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## **The Second Year of the European Journal of Human Genetics**

While evaluation of the first year of publication of the journal is being performed by the members of the Advisory Board, the Editorial Board would like to announce some innovations which are going to be introduced in the course of 1994.

The first innovation which is actually the implementation of one point of the editorial policy published in the first issue of the journal and now reprinted on the following page, regards the appointment of Section Editors who will have these responsibilities:

(1) to follow the review process for a limited number of manuscripts, which implies nominating referees and sharing the final decision on the acceptance of the paper with the Chief Editor;

(2) to promote the submission of mini-reviews (2–5 printed pages) through personal contacts that each Section Editor might have;

(3) to collaborate with the appropriate committees which operate or are going to be appointed inside the Society in order to promote discussion within the journal on themes corresponding to the different sections.

The most important objective for the future of our journal regards its capability to compete with other journals both in terms of the scientific standard of the papers accepted

and the speed of publication. While judgement of the former belongs to the readership, it is our responsibility to improve the latter in order to attract the best papers in the field. In order to achieve this goal more effectively than during the first year, the journal must appear more frequently and increase its size. The General Assembly of the European Society of Human Genetics to be held in Paris next June during the 27th Annual Meeting will be asked to decide on the following points:

(1) should the journal become bimonthly from its present quarterly schedule?

(2) should the journal increase its size, switching to the larger format?

While the first objective can be achieved in the course of 1994, at no additional cost for subscribers for the year, the second would not be realized until January 1995, if the membership of the Society approves it.

To an outsider it might seem strange that we cannot proceed faster with changes that are obviously needed to achieve the goal of scientific excellence clearly stated in the first issue of our journal. We should remember, however, that this journal belongs to the European Society of Human Genetics and that its membership is entitled to have a say in any

major modifications involving an increase in subscription rates. In addition we are bound to a negotiation with the publisher on the changes approved by the membership of the Society. The positive side of this, evidently slow, process is represented by the fact that the innovations which will be introduced during 1994 represent a financial investment of our Society for the coming years. As members of this Society we should be proud to say that we are shaping our journal through democrat-

ic decisions and through the participation of every one of us in establishing its high standard. As a practical sign of this participation we would like to invite all members of the ESHG to submit during 1994 at least one of their best papers to the *European Journal of Human Genetics*. At the same time we would like to reaffirm that a journal of scientific excellence owned and controlled by the European Society of Human Genetics remains the goal of this Editorial Board.

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### **Editorial Policy and Review Process Regulations**

(1) The *European Journal of Human Genetics* is under the control of two boards: the Board of Editors and the Advisory Board.

(2) The Board of Editors consists of three editors appointed by the Board of the European Society of Human Genetics. The Board of Editors, after consultation with the publisher, will elect from amongst its members the Chief Editor who will be responsible for the management of the editorial office. The Chief Editor will have the option of appointing an Assistant Editor, who will cooperate in the management of the editorial office, but will not have the right to vote on the Editorial Board.

The Board of Editors is responsible for the scientific standards of the journal. To fulfill this responsibility, the Board is expected to meet at least once yearly in order to

(a) evaluate the decisions made by the editorial office during the review process of papers submitted to the journal,

(b) update the panel of referees which will have a broad international representation and include members of the Advisory Board plus other experts in the field of human genetics, and

(c) prepare an annual report on the activities of the journal to be distributed to the Advisory Board and to the European Society of Human Genetics.

(3) The Advisory Board consists of up to 30 members appointed by the Board of Editors who will be asked to

(a) participate in the review process of papers submitted to the journal, and

(b) submit a short confidential assessment of the journal to the Board of Editors at the end of each year.

(4) Once a paper is submitted, the editorial office will send a copy of the summary of the article by FAX to at least two scientists asking if they are willing to review the paper. Once they have agreed, it will be forwarded to them. The referees will return the review by FAX within 15 days. The editorial office will then communicate both its decision and each referee's review to the corresponding author as well as to the referees. Every attempt will be made to publish papers requiring minor revisions within 6 months from the date of submission to the journal. Modifications of this review policy, if needed, may be decided upon by the Editorial Board.

(5) The Board of Editors will be responsible for the appointment of Section Editors who will be asked to

(a) follow the review process for a limited number of manuscripts, which implies nominating referees and sharing the final decision on the acceptance of the paper with the Chief Editor;

(b) promote the submission of mini-reviews (2-5 printed pages) through personal contacts that each Section Editor might have, and

(c) collaborate with the appropriate committees which operate or are going to be appointed inside the Society in order to promote discussion within the journal on themes corresponding to the different sections.

(6) Papers should be submitted to

S. Karger AG  
Editorial Department  
European Journal of Human Genetics  
P.O. Box  
CH-4009 Basel (Switzerland)

following the Instructions to Authors.