Editorial

AI in Life Science Research – The Road Ahead

Jürgen Bajorath*

Department of Life Science Informatics and Data Science, B-IT, Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität, Friedrich-Hirzebruch-Allee 5/6, D-53115 Bonn, Germany

This Editorial introduces Volume 2 of Artificial Intelligence in the Life Sciences (AILSCI).

Year One in Review

With 27 publications comprising Volume 1, the editors and publisher of *AILSCI* are pleased with the Journal's first year. Importantly, with an acceptance rate of ∼33% the bar for publication in *AILSCI* has been high and this will continue going forward. Striving for high scientific quality is a core value of *AILSCI*. Furthermore, we have been able to keep average review and publication times well below competitor journals, thanks to extra efforts by editors and reviewers and a -for the most part- quick turnaround by production.

Editorial Board

Interacting with our international Editorial Board (EB) has been another highlight in year one and we are pleased that our current EB will continue to support the scientific development of *AILSCI*. In 2022, we welcome several additional members of the EB, and these new appointments will be announced in due course.

Article Categories

A minor adjustment has been made to *AILSCI's* article portfolio. Since there were no qualifying *Controversial Views* submissions in 2021, this manuscript type has been combined with *Opinion* articles to the new *Viewpoint* type, which is expected to be broader in its scope than the two original types of articles. Apart from this minor change, our article categories remain unchanged (for further details, please, see the Guide for Authors).

Ease of Submission

Initial experiences with the "Your Paper Your Way" policy for authors and the production of the final manuscripts have been very positive. *AILSCI* will continue to alleviate formatting constraints for submission, which makes the process much easier for authors (of course, manuscripts need to be submitted in a format adhering to generally accepted scientific standards).

Themed Article Collections

In early 2022, we will launch several *Themed Article Collections* (*TACs*), corresponding to special issues in other journals. These TACs focus on, for example, female investigators in AI, investigators in industrial settings, or AI investigators and their contributions from selected geographical regions such as Latin America or Asia. These initiatives will be spearheaded by EB members, other guest editors, and the editors of *AILSCI*. It is hoped that the newly introduced *TACs* will spark the interest of many prospective authors in AI R&D with relevance to the life sciences.

Reusable Reviews

As a part of *AILSCI's* dedication to open science and a transparent scientific dialogue, beginning in 2022, we also offer the option to consider reviews from other reputable journals on a case-by-case basis. For example, it frequently happens that scientifically sound manuscripts are rejected on the basis of reviews questioning the novelty of the work, its general interest, or practical relevance. While such assessments are not unreasonable per se –and also depend on a journal's standards and publication culture– for authors, this can be a frustrating experience. Hence, authors facing priority-based reviews and decisions by other journals are invited to re-submit their manuscript in its current format to *AILSCI* together with the reviews and an explanatory cover letter. In such cases, the editors will reserve the option to make a decision on the submission based upon available reviews as well as their own assessment of the manuscript, without another round of peer review. Going forward, this option is termed "*Reusable Reviews*" and interested authors are invited to make use of it beginning this year. As is the case for any submission, external reviews accompanying a manuscript submitted to *AILSCI* are subject to the confidentiality of the editorial process.

Article Processing Charges

Last but not least, it is also noted that there will be no Article Processing Charges (APCs) for *AILSCI* in 2022.

We wish to thank all contributors to Volume 1 of *AILSCI* and look forward to receiving many interesting submissions in 2022!

* Corresponding author. Tel: +49-228-7369-100, Fax: +49-228-7369-101
E-mail address: bajorath@bit.uni-bonn.de

Declaration of interests

The author declares that he has no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.