

ICSP-Publications Committee Meeting - 25th January 2021

Minute 1. Call to order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 8.00 a.m. UK time.

Minute 2. Record of attendance

The following members of the Publications Committee participated: E.R.B. Moore (Chair Publications Committee, Vice-Chair ICSP), I.C. Sutcliffe (Chair ICSP), D.R. Arahal (Chair JC), R. Rosselló-Móra (Vice-Chair JC), A. Oren (Executive Secretary ICSP and EiC ICNP), S.L.W. On (Secretary Subcommittees), M.E. Trujillo (EiC IJSEM).

Minute 3. Functions of the Publications Committee

E.R.B. Moore and I.C. Sutcliffe explained the function of the committee based on Article 9 of the ICSP statutes. It was noted that as the ICNP is now published as a supplement to IJSEM then the latter is now the primary publication of the ICSP.

Minute 4. Annual report and financial statement for IJSEM

According to Article 9 (b) (3) of the ICSP statutes, an annual report on the journal, including a financial statement, must be prepared by the Publications Committee. Concerning the financial report, Article V - 6 (1) (b) of the Journal Publishing Agreement states that "ICSP may, at its expense, audit, examine and make copies of the relevant Publisher financial records during normal business hours, on two (2) weeks' notice, but not more often than once per year." M.E. Trujillo will check with Hilary Logan at the Microbiology Society about the financial reporting.

R. Rosselló-Móra asked whether there might be a conflict of interest for his participation in the discussions of the Publications Committee. The members of the Committee did not find any obvious conflict of interest.

Minute 5. Minutes of the meetings of the Publications Committee

It was agreed that the secretary of the Publications Committee, who is also the executive secretary of the ICSP, would prepare informal minutes of the meetings of the Publications Committee. These minutes will not be posted online but can be used by the chair of the Publications Committee for his reports to the ICSP-EB and the ICSP plenary.

Minute 6. Renewal of the publishing agreement with the Microbiology Society

The publishing agreement with the Microbiology Society is due for renewal at the end of 2022. Article IX on page 7 of the current publishing agreement states that it concludes on 31 December 2022 but "may be extended for successive periods of three (3) years (e.g. January 1,

2022 to December 31, 2025) by written agreement of the parties entered into at least six (6) months prior to the expiration of the then current Term". This agreement was signed by M. da Costa on behalf of the ICSP, R.A. Samson for IUMS, and L. Chipperfield for the Microbiology Society.

Therefore, we should start discussing renewal in mid-2021 if we are interested in continuing with the society. I.C. Sutcliffe will informally contact Peter Cotgreave, the Chief Executive of the Microbiology Society, to confirm the society's willingness to renew and establish who at the society the right person to contact is.

Minute 7. Ideas how to improve IJSEM and its impact factor

Ideas were discussed how to advance IJSEM and improve the level of its papers and thus its impact factor. It is not easy to change the current format: (1) The journal cannot presently refuse the standard 'one colony – one species' papers; (2) The Microbiology Society does not appear interested in reducing the numbers of published papers. (3) Many authors try to publish taxonomic descriptions in online journals with higher impact factors, and then validate the names in the customary way in the lists in the IJSEM. S.L.W. On remarked that this approach led to some descriptions being sub-optimal and not in accordance with published minimal standards and/or good taxonomic practice. (4) Many taxonomic descriptions published in IJSEM were minimalistic and lacked interest to a wider community. (5) Authors of good-quality papers on evolutionary microbiology, reviews etc. may prefer publication in higher impact factor journals. These issues can be further discussed in an upcoming meeting of the ICSP-EB with a view to wider discussions with the ICSP members.

M.E. Trujillo reported that she is flooded by authors' appeals against rejection decisions by the handling editors. This appears to be a relatively new problem: A. Oren received less than ten such appeals during his five-year term as editor-in-chief of the journal.

A. Oren asked why the list editors were not invited, and even were 'un-invited', to the online IJSEM editorial board meetings? M.E. Trujillo replied that she knew of no reason why the list editors would not participate in the editorial board meetings.

Minute 8. Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Monday February 22th 2021, 8 am UK time.

Minute 9. AOB

There was no other business.

Minute 10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 09.45.

Minutes prepared by A. Oren – 25 January 2021