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ISMTE is pleased to announce the 2020 award winners.

**2020 Award for Achievement or Innovation**

Dawn Angel
Managing Editor
*The Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology: In Practice*

The ISMTE Award for Achievement or Innovation recognizes members who proactively suggest and implement innovative solutions to achieve organizational objectives. Ideal candidates will have taken on a challenging assignment(s) beyond the scope of their role in order to implement positive change. Through this exploration and innovation, they will have pushed the boundaries of their role and expanded the definition of what it means to be a professional managing or technical editor.

“I am honored to be selected for ISMTE’s 2020 Award for Achievement or Innovation. In a time that has elicited both uncertainty and innovation in many of us, I am proud to have had the opportunity to do what I could to use the latter to alleviate the former. I would like to thank my editorial team, particularly my Editor-in-Chief, Michael Schatz, for their assistance in this enterprise. And I must express my hope that everyone and their loved ones are keeping safe and well in these unsettled times.”

- Dawn Angel

**2020 Early Career Award**

Lauren Overbey
Senior Managing Editor
J&J Editorial, LLC

The ISMTE Early Career Award recognizes the achievements of members who are in the early stages of their career, with roles in scholarly publishing for five or fewer years. Candidates will have demonstrated excellence through a high degree of initiative and a strong commitment to learning and growth in their early roles.

“I’ve benefited tremendously from ISMTE. The Society’s members have a wealth of experience, and it’s been a privilege to have met so many over the last decade. I have learned so much from them and from the experience I gained through leadership roles in the Society, especially the President role and supporting the various conference committees. It’s a special honour to receive the Ira Salkin Award, given how influential Ira was in the inception and early growth of ISMTE.”

- Michael Willis

**2020 Ira Salkin Service Award**

Michael Willis
Senior Manager, Researcher
Advocate
Wiley

The Ira Salkin Service Award recognizes ISMTE members for outstanding service to the Society. The ISMTE Board selects members who have exhibited enthusiasm for and commitment to the Society and its mission to connect, educate, and provide resources for professionals who are passionate about the operations of peer-reviewed publications. Awardees should have a history of dedicated service to ISMTE demonstrated by active participation such as involvement at the committee level, serving as a committee chair, writing for EON, or presenting at conferences, workshops, or webinars. The individual must be a current ISMTE member with at least one year of active involvement with the Society. The award is named in honor of Ira Salkin, who was one of the founding members of ISMTE and sadly passed away in 2016. His goal was to ensure editorial office professionals are educated and vigilant in matters of publishing ethics.

“I am incredibly honored to be selected for the ISMTE Early Career Award! ISMTE has been such a valuable resource for me to learn from experienced colleagues, and I am so grateful for the growth and development the Society has offered. Thank you so much!”

- Lauren Overbey

Congratulations to all the 2020 award winners!
Every Spring the American Gastroenterological Association (AGA)’s publications team is hard at work preparing for the world’s largest gathering of physicians and researchers in the field of gastroenterology, hepatology, endoscopy, and gastrointestinal surgery: Digestive Disease Week (DDW). This year, however, we were met with an unexpected challenge: COVID-19 led to the cancellation of DDW, as it has for many other conferences around the world. Instead of a face-to-face gathering with 14,000 GI professionals in Chicago, we found ourselves isolated in our homes but still tasked with one of our biggest yearly projects: running our annual Board of Editors and publications committee meetings in a virtual setting. This meant six meetings with groups as large as 40 participants from around the world (Figure 1).

Our team has never hosted anything of this size or importance online, and to say we were anxious would be an understatement. We called on one of our departmental core values—adaptability—and set out to make these meetings as successful as possible. Now that we’re on the other side of meetings that were lauded by editors and staff alike, we are sharing some tips on what helped us make it happen.

**Plan**

**Pick your platform**

Consult with your IT department to determine the best platform to host your meeting. Though AGA predominantly uses Microsoft Teams for our internal work, we decided to uses Zoom for our DDW meetings thanks to its extra features. Make sure you’re clear on restrictions for whichever platform you decide on; for example, a free Zoom account limits the length of your meeting. If your organization has a paid account used by multiple people, make sure the meeting times don’t overlap—only one meeting can occur at a time. AGA has since added a Zoom account for each department to help prevent future meeting conflicts.

