Author’s response to reviews

Title: Moving toward the automation of the systematic review process: A summary of discussions at the Second Meeting of International Collaboration for the Automation of Systematic Reviews (ICASR)

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First we would like to thank the reviewers for taking their time and enthusiasm for the goal of ISCAR.

Reviewer reports:

Reviewer #1: I do not have that much to say. I was at the Vienna meeting and was not able to be there in Philadelphia - but this sounds very much like what I would have expected of that second meeting. This is not a research paper but is an account of discussions. I have no idea if it is accurate or it misses important things that were talked about in Philadelphia - but that would seem unlikely from the collaborative nature of the authorship and this group.

This is a hugely important initiative and it is really announced in this article for the first time. It would be great if Systematic Reviews could foster this initiative even more, perhaps by being the journal to go to for the details of each of the evolving software on the 'backbone' they describe.

Thank you – we need no edits requested.
Reviewer #2: This is a detailed and clear summary of a meeting on the important topic of the automation of systematic reviews. The meeting was clearly hugely interesting and stimulated some fruitful discussion on many ideas for future directions and the steps that must be taken both now and in the longer term. These include practical issues and cultural considerations. It is therefore of great importance that such a summary be published and disseminated widely such that awareness of these issues be raised and cultural discussions can take place.

I wonder if the authors would like to consider structuring the paper slightly differently? In such a way as to give prominence to the various needs and challenges, next steps and so on. These are currently slightly lost under the 'Purpose' heading. However I appreciate this may disrupt the chronological nature of the report which is meant to reflect the progression of discussion in the meeting.

Thank you for this suggestions, we hope you will accept that prefer to stick with the chronological description.

This is an exciting initiative and sounds like a great group to be leading!

There are a couple of minor typos;
"second meeting ot" (Abstract)
Corrected- thank you – how did we miss this on the first line 😞

"This diversity was intended to communicate broadly about progress..." p2 consider rewording?

Yes this needs rewording: the current text is
This diversity of participants was intended to ensure effective communication with numerous stakeholders about progress toward automation of systematic reviews and stimulate discussion about potential solutions to identified challenges.

"prowless" Acknowledgements
Corrected