

Editorial

The continuing growth and development of CBI

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We wrote an editorial in November 2001 about changes in our publication processes. About that time, Elsevier had acquired Academic Press and some immediate changes were necessary, but we knew that most of those concerning CBI would come into effect 6–12 months later. In addition to having a new publisher, many journals like ours have been experiencing changes that come from an acceleration of movement into the modern electronic era. Time was required to develop the necessary web-tools, sites, back-up mechanisms and so forth needed for efficient operation via the Internet. This editorial tells you about further developments and discusses several important matters concerning the future of CBI. The most pressing reason for doing so is that CBI has indeed turned a large corner, from a journal facing extinction in 1998 to a revitalised one with the most up-to-date technology behind it, but there is no room for complacency. CBI is the official journal of the *International Federation for Cell Biology*, and as such needs to be more strongly supported by all members of societies affiliated through their national cell biology organisations to the *International Federation for Cell Biology*. Not only must we be truly international, but we also have to improve both the quantity and quality of manuscripts being submitted in order to help raise our impact factor. This will be discussed below, along with other relevant issues.

1. ScienceDirect

All the journals that were on IDEAL, Academic Press' online journal library, have been moved onto Elsevier's ScienceDirect. Designed to serve the needs of the researcher, ScienceDirect offers immediate access to

the abstracts, journal and reference work articles needed for research. With over two million articles available online, an expanding suite of backfiles (titles loaded from Volume 1, Issue 1), and access to the leading STM bibliographic databases, ScienceDirect is an invaluable tool for over nine million scientists around the world. Journal sample copies, tables of contents and abstracts are freely available and CBI can be found on ScienceDirect at: <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/journal/10656995>.

Articles are available on ScienceDirect in a seamlessly linked, fully searchable html format, as well as paginated PDF. Not only this, but the 'Save as Citation' alert function allows you to set up an e-mail update that notifies you each time the article is cited—an excellent way of keeping track of how your own research is being used. You can also set up a personal profile to ensure you are kept up-to-date with publications in your fields of interest.

2. New electronic submission procedure

With the continuing growth in the number of authors using the Internet for all facets of their work, many now prefer to submit their manuscripts electronically. Due to the considerable benefits of e-submission over traditional methods, Elsevier has created a new online e-submission service for CBI that allows authors to submit their articles with ease and speed within a secure web environment.

We would like to invite you, as an author, to submit your next article to CBI electronically via: <http://authors.elsevier.com/issn/10656995>.

This easy-to-use submission system features a wide range of functions and capabilities designed to streamline the submission procedure:

- Step-by-step instructions assist authors throughout the entire submission process

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Table 1

Our competition, in terms of number of papers published in 2001, the 2001 ISI impact factor based on data from 2000 and 1999 and the percentage of articles published during these 2 years that have not been cited

Title	Papers 2001 ^a	2001 IF (ISI) ^a	JCR 2 year uncited ^a (%)
CBI	145	0.942	48.64
Cell	353	29.219	0.43
Journal of Cell Biology	462	12.915	0.59
Experimental Cell Research	309	5.096	14.60
Molecular and Cellular Biology	784	9.836	2.24
Journal of Cell Science	433	6.213	6.40
Journal of Cell Physiology	165	4.285	14.71
European Journal of Cell Biology	86	2.244	23.67

^a Copyright ISI Journal Citation Report 2001.

- Submitted articles are automatically converted to PDF files for fast and easy downloading, printing and reviewing
- Information can be accessed from anywhere, anytime—authors simply login to view submitted articles, make revisions, or check the status of the reviewing process

Online submission for CBI is integrated into the Author Gateway, Elsevier's new online service for authors. The Gateway provides an integrated website, allowing authors to view and access information and tools to speed up the publication process, as well as stay informed of new journal content and books.

As well as benefiting authors, e-submission facilitates the entire editorial process:

- Submitted file is sent by the Editor to selected reviewers via e-mail
- System automatically informs authors of every step of the peer review process
- Data is regularly backed up on Elsevier's secure servers
- After acceptance authors can track their paper through the stages of production right up to publication

Register with the Author Gateway and submit your paper online at: <http://authors.elsevier.com/>.

Authors can still submit manuscripts as hard copy but electronic versions are preferred. Hard copies do not need to be sent if a copy is submitted electronically, unless requested.

3. Initiatives

We are introducing a 'Methodology' section to the journal. The papers we are seeking should be short, succinct and precise in detailing some new or modified method that would be welcome by many other scientists working in cell and molecular biology. Such papers may lead to many people employing the new techniques and

this will increase the citation frequency of the CBI articles. The same can be said of *minireviews*. We welcome you sending us such articles under your own initiative at any time; do not wait to be asked. Also remember that we look for articles concerning the *training and education of cell biologists*.