**Designate roles**

If you have multiplestaff attending the meeting, designate one person to run the meeting and share their screen for presentations, another person to take notes for the meeting, and another to monitor the chat box. Speak to your editor to ensure he/she is aware of the plan ahead of time.

We also found it helpful to have one host for each meeting who would then designate the person running the slides as a co-host. Having two hosts helps admit participants swiftly, should you decide to use a waiting room feature (for security, we decided to use this feature and include a password for all meetings). It’s also a useful backup if one host loses internet connection in the middle of a meeting.

If you’re running the meeting, it’s incredibly helpful to have two monitors so you can present on one screen and have the other available for internal chats with your team, should they need to reach you.

**Use video**

We see you over there, afraid to turn on your camera! Don’t let that stop you—using video gets you as close as possible to an in-person conversation. Seeing facial expressions as you hear someone’s thoughts can help you read nuances you would otherwise miss.

To be fair to the group, make it clear ahead of time that the use of video is strongly encouraged. No one likes to be caught off guard by those requests! You can also remind attendees at the beginning of the meeting with a slide outlining ground rules (Figure 2). To avoid last minute technical difficulties and interruptions, we encouraged participants to call in a few minutes early.
Explore your options
A virtual meeting will never be the same as gathering in person, but exploring more advanced meeting features in your software can help keep your group engaged and interactive even in a virtual setting. Our team found Zoom’s polling functionality particularly helpful (and fun, too) for items like a voting exercise on name options for a new initiative and sharing results in real time during the meeting.

Practice
Learn your platform
By now most of us have attended a virtual meeting (or 20) and we may think we’re familiar with the platform’s functions, but you’d be surprised how many options are available for your use that you may not encounter on a regular basis. Taking time to review tutorials on the platform’s website and/or user tricks on YouTube can be extremely helpful in finding useful features appropriate for your meeting.

Test (and test again)!
Our team found so much value in creating test meetings ahead of time. If you need to give control to other participants so they can share their screen or present slides, test that with other staff members. Practice sharing your screen and presenting your slides—we found it useful to only share the program we were using instead of our entire screen. This prevents potential distractions like notifications popping up in the middle of your presentation.

Figure 1. Participants at Gastroenterology’s Board of Editors virtual meeting.
Some ground rules before we begin

To ensure that these meetings are as productive as possible, please

- Close your email
- Mute your phone/microphone when you’re not speaking
- Silence your cell phone
- Turn on your video

Figure 2. Best practices slide we shared at the beginning of each meeting.

Make sure you know how to admit participants, how to mute and unmute them, and where you’ll see a virtual hand raised for questions. It’s also important to expand the chat window, so you can view conversations in real time and see how private messages display compared to chats sent to everyone. If you use advanced features like polls, try those out too and be sure to set responses to anonymous, if needed. You can even record your test meeting to see how the files are saved and if it would be useful to record your actual conference (we learned the hard way in Zoom that the chat is only saved if your meeting is recorded!). If you decide to record your meeting, disclose to the group that the meeting will be recorded before you start.

All in all, we found these virtual meetings to be a complete success. Not everything was perfect, but perfection was never our goal (and it shouldn’t be yours, either). At the start of each meeting we informed the group that this was our first time hosting these meetings in a virtual platform, and we were grateful for everyone’s patience and understanding. It was helpful to set the stage in that manner.

Despite the virtual venue not being ideal, we did find some positives: Several Board members who are typically unable to attend due to their geographic location were able to participate for the first time. It was also useful to have a chat function for participants that may be less willing to speak up during a large conversation. The chat box was used often and was helpful for them to weigh in with their thoughts.

