The New (2020) Journal Impact Factor of *Acta Cytologica* is 2.319

Kari J. Syrjänen^a Fernando Schmitt^b Simon Turner^c

^aSMW Consultants Ltd, Kaarina, Finland; ^bMolecular Pathology Unit, IPATIMUP, University of Porto, Porto, Portugal; ^cS. Karger AG, Basel, Switzerland

Dear *Acta Cytologica* readers,

As you all recall, exactly 1 year ago we had great news to announce: the journal impact factor (JIF) was returned to *Acta Cytologica* after 6 years of interruption [1]. The 2019 JIF released in June 2020 was 1.226. Needless to reiterate, we all were very happy with this because after such a long period with no JIF *Acta Cytologica* succeeded in maintaining almost the level of its last (2013) JIF of 1.562 before delisting from the SCIE (Science Citation Index Expanded) in 2014 [2–4].

The first year since the return of our JIF has now passed and the new 2020 JIF listing was released on June 30, 2021. Beyond all the expectations of the Editor, Associate Editors, and Editorial Board, the JIF of *Acta Cytologica* has reached its highest value ever: 2.319 [5]. In practical terms, this means every (citable) article published in our journal in 2018 and in 2019 was cited an average of 2.319 times in 2020.

With this Editorial, we would like to extend our gratitude to the entire readership of *Acta Cytologica*, i.e., to those people without whose continuous support this “JIF miracle” would not be possible. Naturally, this group of colleagues includes all the Associate Editors, all members of the Editorial Board, all Guest Editors and contributors to the published Special Issues, as well as all our loyal peer reviewers, all continuing their invaluable contributions to the success of *Acta Cytologica*. Without thinking about the hours spent for this completely voluntary work, these people deserve the full respect of the International Academy of Cytology (IAC) members.

However, this list is not complete simply because the most important contributors are missing: the authors who continue submitting their scientific work for publication in *Acta Cytologica*. The truth is that irrespective how well the above listed regular operators of the journal are performing, no journal can reach success without committed authors who submit their manuscripts to the journal. A high enough volume of manuscript submissions is mandatory to ensure that the peer reviewers and Associate Editors have enough material to pick up the most interesting manuscripts for publication.

Interestingly, the past year also witnessed the highest number of submissions ever received by *Acta Cytologica*, far exceeding 200 papers. Importantly, this activity has been completely spontaneous, with no single invitation letter ever circulated among the potential contributors to solicit their submissions to the journal. This is the best indication that the authors conducting their research in the domain of clinical cytology consider *Acta Cytologica* prestigious enough to publish their most valuable results. In this situation, the Editor has been in a privileged position, regularly receiving manuscripts on his desk that peer reviewers and/or Associate Editors have found eligible for publication. Indeed, the vast majority of those will eventually be accepted, but after a rigorous internal ranking some are still rejected at this stage. For many years by now, the overall acceptance rate of *Acta Cytologica* has remained below 50%.

Future Prospects

Over the past years the priorities of the publication policy of *Acta Cytologica* have not significantly changed [6]. We consider the greatly increased JIF as an indication of the success of this policy, and will continue, as before, preferring high-quality original papers (in any field of cytology), meta-analyses, comprehensive reviews, and technical innovations, rather than single case reports. The latter are accepted as Novel Insights from Clinical Practice only under exceptional circumstances when something extraordinary is being described in an otherwise flawless report containing a comprehensive literature review on that entity/subject. Authors who plan to submit a comprehensive review and/or meta-analysis should preferably contact the Editor so as to receive an estimate on the general interest of the topic among the *Acta Cytologica* readership.

While the priorities of *Acta Cytologica* remain unchanged, we wish to enhance the educational value of our published work and make it more explicit. Of the four junior editors (Ricardo Lastra, Yurina Miki, Joerg Schwock, and José Cândido Xavier Jr.) J.S. and J.C.X. have kindly agreed to help us publish more articles focusing on education with supported e-learning. You will not have to wait long to see this – our upcoming special issue on digital cytopathology (guest editor Jianyu Rao) will be accompanied by a short online course developed by Pamela Michelow and Ewen McAlpine.

Acta Cytologica is owned by a scientific society – the IAC. As the only truly international organization dedicated to cytology, the IAC is aware of all challenges that our profession will face around the world, and besides congresses, tutorials, and training, *Acta Cytologica* is an important tool of dissemination of knowledge improving research and diagnostic skills. In fact, all IAC members own the journal, and they were and will be fundamental to consolidating the tradition of *Acta Cytologica* as The Journal of Clinical Cytology and Cytopathology.

Last but not least, we would also like to announce an important change on the publisher's side coinciding with the end of June 2021. For several years, the publication manager at Karger responsible for the smooth running of the operations of *Acta Cytologica* has been Paul Lavender. His role has been indispensable in different phases of the eventful developments during the period 2014–2020 that finally culminated with the return of JIF to *Acta Cytologica* in 2020 [1–4]. Paul decided to conclude his term as the publication manager of *Acta Cytologica* at the end of June 2021 to be able to focus full time on issues related to training and education at Karger. The IAC would like to express its most

sincere thanks to Paul for his personal dedication to all the operations of *Acta Cytologica* and wish him the best success in his demanding new duties at Karger. On this same occasion, we would like to acknowledge Karger's top leadership (Dr. Gabriella Karger, Chair of the Board, Publisher), who made a personal commitment in the process of bringing the JIF back to *Acta Cytologica* during these years [2–4].

Paul Lavender has been replaced by Dr. Simon Turner, PhD, as the new publication manager of *Acta Cytologica*. Representing a young generation, Simon has a lot of fresh new ideas, and the IAC welcomes him into the “publication team” of *Acta Cytologica* and looks forward to fruitful co-operation with him.

At the age of 64 years, *Acta Cytologica* as the official journal of the IAC feels younger than ever and is looking forward to a brilliant future, with its scope extending beyond a purely scientific journal towards an increasingly important platform of training and education in the field of clinical cytology.

Acknowledgements

The authors express their special thanks to Paul Lavender (S. Karger AG) for careful reading of the manuscript and for his thoughtful comments.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

Funding Sources

No funding was received for completion of this manuscript.

Author Contributions

This Editorial is a joint work of the three authors, who contributed equally, have read the final text, and fully agree with its contents.

References

- 1 Syrjänen KJ, Schmitt FC. Journal impact factor returned to *Acta Cytologica* in 2020. *Acta Cytol.* 2020;64(4):280.
- 2 Syrjänen K, Vielh P, Schmitt F, Nold T. Editorial. *Acta Cytol.* 2015;59(1):1.
- 3 Publisher's note. *Acta Cytol.* 2017;61(4-5):257–8.
- 4 Publisher's note. *Acta Cytol.* 2018;62(5-6):317.
- 5 *Acta Cytologica*. The journal of clinical cytology and cytopathology. Available from: <https://www.karger.com/Journal/Home/254338>.
- 6 Syrjänen K. Keynotes from the new editor-in-chief. *Acta Cytol.* 2013;57(6):543–4.