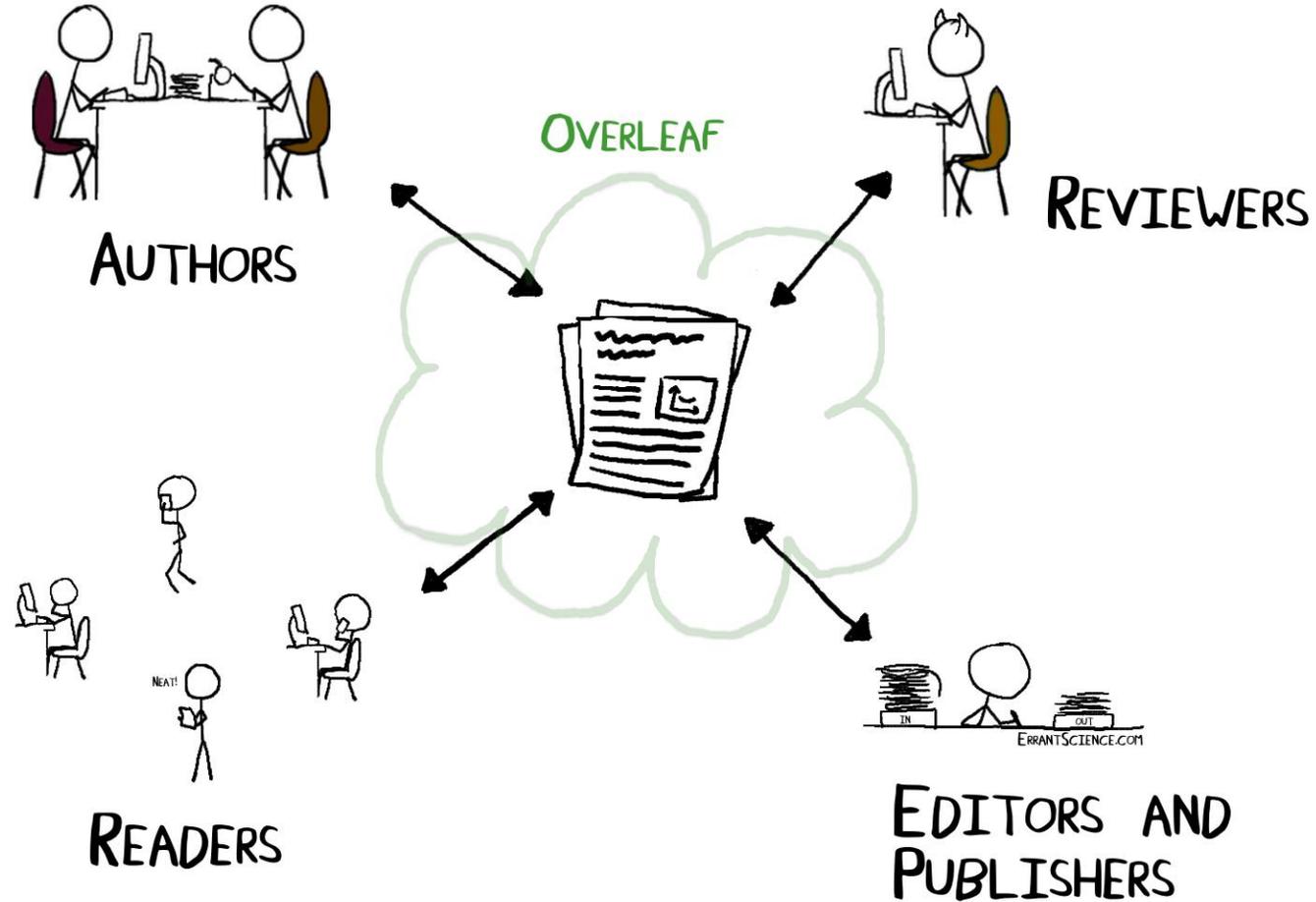
Overleaf also lowers the barrier to those getting started with LaTeX for the first time

Over 8 million people have signed up to use Overleaf since 2012.

This includes 1.8M new users in 2020 alone!