We hope these tips are helpful as you embark on your virtual meeting adventures!
Does Sending a Personal Reminder Email Spur Late Reviewers into Action? A Study of a Clinical Medical Journal

By Jason Roberts, PhD and Charlotte Roberts

1Origin Editorial, LLC [pictured]  
2Saratoga Springs High School

Introduction

Very late reviewers are a perennial problem for editorial offices battling to keep all-important turnaround times down. Compounding this stress on editorial offices are the twin realities of anxiously waiting (read impatient in many instances) authors and the recognition that reviewers are usually very busy subject experts volunteering their time. To keep reviewers on time, journals typically rely on a series of automatically generated email reminders in combination, quite often, with contacting tardy reviewers on an ad hoc basis.

*Headache*, a medium-sized clinical medical journal and the official journal of the American Headache Society, began in 2016 to send—in certain instances—a personal reminder email to very late reviewers once all reminder emails had been exhausted. This letter, though written with a more personal tone, was still, nevertheless, a template message. However, the editorial office often added a personal line of some manner or another. Accompanying this personal email was a PDF of the manuscript with instructions to either complete the review in the editorial management system or, if it was easier, simply email comments to the editorial office. The accompaniment of the manuscript PDF with this letter was to make it easier for reviewers should accessing the system prove to be a barrier to completing the review.

This article reports the results of a 4.5-year ‘experiment’ in sending personal reminder emails. The term ‘experiment’ is used lightly—no conscious effort was made to conduct a study; instead, after years of recording who had received this letter, the journal decided to see if it had any impact. By describing this process, this article also provides a brief methodological outline should other journals wish to examine the behavior of late reviewers.

Methods

*Headache* invites subject expert peer reviewers to complete their evaluations inside 14 days. Over our study period (January 1, 2016 through June 18, 2020) the median turnaround time is actually substantially faster at 10.04 days. The proportion of reviews completed on time is healthy, representing roughly 3 in 4 (78.8%, 1,480/1,878 reviews). Table 1 summarizes information on the journal’s peer-review process and some key performance indicators. From the time the journal first adopted an editorial management system in 2003, the last automatic reminder has been set to trigger at 7 days overdue. Starting in 2016, the journal decided to apply a more personal touch to some late reviews. At 8 days overdue, an email was set up to be sent to the editorial office pointing out that a reviewer was now over one week delinquent. This notification, in turn, prompted the editorial office to send a personal reminder. See Box 1 for a copy of the text used in the personal reminder letter (excluding any additional personal text or note driven by ongoing circumstances that may or may not have been added by the editorial office, e.g., “looking forward to seeing you at the meeting in two weeks” or “we appreciate COVID-19 may have disrupted your ability to find time to complete a peer review at this time”).

It should be noted that the letter is not always sent. Sometimes the reason is simply because we know a review will be arriving imminently as a reviewer had reached out to the journal. Other times it is because we have no other alternative but to wait for a reviewer we are well acquainted with and who can be relied upon to eventually complete the peer review. Such reviewers are often the only person likely to be able to comment on the subject matter of the manuscript with authority. In other instances, the journal simply missed that the reviewer was running late. Regardless of whether a personal letter was sent, eventually a decision is made to abandon peer review once the
editor in charge of a given manuscript and the editorial office believe no review will be forthcoming (Table 1 outlines reasons why such a step may be taken). The decision to cut off a reviewer has been somewhat arbitrarily applied over the years. Typically, 14 days past due (i.e., 28 days in peer review) is as close as the journal comes to a cut-off time, though no official protocol exists and some reviews extend beyond that time for a variety of editor-driven or submission-specific reasons.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reviewer deadline</td>
<td>14 days from acceptance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reviewer reminders (in days pre/post deadline)</td>
<td>Automated: -7, -3, 0, 7; Personal: 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reviews received by deadline</td>
<td>78.8% (1,480/1,878)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median reviewer turnaround time</td>
<td>10.04 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range of time elapsed for reviews to be returned</td>
<td>0-47 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total reviews agreed</td>
<td>2,286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total reviews completed</td>
<td>1,878</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total reviews abandoned</td>
<td>408 (17.8% of agreements to review)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of individual reviewers agreeing to review</td>
<td>979 (range of no. of invitations: 1-21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of individual reviewers completing review</td>
<td>910 (range of no. of completed reviews: 1-19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasons for review abandonment</td>
<td>Reviewer failed to complete review on time—cut off by editorial office; mandatory minimum number of reviews were already received—cut off by the journal; reviewer requested abandonment—no longer had time, discovered conflict, discovered they were unqualified to review; reviewer died</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasons for allowing excessively late reviews</td>
<td>Reviewer asked for one or more extensions that the editor/editorial office approved; lack of alternative options meant reliant on review being completed; editorial office missed late review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer review tasks</td>
<td>Reviewer scoresheet, publication recommendation, and free-text Comments to Authors (and Comments to Editor)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>System Used</td>
<td>ScholarOne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of peer review</td>
<td>Double-blinded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transparency</td>
<td>The journal does not yet mandate supplying data files/code to reviewers; it also does not yet require or even offer reviewers the chance to make their reviews open and available with the published article</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note on specialist reviewer</td>
<td>The journal employs a Design and Methods Advisor who reviews every original research paper and review article</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Results**

