

# Introductory Editorial

Hafiz Ahmed

Assistant Professor, University of Maryland Biotechnology Institute, Baltimore, Maryland, U.S.A.

I am pleased to announce the launch of *Glycobiology Insights*—a new peer reviewed open access journal published by Libertas Academica. *Glycobiology Insights* is an open access, peer reviewed electronic journal focussing on all aspects of protein-carbohydrate interactions in normal functions and disease states. This includes, but not limited to, interactions between lectins (proteins or glycoproteins) and carbohydrate ligands (glycoproteins, glycolipids, and proteoglycans) and modulation of these interactions by glycosidases and glycosyltransferases.

Protein-carbohydrate interactions play significant roles in mediating cell-cell and cell-extracellular matrix interactions, which in turn, modulate fundamental biological processes such as growth development, immune functions, and apoptosis. Thus, the identification of these carbohydrate-binding proteins (known as lectins) and their partners (carbohydrate ligands), and the detailed understanding the molecular mechanisms and downstream effects of these protein-carbohydrate interactions as well as the carbohydrate modulation by glycosidases and glycosyltransferases are currently subjects of intense research.

*Glycobiology Insights* seeks to be the most timely journal for those who need to be up to date with the latest and most important developments in the field. The journal offers high-speed and credible submission processing to authors. At a time when institutional libraries are aggressively cutting subscriptions to conventional journals, by publishing in the open access format authors are able to reach the widest possible group of authors.

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 because 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.

*Glycobiology Insights* 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 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.

In hard-copy journals, the costs of publication are met by subscriptions, paid by the reader. In *Glycobiology 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 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, 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

---

**Correspondence:** Hafiz Ahmed, Assistant Professor, University of Maryland Biotechnology Institute, Baltimore, Maryland, U.S.A. Email: [ahmed@umbi.umd.edu](mailto:ahmed@umbi.umd.edu)



Copyright in this article, its metadata, and any supplementary data is held by its author or authors. It is published under the Creative Commons Attribution By licence. For further information go to: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/>.

around the world where institutional libraries are unable to afford subscription fees for a full range of journals.

I expect that *Glycobiology Insights* will 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 of the manuscript.

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.