Celebrating over five million users, a quarter million daily actives, and over five years of dedicated user support

Posted by John on November 28, 2019

Earlier this month we hit a number of significant milestones at Overleaf that we'd like to share with you all 😊

Five million users!

There are now over five million user accounts on Overleaf! It's not long since we were announcing hitting the four million user mark, and the continued growth in new sign ups has been amazing to see.

This was announced in a typically understated fashion internally via Slack:

🧑 **Tim**

```
> db.users.count()
5000379
```

Reaching six million users in an unprecedented six months

Posted by John on July 1, 2020

It has certainly been an unexpected six months since the start of 2020. Back on January 1st, when we all celebrated the start of the new year, none of us expected the lockdown and global pandemic that would follow, nor the events in the USA that would galvanise Black Lives Matter around the world.

In amongst all of this, in early June we reached the milestone of six million users worldwide, after hitting five million last November. We also saw our best-ever month for active users in May, driven both by the natural growth of Overleaf we've seen each year since we started back in 2012, and also the accelerated move to online collaborative tools in the wake of the Coronavirus pandemic which has swept across the globe in a few short months.

Six million users is an amazing milestone to reach, although I think we would all have preferred to reach it in simpler times. But even in these times—or perhaps especially in these times—it's worth taking a brief moment to recognise this

And Overleaf has been adopted by over 130 universities and institutions around the world, including CERN!

What's new at Overleaf in 2021?

New **Compile Errors UI** – making it easier to find and fix errors quickly when they occur.

- Context: Errors accumulating in projects is one of the biggest causes of headaches for authors.

- This manifests itself to us in support tickets, where authors need help finding and fixing the errors.

- We wanted to find a balance between LaTeX's two modes: the strict 'halt on errors', and the more permissive 'continue on errors'.
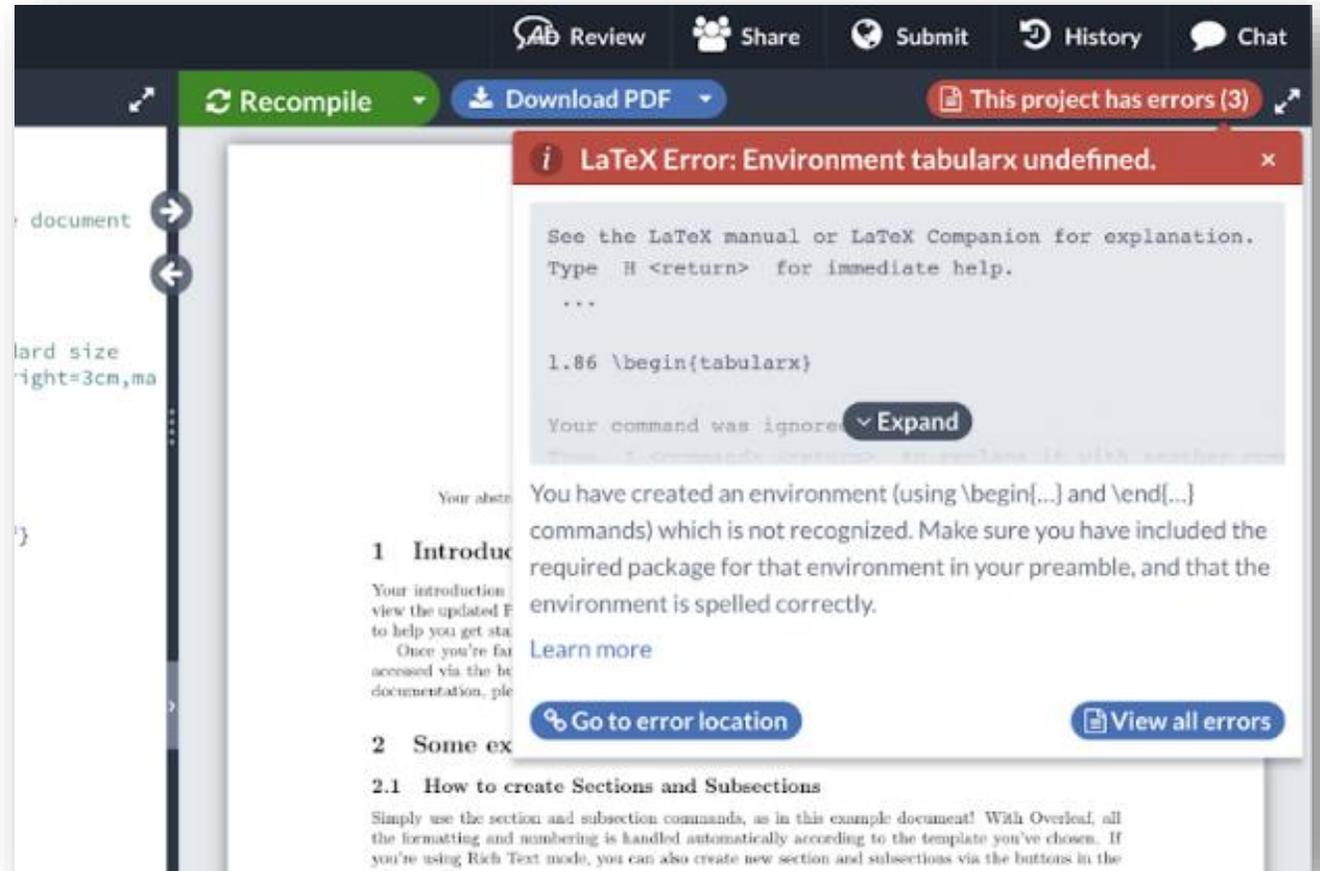
What's new at Overleaf in 2021?