**Time to completing a review**

In reviewing the data our primary aim was to determine whether the reminder email had an effect in prompting reviewers to complete their review. We examined the responses to 68 emails that were dispatched. The good news was that in 80% (33/41) of cases where the reviewer...
responded with a completed review, the reviewers did return comments within 48 hours as they were requested to do. This compares favorably against those reviewers never sent a personal reminder. In such instances 61% (49/81) got a review done between 22 and 24 days late (i.e., 8-10 days overdue).

Despite this seemingly better responsiveness, when we then examined the median turnaround times of reviewers with and without a personal email, there was no marked improvement; in fact the median times to get a review done for all very late reviewers, defined as being late by 8 or more days (i.e., taking 22 days or more to complete the review), was remarkably similar: 24.35 days (n=41) to complete a review for those sent the personal reminder and 24.38 days (n=81) for those left alone after the final auto-generated reminder.

The comparison of medians does suggest that whether actively pursued or just left alone, reviewers were going to get their reviews done on their own personal timelines (“you’ll get it when I’m ready,” in other words). But the good news is that actively pursuing reviewers with a reminder did elicit more responsiveness over that initial 48-hour period. After that, as the comparative median times suggest, it seems the journal could not really control when the reviewers would return their comments.

The risk of abandonment
Did the sending of the reminder letter ensure a review was not abandoned? It seems the answer is negative. When sent a personal reminder letter, 40% (n=27) of reviewers failed to turn in a review. However, and this is a limitation of this study, blended into the sample population alongside cases where we just gave up are reviews that were actively abandoned perhaps because the editor decided to terminate peer review before all reviews were received. This occasionally happens when the journal’s Design and Methods Advisor detects a fundamental flaw in the study design of a paper or suspects the results are simply implausible. More likely, however, when it comes to very late reviewers, the editors simply didn’t get the memo that the editorial office was following a chase-up protocol and gave up waiting for the late-running reviewer. It does seem fair to conclude that, unfortunately, no personal entreaty from the editorial office to get the review done was going to work in 2 out of 5 cases amongst our sample population of very late reviewers, and that is disappointing.

Word counts of ‘Comments to Authors’
We were also interested in determining if the review itself was perhaps rushed as a function of a) lateness, b) being reminded that the review is late, or c) a combination of both of these factors. Our concern is that once hurried into action, reviewers may quickly dash off an evaluation just to complete the task as opposed to taking a more considered approach. Segmenting the data in to four categories (review submitted inside deadline, review 1-7 days late, review 8+ days late with a personal reminder sent, and review 8+ days late with no personal reminder) we decided to examine the
word count of the Comments to Authors for each review. We appreciate word count is the crudest possible way to measure the quality of a review—indeed it really hardly measures it at all and it is fair to say it is the quality, not quantity, of the words in the review that make a good review. Nevertheless, it is a metric that is relatively easy to obtain, and there is logic in the supposition that a review quickly pumped out might suffer from being briefer than if the reviewer was not rushed or under additional pressure from the editorial office.

