

Introductory Editorial

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It is with the greatest pleasure that I warmly announce the launch of *Immunology and Immunogenetic Insights*, a new peer-reviewed open-access journal published by Libertas Academica. *Immunology and Immunogenetic Insights* will devote itself to all aspects of adaptive and innate immunity in health and disease. Methodology will not of itself be a restraint. The journal will include clinical applications; immunotherapy and immunodiagnostics; comparative, evolutionary, and structural immunology; immunogenetics; immunomics; and immunological physiology and pathophysiology, including immunological disorders and immunodeficiency.

Given my own interests, encompassing both experimental and theoretical aspects of immunology, I am keen for *Immunology and Immunogenetic Insights* to explore the full gamut of the immune sciences. It is my hope and intention that the journal will be enlightened by an open and inclusive attitude. Increasingly-important Cinderella disciplines - enabling technologies, theory and modelling, and bio-informatics - will not be ignored. Vaccinology, in all its nuanced forms, will also find a home here. In particular, I am eager to see papers that tackle immune applications of modern and emerging multi-disciplinary post-genomic disciplines such as synthetic, chemical, and systems biology. Systems biology in particular, with its emphasis on rigorous quantitation and addressing biological system as a whole should generate significant dividends for the science of immunology.

Increasingly, immunology and vaccinology find themselves at a pivotal decision point in their history. After a century of empirical research, they are poised, perhaps, to reinvent themselves as a fully-quantitative, genome-based science. Immunology and vaccinology face the perennial challenge common to all post-genomic disciplines: how best to capitalize on a potentially overwhelming deluge of new data delivered by high-throughput technologies, which is both complex and delivered on a seemingly unimaginable scale. Immunology and vaccinology, and those involved in their practice, must therefore increasingly look for their salvation to the modern and forward-thinking perspective offered by systems biology and other embryonic disciplines both experimental and computational: the journals such practitioners read must likewise reflect these new approaches.

Immunology and Immunogenetic Insights will compete head-on with several existing subscription-based journals. However, there is clearly a niche for the new journal, since all articles will be accessible without restriction to all internet users worldwide. This freedom is coupled to rigorous, fair and prompt standards of peer review, which will be undertaken by two or more leading experts in the relevant area. Open access publishing has developed in response to problems inherent within conventional print journals, such as high subscription prices and restrictive copyright policies preventing authors from reaching all but a tiny proportion of their potential audience. Open access journals cost nothing to read and are freely accessible via the World Wide Web.

Immunology and Immunogenetic Insights will only be published online. The visual impact of articles will be high and equal to that of the best hard-copy publications. In contrast to print-based journals, the Libertas Academica electronic format will allow for the use of digital technologies. It permits the inclusion of large data sets, from field and from laboratory studies, links to other web pages, animations, slide shows, video clips and unlimited colour, all without additional charge. Authors retain copyright of their work and can grant anyone the right to reproduce and disseminate it, provided that it is correctly cited and no errors are introduced, under the Creative Commons "CC-BY" licence.

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In hard-copy journals, the costs of publication are met by subscriptions, paid by the reader. In *Immunology and Immunogenetic Insights*, as in other open access journals, these costs are borne by the author in the form of a publication processing fee. Many grant-awarding bodies recognise the value and growing importance of open access publishing. They often allow their funds to be used for PPFs. Fee waivers and discounts are available on a case-by-case basis. *Immunology and Immunogenetic Insights* and Libertas Academica shall make every reasonable effort to prevent lack of funds impeding our aim to publish the best science, irrespective of authorship or country of origin.

It seems unlikely, in the short term at least, that online, open access journals will supplant the traditional print format, although such a trend may

increase in time. Yet it does seem likely that the benefits of online publication, and the extra opportunities that digital technologies can give to authors, will be increasingly recognised. Open access is of huge potential benefit to researchers working in institutions around the world unable to subscribe to a full range of journals. It is my hope and my expectation that *Immunology and Immunogenetic Insights* will attract manuscripts of the highest quality and that these manuscripts will prove to be of great benefit to readers of the journal.

For further information on what we hope will be an exciting and highly useful new journal, please click on the “about this journal” link on the journal’s web page.