New **Compile Errors UI** – making it easier to find and fix errors quickly when they occur.

- Our new compile errors UI makes errors more prominent and easier to deal with, whilst still providing the PDF where possible.

- We are testing two variations; for the leading option, tests show it reduces the number of projects with accumulated errors by ~19%.

- Reducing accumulated errors helps during collaboration, and in avoiding issues with submission & publication.

- Currently undergoing a phased rollout; expected to be available to all users in July.
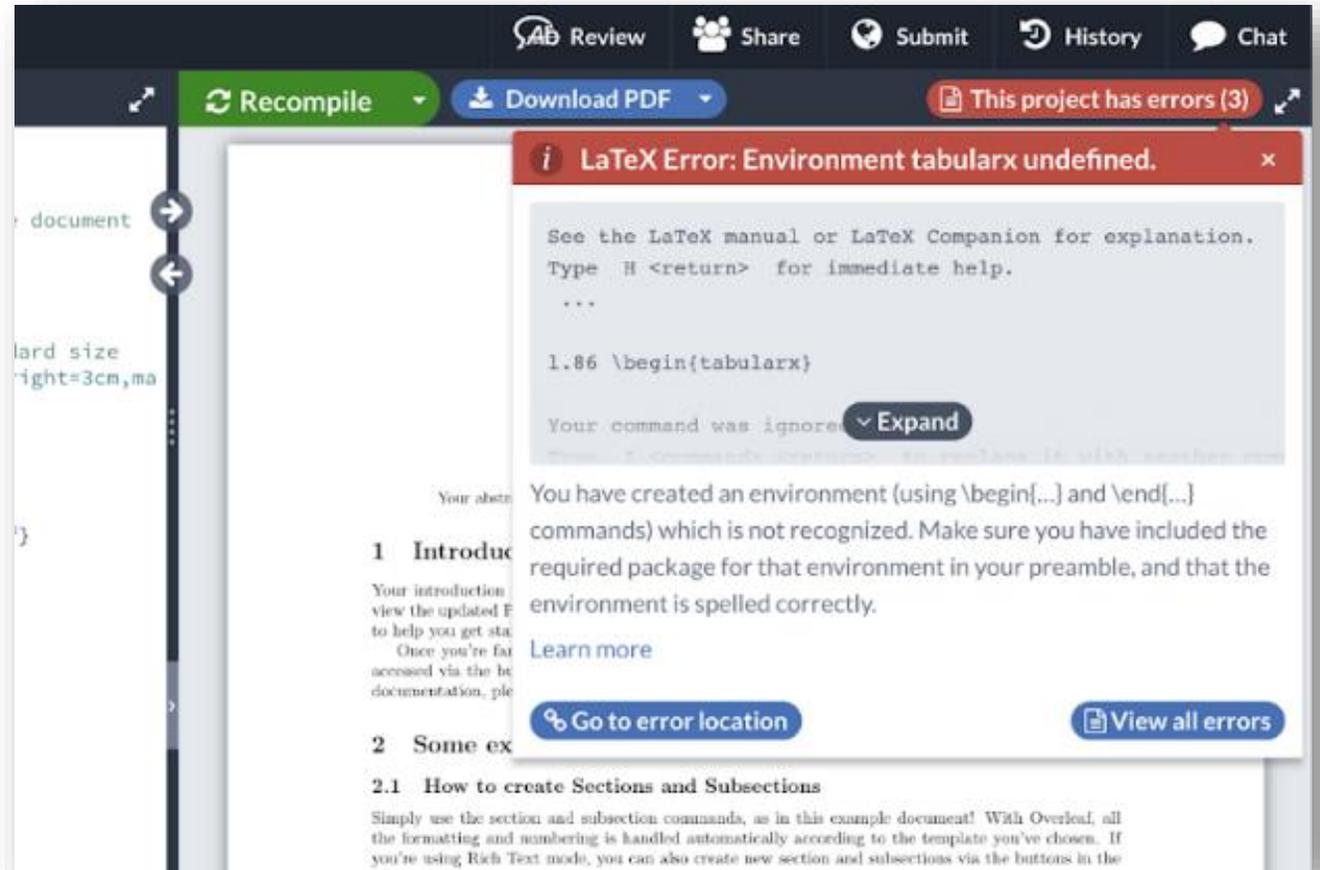
What's new at Overleaf in 2021?