We found that when left alone with no reminder the very late reviewers included more words in a review (median of 365 words) than those who had been on time (257.5 words), 1-7 days late (257 words), and 8+ days late with a personal reminder (259 words). Did this mean actively pushing the reviewers to get the review done was maybe applying pressure to rush that translated into a briefer review? Well, we might have concluded that if all we compared was 365 words for very late reviewers with no reminders versus 259 words for very late reviewers with a reminder. However, at 259 words, the median word count for the very late reviewers sent a reminder was remarkably similar to the median word count for on-time reviews and reviewers 1-7 days late. Figure 1 presents these results.

Discussion

What can be concluded from these results? Has the effort of sending a personal reminder letter to very late reviewers been a waste of time? Maybe, but perhaps not conclusively so. It certainly does seem that reviewers more often than not will be working on their own internal clock and will complete the review on a timeline that suits them once they go beyond the deadline. Obviously, with 78.8% of reviews completed on time, reviewers clearly pay attention to the stated deadline. After that all bets are off it seems. So, are there any upsides to sending a personal letter? We can only report anecdotally, but it does seem that when sending the personal reminder it typically elicits a response from the reviewer in the form of an acknowledgement email that they are late along with promises to get the review done soon. The alternative is hearing nothing at all. Automatically generated reminders almost never prompt reviewers to write to acknowledge they are late. This may well be a result of the sheer ubiquity of automatic reminder letters. Almost all journals use them, they often look the same, and regular reviewers have likely become immune to them. So one benefit to writing a personal note is that you can reconnect with a reviewer who is drifting.

Perhaps a question to consider is whether the personal reminder should be sent sooner, such as, say, after the review becomes 5 days late. The editorial office is currently contemplating such a course of action along with shifting the first post-deadline reminder to 3 days overdue rather than 7 days overdue. If it does make a change in practice, we will, of course, report back to the readers of EON. If sending the reminder seems to have limited effectiveness on timeliness after 8 days late, it could logically be argued that moving the reminder up 3 days will not make a difference—again, reviewers will be ready when they are ready so to speak. That may well turn out to be the case, but perhaps any final decision on the best protocol for handling late reviewers should first be evidence-based.

The analysis outlined here is admittedly simplistic. There is nothing presented here, however, that is unique to Headache. Other editorial offices are encouraged to attempt and share the results of similar analyses. It would also be interesting to see if other strategies have been attempted, measured, and proven successful in getting reviewers to complete reviews in a more timely fashion or ensuring a lower number of reviews are abandoned. An interesting outcome, should journals become more transparent in their peer-review operations, is whether open peer review and the publication of the review (and maybe the reviewer’s name) with the published article will alter reviewer behaviors. Another issue for journals to consider when researching reviewer responsiveness is the size and nature of the reviewer pool. If the pool is tight-knit or used regularly—with an associated familiarity with the expectations of the journal—does that shape both reviewer timeliness and the length of the review they complete?

Figure 1. Box plot of word counts for all reviews of initial submissions to Headache between January 1, 2016 and June 18, 2020. Reviews are segmented into 4 groups: on time, 1-7 days late, 8+ days late with a personal reminder, and 8+ days late with no reminder. The horizontal line in each box represents the median, with the top and bottom boundaries of the box denoting the 75th and 25th percentiles, respectively. The whiskers are a measure of the spread of the data, and the individual data points are outlier values.
Conclusion

No doubt journals in different circumstances or fields may observe different behavior, but it does seem there is much research to be done towards establishing optimal practices for handling volunteer reviewers. Our results proved to be a mixed bag. Overall, the responses to our reminder letter were as follows: 49% (n=33) got their review done inside the 48 hours that we requested, 40% (n=27) of cases saw the review abandoned, 12% (n=8) were allowed to take longer than the 48 hours they had been told they would get. It does appear our reminder letter was marginally more successful at capturing a completed review between 8 to 10 days late. So, before abandoning the practice of chasing very late reviewers with a personal reminder, we have determined, following a review of the results presented here, to try and move the timing of the very late reviewer reminder correspondence forward to see if that speeds up late reviewers. In summary, we found that the rate of abandonment for very late reviewers was still high (2 in 5) if the personal reminder letter was sent. Those who did complete their review did not seemingly rush their review if determined by length, as word counts were comparable with on-time reviews and reviewers who were 1-7 days late.

