

Introductory Editorial

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I am pleased to announce the launch of *Ophthalmology and Eye Diseases*—a new peer reviewed open access journal published by Libertas Academica. *Ophthalmology and Eye Diseases* is an open access, peer reviewed journal covering all aspects of ophthalmology and vision science, especially the prevention, diagnosis and management of disorders of the eye. Related pathophysiology, genetics and epidemiology are also included. Articles describing clinical and/or basic research findings are equally encouraged contributing to a broad readership and facilitating new ideas and approaches to vision related studies both in the clinic and the lab.

The journal will be competing head-on with a number of existing subscription-based journals. However, there is clearly a niche for *Ophthalmology and Eye Diseases* in that all articles will be accessible without any access boundaries to Internet users throughout the world. Another major benefit is that any vision scientist can contribute, not only those in major institutions. These freedoms are coupled with rigorous, fair and prompt standards of peer review.

Ophthalmology and Eye Diseases is published exclusively online. Articles will follow a consistent format so that the visual impact will be high and equal to that of the best hard-copy publications. In contrast to paper-based journals, however, the electronic format allows the full use of digital technologies and permits the inclusion of large data sets, links to other web pages, animations, slide shows, video clips and unlimited colour, all at no additional charge. Open access means that all articles are freely available to everyone, worldwide, and at no cost to the reader. Authors retain copyright of their work and can grant anyone the right to reproduce and disseminate it, provided that the article is correctly cited and no errors are introduced, under the Creative Commons “CC-BY” licence.

In hard-copy journals, the costs of publication are met by subscriptions, paid by the reader. In *Ophthalmology and Eye Diseases*, 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 of open access publishing by allowing their funds to be used for publication processing fees. Fee waivers and discounts are available on a case-by-case basis, and we will make every effort to ensure that lack of funds does not impede the overall objective of publishing the best science, irrespective of authorship or country of origin.

I do not foresee that open access, online journals, such as *Ophthalmology and Eye Diseases* will totally replace the traditional print format in the immediate future, although this may be an increasing trend with time. I am certain, however, that the benefits of online publication, and the extra opportunities that digital technologies give to authors, will be increasingly recognised. Open access is of huge benefit to the researchers working in institutions around the world where institutional libraries are unable to afford subscription fees for a full range of journals.

Peer review is undertaken by at least two leading experts in the area of the manuscript to help ensure quality and accuracy of the articles. I expect that *Ophthalmology and Eye Diseases* will attract manuscripts of the highest quality which are of the greatest possible benefit to readers.

I wish to thank the editors who have agreed to be part of *Ophthalmology and Eye Diseases*. We have assembled a talented and diverse group of scientists and clinicians who will help shape 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.

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