New **Compile Errors UI** – related UI improvements.

- This new feature rollout also incorporates a number of related UI improvements, including:
  - The download PDF button is more prominent and clearly labelled
  - It's easier to download other output files
  - The "Recompile from Scratch" option provides a more intuitive way to clear the cached files
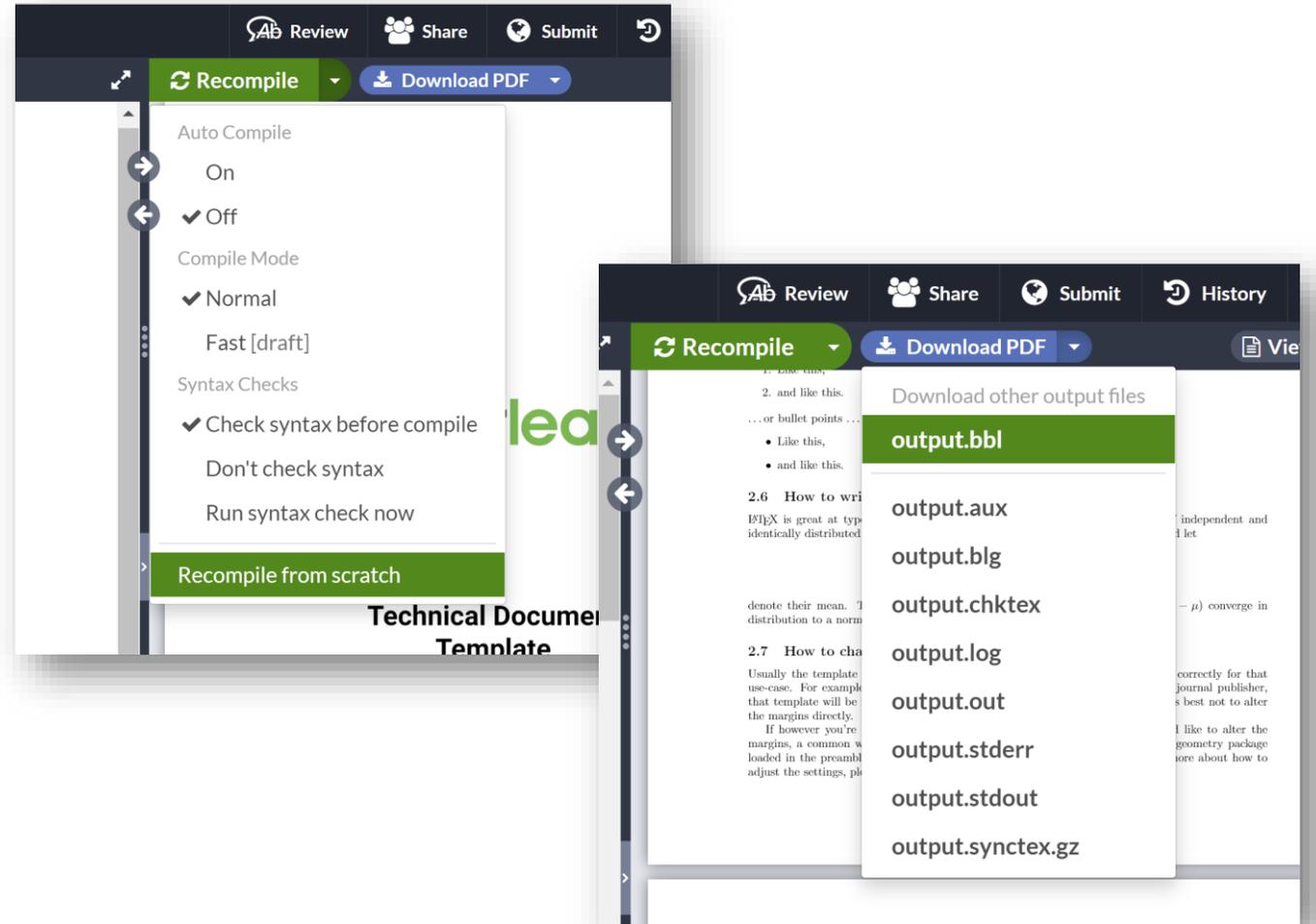
What's new at Overleaf in 2021?