Disclosure Statement

JR receives a stipend from the American Headache Society for the management of the Headache editorial office. CR reports no conflicts of interest.
Without having formal training using Excel, my approach to data and spreadsheets has been shaky at best. However, I frequently find that the reports generated from our editorial system do not produce the data we need in a useful way, and I have (somewhat reluctantly) been relying more on Excel to provide information that is meaningful and coherent.

The COUNTIF Formula

One useful function I have learned is the COUNTIF formula. Excel’s description states that it “counts the number of cells within a range that meet the given criteria.” What that means for me is that I can run a report to retrieve a large amount of data (e.g., all manuscripts with a final decision in a specific time period) and use the COUNTIF formula to “count” how many times a value appears (e.g., how many of these were accept decisions).

The Journal of Pediatrics desk rejects ~68% of submitted manuscripts. My editors wanted to know the editorial rejection (“edit reject”) rates by article type. Using the COUNTIF formula and a generated report of all edit rejected manuscripts, I was able to count how many manuscripts were edit rejected broken out by article type (Figure 1).

In this example, the formula to count how many Original Articles were edit rejected was

\[ \text{COUNTIF(EditRejects!D:D, ”Original Article”)} \]

\[ \text{EditRejects! } \] refers to the sheet from which the data should be pulled.

D:D, refers to the section of data to be searched (in this case, column D).

“Original Article” refers to the value to be counted.

To count the number of other article types that were edit rejected, the value between the quotation marks can be updated (Figure 2).

Figure 1. Example of generated report showing all edit rejected manuscripts (A) and the number of manuscripts edit rejected by article type counted using the COUNTIF formula (B).

Figure 2. Examples of COUNTIF formulas for Original Articles (A), “Brief Reports” (B), and “Letter to Editor” (C).
Troubleshooting

It is important to note that the criteria being counted must match exactly what is in the selected data range otherwise it will not be counted. If “Original Articles" was entered into the formula, but the column contains entries for “Original Article," no results will be returned. Additionally, double check the column or data range in the formula to ensure it is searching for the value in the correct range.

If “A:A," was entered into the example formula, it would search the Decision Term column, rather than the article type in column D.

Acknowledgments

The author thanks Dan Steigerwald for technical assistance and his advice while writing this article.

Call for Volunteers

Volunteers Needed for 2020 Strategic Plan Implementation

The ISMTE Board of Directors recently completed a three-year strategic planning process. This process involved an examination of all current programs, committees, goals, and objectives. Survey data from members and other sources were reviewed to help evaluate engagement in current ISMTE programs and how we should adjust communication and volunteer utilization strategies in a way that aligns with the strategic goals of ISMTE. This process will create substantial opportunities for volunteer involvement.

As we move through the strategic plan implementation process, we would like to invite you to consider becoming more active as a volunteer of ISMTE. A broad range of opportunities with varying requirements of time and expertise will be available. This enhanced level of engagement provides more opportunities to create resources that benefit the profession, enhances opportunities for interaction with other editorial office professionals, and provides an opportunity for personal and professional growth. Thanks for considering volunteer engagement with ISMTE as we move in a new strategic direction.

If you are interested in volunteering for the strategic plan effort, or in some other capacity, please contact Alethea Gerding at alethea@ascpt.org.
ISMTE Member Testimonials

Michael Willis
Senior Manager, Research Advocate
Wiley

Deborah R. Meyer
Director of Publications, ASE
Managing Editor,
CASE and JASE

“Since joining ISMTE shortly after it was founded, and working as I do in a large publishing house, I have benefited immensely from expanding my network of editorial office professionals, keeping abreast of industry developments, and learning about new technologies and processes that can help us improve the service we provide to researchers. Joining the Board and chairing committees also helped me develop leadership skills that have contributed to progressing my publishing career.”

“I have worked in science publishing since 1988, and when I learned about ISMTE eight years ago, I immediately joined. It was one of the best decisions in and for my career. The local meet-ups have been awesome with the talks given, the professional and personal friendships formed, and the elevation I have felt due to having a professional home. The newsletter provides incredible information and makes me feel like I am always positively evolving. The list-serve is invaluable for asking questions and being able to help fellow members. We are all in this together. Thank you ISMTE for being you!”

