

EDITORIAL



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On Time! Up to date! After 2 years and 12 published numbers we are up to date!

I did not hesitate when SPCCTV offered me the chief editorship of the Journal of Rev Port Cir Cardiotorac Vasc, which I took up earlier last 2 years. I had been the associate editor of the journal's cardiothoracic section for 4 years, so I felt like I knew how things worked. Still, editing is a big job – the journal receives submissions every week and requires my own daily attention for a couple of hours: I split it between the early morning and the evening so that it doesn't interfere with my own research or professional and social life too much.

We work on all aspects of the submission process close to a couple of associate editors and a roster of several scientific and writing experts to oversee reviewing. The generosity of peer reviewers with their time and expertise is one of the most gratifying things about journal editorship. The complete review cycle for a submission takes an average of three to four months. We would like to speed up the process, but this can happen only if more of our fellow scientists are willing to perform peer reviews, and are able to do so in a timely manner.

Editing a journal is one of the most significant contributions scholars can make to their fields, but, unfortunately, this is not always recognised when it comes to appointments, promotions or other academic honours. It is also laborious and relentless. There is always an issue about to come out, as well as one in proof and one being assembled from accepted papers. Editing a small journal in a small field means that you know many of the authors who are submitting, making the difficult task of rejection even harder. I read through all manuscripts sufficiently closely to determine whether they fall within the scope of the journal, whether the quality of the writing and presentation is adequate, and whether the overall novelty and technical quality justify sending it out for peer review. Moreover, you do it for no pay, on top of all your other duties – which usually means at the weekend. It is easily possible to spend more than a day a week on it, and this can seriously impede your own scholarship.

Despite the downsides, I would recommend journal editorship to anyone. It is a great honour to be responsible for a publication that has been around for more than two decades and is widely read in our field. Editorship also gives you a privileged vantage point from which to observe how your discipline is evolving. You can even direct that evolution by commissioning special issues, reviews and editorials, highlighting new trends. This is probably the most rewarding part of our work: seeing new fields emerge and capturing them in the scientific record.

Being a journal editor definitely has its rewards. I've had an opportunity to interact with all the leading researchers in my field, both as authors and as referees. I've been able to read about exciting new research results before the data were even published. And I've been able to help a large number of young researchers improve their publications, through both my own comments and those of the referees.

Being an editor certainly isn't for everyone. You need discipline, organisation, patience and a thick skin. You also need to command the respect and trust of your professional colleagues – particularly when rejecting papers from a senior researcher. But it is an incredible learning experience, and I am very proud to have contributed so much to our journal improvement.

The primary aim of the Journal of the Portuguese Society of Cardiothoracic and Vascular Surgery is to provide a medium for the publication of high-quality original scientific reports documenting progress in cardiac, thoracic and vascular surgery. The journal publishes reports of significant clinical and experimental advances related to surgery of the heart, the great vessels, the chest, peripheral vessels and endovascular interventions.

Next year, 2019, the official language of the Journal will be English and new Editorial Rules will be announced. All submissions to the journal are initially reviewed by the Editor and his Associates. At this stage manuscripts may be

rejected without peer review if it is felt that they are not of high enough priority or not relevant to the journal. This fast rejection process means that authors are given a quick decision and do not need to wait for the review process.

Manuscripts that are not instantly rejected are sent out for peer review, usually to three independent reviewers. Based on the feedback from these reviewers and the Editors' judgment a decision is given on the manuscript.

This is the way to achieve the much-desired impact factor - a measure reflecting the yearly average number of citations to recent articles published in that journal – we can, we should and we will get it!



Miguel Guerra | Editor-in-Chefe