New **Symbol Palette** – provides a quick and easy way to look up and insert symbols.

- The Symbol Palette is currently available to users enrolled in the Overleaf beta programme.

- It provides a quick and easy way to look up and insert symbols, right within your document.

- Some symbols require you to use extra packages - if you hover on the symbol, the tooltip will tell you which package you need:
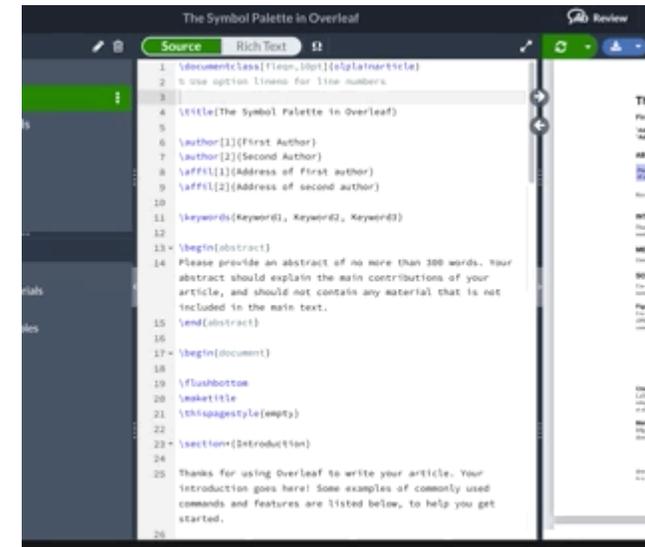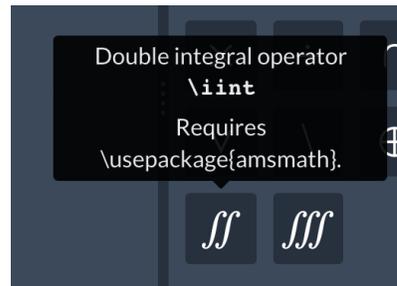
And one from late 2020!

New **File Outline** – making it easier to navigate your way around your document.

- You can view the logical structure of your .tex file using the File Outline feature.

- This displays most standard LaTeX sectioning elements in a sidebar to allow quick navigation within the open .tex file.