Call for Submissions

Are you a fan of EON? Do you have an idea for an article, column, or special section? Contact our editorial office today to share your suggestion or for more information on submitting a manuscript.

ISMTE Elevator Pitch

Quick: Why join ISMTE? I’ve been a part of this organization since its inception, and if given the opportunity, I could happily rattle on about it at some length. But could I give you the 20- to 30-second elevator pitch? The Board of Directors’ strategic plan has prioritized developing an ISMTE “elevator pitch” to point out the unique selling proposition of the organization. What makes ISMTE different from other similar groups? Why should you join ISMTE?

I will be soliciting elevator pitches over the course of the year. Send yours to me at alethea@ascpt.org. You’re in the elevator with a fellow editorial office professional. You have 6 floors to go. Be quick!
Committee Update:  
2020 Asia Pacific Conference

By Tony Alves  
2020 Asia Pacific Planning Committee Chair  
Aries Systems Corporation

The 2020 ISMTE Asia Pacific Conference was to be held at the Jasper Hotel on March 2 and 3 in Melbourne, Australia. The Committee originally discussed postponing the meeting due to the wild fires that were raging outside of Melbourne earlier this year. Those fires had begun to subside, and we were assured that the Melbourne air quality was just fine. However, within days, the true scale of the coronavirus became apparent, and Australia closed its border to many of the countries in the region. This meant that many presenters and most participants would not be able to attend, and so the decision was made to transition the meeting to a virtual event and to hold it in September in between the North American and European meetings.

The Asia Pacific Conference Committee has put together a great agenda focused on the theme “The Changing Landscape of Scholarly Publishing.” The virtual meeting will likely be held in two four-hour blocks across two days. Most of the originally planned educational offerings will be included, including a COPE workshop. The meeting will kick off with a plenary address featuring Adam Hyde from Coko Foundation, who will speak from his 14 years of experience working with open source initiatives and will give an overview of the opportunities and challenges that open infrastructure presents for the scholarly publishing sector. Other session topics include fair and open data, transparency in peer review, text recycling, reviewer guidelines and training, and setting up social media initiatives.

The sessions will be held during Asia Pacific work hours, and will be recorded and made available to all attendees of all of the ISMTE Annual Conferences. The presenters are primarily located in the Asia Pacific region and will focus much of the content on topics and concerns unique to the region. However, since scholarly publishing is an international endeavor, we are sure that all of the sessions will be useful to all ISMTE members, regardless of geography.

Please visit the ISMTE website to register for the conference and to view the conference schedule as it is finalized. Follow along using #ISMTEglobal.

Committee members:
Tony Alves (Chair), Aries Systems Corporation  
Heidi Allen, Wiley  
Prabin Chhetri, Birat Journal of Health Sciences  
Paul Du, Clarivate Analytics  
Anke van Eekelen, Respirology  
Julie Nash, J&J Editorial  
Michael Willis, Wiley
Changes in authorship
(b) Corresponding author requests removal of author before publication

- Clarify reason for change in authorship
- Check that all authors consent to removal of author
  - All authors agree
    - Amend author list and contributor details (list of each author/contributor/acknowledgments as required)
    - Proceed with review/publication
  - Authors do not agree
    - Suspend review/publication of paper until authorship has been agreed
    - Inform excluded author(s) that if they wish to pursue the matter they should do this with their co-authors or institutions rather than the editor

Note:
Most important to check with the author(s) whose name(s) are being removed from the paper and get their agreement in writing.

Permission to publish this flowchart was granted by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE). Please visit http://publicationethics.org/ for additional flowcharts and information.
Calendar of Events

ISMTE North American Conference
August 4-7, 2020
Virtual
https://www.ismte.org/page/Conferences

ISMTE Asia Pacific Conference
September 14-15, 2020
Virtual
https://www.ismte.org/page/Conferences

ISMTE European Conference
November 12, 2020
Amsterdam, Netherlands
https://www.ismte.org/page/Conferences

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