Editorial

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Scientific publishing has substantially changed over the past two decades. Thanks to electronic computing, authors have immediate access to powerful and convenient facilities to finalize their manuscripts, for instance by incorporating sophisticated statistics and high-quality figures. In addition, the growing obligation of institutions and scientists to account for their funds and to document the amount and quality of their work has increased the need for continuous and rapid publication of progress reports. This has substantially increased the number but not always the quality of submitted papers. Last but not least, the impact factor of a journal where a researcher publishes his work has further grown in importance over recent years; this is mainly due to the growing significance and consequence accorded to evaluations of individuals and institutions, and the unfortunate lack of more individual, objective and comparably simple quality measures of single scientific publications.

These changes also increasingly influence the way readers look at scientific publications. The high percentage of progress reports gives them the possibility to follow the developments in their field more closely and obtain an idea of the progress and methodological competence of competing research groups. The sheer amount of publications, on the other hand, has increased the need for powerful databases and good screening tools to find the relevant papers. Undoubtedly, however, it has become harder to keep an overview of the current state of the art in any given field and to judge the impact of single publications.

With this first issue of 2005, *Neuropsychobiology* has reorganized its structure and editorial processes. The changes will allow us to meet the demands made on a

modern publication platform for research reports. This requires rapid editorial decisions, constant high quality of the reports as well as advanced electronic services like online-first publication and efficient online access to the journal. To achieve these goals, some structural and organizational changes were necessary: the traditional division of *Neuropsychobiology* into four sections has been dropped to allow a more flexible, efficient and comprehensive coverage of all topics within the scope of this journal. *Neuropsychobiology* will now be divided into the following sections: Original Papers, Short Communications, Case Reports, and Reviews. Letters to the Editor are also welcome for publication if they touch on relevant and current issues or if they refer to papers previously published in *Neuropsychobiology*. All submitted papers are now subject to online processing by the editorial office, and all accepted papers will be published online first. The expertise of the members of the editorial board covers all aspects of the field of biological psychiatry and psychology and every editor will contribute to the constantly high quality of the journal.

Like every scientific journal, *Neuropsychobiology* depends on the support of experts who are willing to review the submitted manuscripts. The above-mentioned changes in the publishing world have also noticeably increased the workload for qualified specialists who help us to judge the value of the manuscripts. Given the growing pressure – mainly by more and more administrative duties weighing on every active academic today – we are especially grateful to all colleagues who continue to help us keep the quality of the journal high.

The general scope of the journal remains the same as before: *Neuropsychobiology* is focused on high-quality re-

search reports covering the fields of biological psychiatry, biological psychology and neuropsychology, as defined by its name: *Neuropsychobiology*. Basic and animal research will be considered for publication as long as it addresses topics of interest to current psychological or psychiatric issues.

As you will have noticed, the journal also has a new cover. It maintains elements of the familiar layout and adds a graphic that is apposite to symbolize the orienta-

tion of the journal: to describe single elements of the puzzle of the human brain's structure and function whilst keeping in mind the entirety of the human being.

Finally, we are convinced that these changes will help to maintain the high quality of the journal and to attract an increasing number of topical and excellent manuscripts from research groups that appreciate a modern and efficient approach to publishing their scientific work.