4. Format improvements

The page format and reference style of CBI has changed slightly and further information on the new reference style can be found in the Guide to Authors. Authors should follow these guidelines carefully as the Editorial Office will not reformat papers.

5. Impact factor and citation problems

The impact factor has risen sharply, but the previous years when we were in the doldrums are still dragging us down because impact factors are calculated on data based on the previous 2 years' citations. We have little doubt that our impact factor will rise again at the end of this year, but we have missed a number of excellent submissions simply because our current level is not high enough. This is a catch-22 situation, and the only way to get around it is for people to submit to us without dragging in the impact factor argument. Where grant money or promotion prospects are not on the line, we hope that outstanding scientists can be persuaded to send us top quality papers. Table 1 gives our present ratings, and we confidently expect 2003 to show a further big jump in our rating.

There is probably going to be a major change in the importance of the old impact factor—old because it seems to have been running for about 40 years or more. Electronically, each paper published on the web has a digital object identifying (*doi*) number. The number of 'hits' it receives are monitored and the number of full text article downloads can be recorded. The number of times it is cited should also become a parameter that one

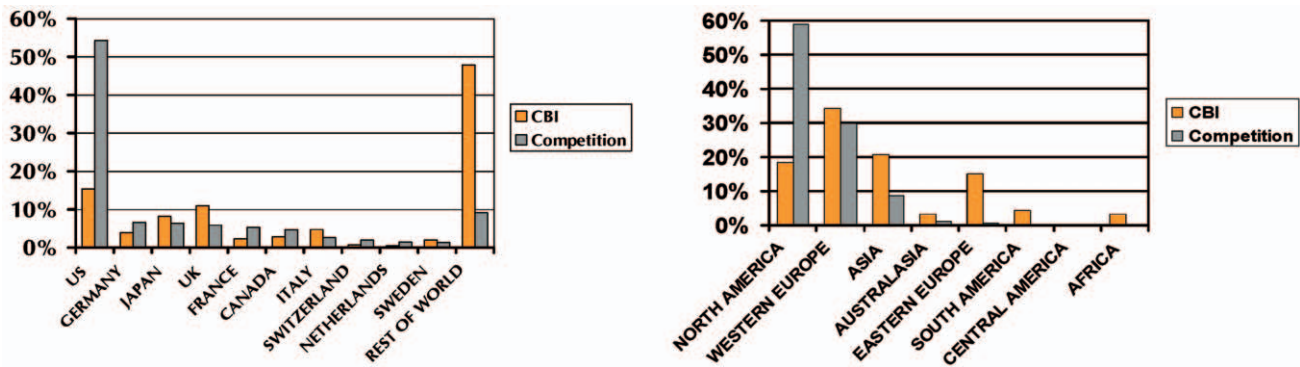


Fig. 1. Distributions of published manuscripts; left: by country; right: by region. Our competition has far poorer coverage of the globe than CBI (orange). This is our strength, and it will make us the premier cell journal serving the world in future.

can get from one's own PC. Thus the impact factor of the future will not be a general performance rating for a journal, but a true indication of the 'popularity' (for want of a better word) of each individual paper. This is a much better way forward and less invidious than the present impact rating method.

6. Help with manuscript presentation in fluent English

We also feel that our truly international status can provide a platform whereby the best papers coming out of Russia, China, Japan, India, Brazil and other such countries will come preferentially to us. If you look at the two graphs in Fig. 1, you will appreciate that our spread of publications in a geographical sense is far wider than many of the top cell journals. This is important, and it is something we actively promote. To encourage this, we can help with the improvement of manuscripts through a now consolidated editorial services operation under the name 'BioMedES-Biological and Medical Editorial Services' (<http://www.biomedes.com>). This incorporates our 'Manuscript Presentation Service'. Charges are modest, and authors from countries with poor economies can negotiate with the editor for an appropriate reduction in fees.

7. Refereeing

The perennial problem with getting papers peer reviewed is the time spent chasing referees. If we had contracts and payment, this would make the process faster. We do not propose paying people for refereeing articles since this would quickly make the journal non-viable. However, we now have a back-up system whereby we can send manuscripts to be screened for their scientific merit even if only one referee is a true expert in the field. Also our number of advisory staff is increasing, so that we can secure two reports more quickly in future. Electronic operations via the net has not significantly affected the speed of peer review for most papers, but can make the checking of high quality papers very much faster.

8. International editorial assistance

To increase our world coverage, we are still seeking regional editors. India and China will be the next to consider. From Russia, we now have Elena Nadhezdina with us, and the North American regional editor is Greenfield (Kip) Sluder. We have recently recruited Consuelo de la Torre (Madrid) as a new editorial adviser. She will strengthen our cell cycle aspects along with John Bryant on the plant cell side.