

Human Parasitic Diseases—communicating new knowledge equitably and logically

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I am pleased to announce the launch of *Human Parasitic Diseases*—a new peer reviewed open access journal published by Libertas Academica.

The journal will be competing head-on with a number of existing subscription-based journals. However, there is clearly a niche for the new journal. The reason for this is that all journal articles will be accessible without any access boundaries, to all internet users throughout the world. Another major benefit of open access online journals is that anyone can contribute, and not only those in major institutions. These freedoms are coupled with rigorous, fair and prompt standards of peer review. Since parasitic diseases are mainly of interest to low income countries, open access publishing of new knowledge in this field is logical and equitable.

Human Parasitic 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 from field and laboratory studies, 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 all, worldwide, and at no cost to the reader. Authors retain copyright of their work and under the Creative Commons “CC-BY” licence they can grant to anyone the right to reproduce and disseminate their article, provided that it is correctly cited and no errors are introduced. All articles published in *Human Parasitic Diseases* will become immediately available to researchers worldwide, through PubMed and other electronic databases.

In hard-copy journals, the costs of publication are met by subscriptions, paid by the reader. In *Human Parasitic 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 PPFs. Fee waivers and discounts are available on a case-by-case basis, and we shall make every effort to ensure that lack of funds does not impede the overall objective of publishing the best science in this field, irrespective of authorship or country of origin.

I do not foresee that open access, online journals 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 ever-rising subscription fees for a full range of journals. Research libraries spent 2.7 times more on journals in 1998–1999 than they did in 1985–1986, yet purchased 6% fewer titles [1]. Journal prices increased by 215% between 1986–2003, while in the same period the consumer price index rose by just 68% [2].

I expect *Human Parasitic Diseases* to attract manuscripts of the highest quality which are of the greatest possible benefit to readers. Peer review is undertaken by at least two leading experts in the area covered by the manuscript.

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

Ashley M Croft

Editor in Chief, *Human Parasitic Diseases*.

References

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- [2] Kyrillidou, M. and Young, M. ARL statistics 2002–2003. [Web document]. Association of Research Libraries, 2004. (Available from: <<http://www.arl.org/stats/pubpdf/arlstat03.pdf>>).