- The File Outline is displayed at the bottom of the left pane, which also contains the file tree.
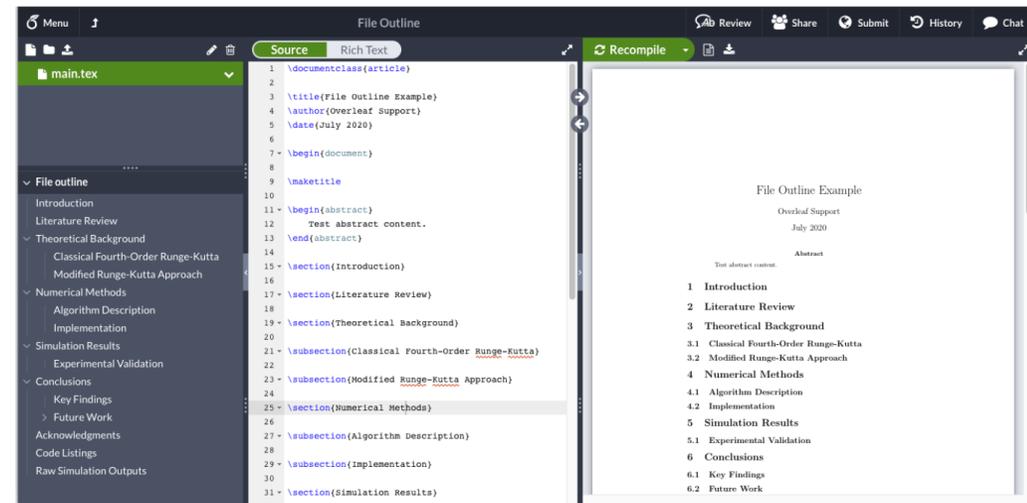
We also recently wrote a paper on the merging of Overleaf and ShareLaTeX

It won the SIGCHI Best Case Study Award
at the recent ACM CHI2021 conference!

- The case study describes and discusses the user-centered approach taken to successfully merge two established online LaTeX editors: Overleaf and ShareLaTeX.

- Paulo and Sven presented the Case Study on 10th May 2021, and you can see a recording of Paulo here: https://youtu.be/2gDX3nS9lGc

- The full case study is available here: https://dl.acm.org/doi/10.1145/3411763.3443455
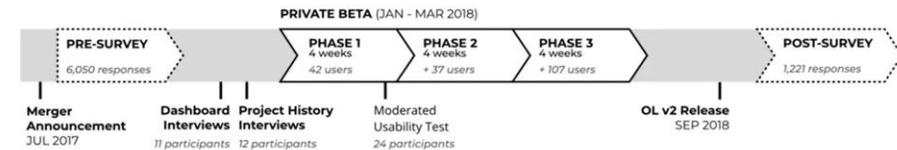
Visit our blog / webinars for new features, case studies & updates

www.overleaf.com/blog

www.overleaf.com/events/webinars

Blog

Case Study: CFEngine gets a document collaboration boost with Overleaf

Posted by Mary Anne on June 8, 2021

The CFEngine product development, product management and community team used Overleaf to help improve the collaboration surrounding the creation of a very important technical white paper. The white paper compared CFEngine to Ansible in the ways both solutions address the scalability challenge in server configuration.

The white paper was co-authored by Vratislav Podzimek, Ole Elgesem, Nick Anderson and Cody Valle. Vratislav describes the process of authoring this white paper on behalf of the team.

Read More

Tags:

Overleaf Webinars

Intro to Overleaf Part I – Beginner

Whether you're new to working with LaTeX, Overleaf or both; or just want an insight into the best way to work with your projects in Overleaf, watch this 30 minute on demand webinar, where we cover:

- Background
- Overleaf and LaTeX Basics
- Creating a new project
- Using Rich Text Mode
- Editing your project
- Sharing your project
- Questions & Answers

Watch Webinar Now

Intro to Overleaf Pt.II – Intermediate

Our Intro to Overleaf Part II:Intermediate Features webinar is perfect if you want a deeper insight into how to best use Overleaf and make the most of your account access or subscription. In this webinar we cover:

- Creating a new project
- Adding Images and Tables
- Uploading a bibliography
- Fixing errors
- Sharing your project
- Downloading or Submitting your project
- Questions & Answers

Watch Webinar Now

Thanks for listening!

Dr. John Hammersley
Co-founder and CEO, Overleaf

Contact email: john@overleaf.com

www.overleaf.com