

## Editors at conferences



**Scientific meetings are the perfect venue for staying on top of the field and building new relationships with researchers from all career stages, as well as solidifying bonds with current authors. Here we explain why editors of *Nature Metabolism* attend conferences and what we do when we get there.**

**A**s in-person scientific meetings are in full swing again after a forced standstill, many scientists are now planning which meetings to attend. For researchers, such scientific gatherings are key for sharing the most recent projects, staying on top of the field, starting collaborations and exploring career opportunities. Editors, too, need to keep up with their fields and stay in touch with the scientific communities we serve. Institute visits and virtual meetings are two ways to achieve this. However, editors regularly attend scientific conferences as well; yet our objectives might be somewhat different from yours. Here is a snapshot of how we prepare for a conference, what we do once we are there and how we use the insights gained back at the office.

### Preparing for the conference

At *Nature Metabolism*, each editor focuses on specific fields of research, which informs our decision on which conferences to attend in a given year. We usually aim for a healthy mix of both larger and smaller conferences, ideally covering different continents, to maximize interactions with the local, and global, scientific community. When travelling afar, we aim to combine the trip with a visit to a research institute or university in the area.

Naturally, we take a closer look at the list of attendees, and we might reach out to you via email to meet in person during the event. There are many reasons to meet – for example, simply to catch up, to discuss a manuscript that we have spoken about previously, to learn more about a topic we would like to see featured in our pages, or perhaps because you have recently started your lab and we would like to get to know you and what you are working on. (**Tip 1:** if you see us on the list of attendees, feel free to reach out to schedule a chat beforehand!)

### What we do

In one word: networking. We want to meet you, know about your latest projects, meet your collaborators, chat about the field and, ultimately, explore the possibility of showcasing your work in our journal. Conferences are a great opportunity to pitch ideas for possible submissions, and a conversation with an editor allows you to explore whether a manuscript is a good fit for *Nature Metabolism*. We also want to learn from you, for example about whether we should be covering certain topics more (or less), or maybe you have a great idea for a timely review article.

We are happy to answer any questions you might have about our journal or about the work of an editor. Coffee breaks and lunch-times are great times to do this. (**Tip 2:** feel free to approach us during a break, we will always be open to chat!)

During scientific sessions, we are on the lookout for projects that could be a good fit for the journal, so we might approach you after your talk. At poster sessions, we particularly enjoy interacting with early career researchers, who are usually the ones generating the data. We also enjoy meeting the authors of papers we have published and getting their

feedback on their experience of working with us, both good and bad. All feedback is much appreciated! Such interactions also allow us to meet researchers who were not previously on our radar, not least to broaden and diversify our reviewer pool. (**Tip 3:** you are welcome to volunteer as a reviewer; we will be glad to consider you for future manuscripts that fit your area of expertise.)

From time to time, we also participate in meetings as poster judges or session chairs, or in discussion panels or career-oriented sessions; for example, by talking about the editorial and publishing process at *Nature Metabolism* or about our experience of working as professional editors.

### Back at the office

Information learned during the trip, including important scientific developments or researchers to watch out for, is shared with our team. These conversations both feed into our broader journal strategy in terms of which topics we should be covering and generate commissioning ideas for Reviews or Comments. If we expressed interest in your work, we might reach out to you again for a more in-depth discussion or to see how the work is progressing.

Overall, conferences are a great way for all attendees – including editors – to understand the latest developments in a specific field, and perhaps more importantly, to develop an understanding of where the field is heading. Although attending a conference is time consuming, it is an integral part of an editor's role, and the experience is always enriching, as we enjoy getting together with the scientific community as much as you do. We look forward to meeting you at an upcoming conference!

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