

**Toward further excellence in *Haematologica***Jacob M. Rowe,<sup>1</sup> Carlo Balduini<sup>2</sup> and Jerry Radich<sup>3</sup><sup>1</sup>Shaare Zedek Medical Center, Jerusalem, Israel; <sup>2</sup>Fondazione Ferrata Storti, Pavia, Italy and <sup>3</sup>Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, Seattle, WA, USA

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As we enter 2022, having come through another difficult year with COVID-19, we mourn the loss of colleagues, as well as many others in the healthcare field. The pandemic has had consequences for us in many ways, affecting all aspects of the journal, including authors, reviewers and editors. At the same time we are fortunate to acknowledge that *Haematologica* has been blessed by an outstanding group of associate editors as well as a totally dedicated editorial team, even allowing us to look back at this period with some humble pride.

As a leading journal in hematology, we continue to strive for excellence and underscore this in the quality of our publications. Our priority remains publishing high quality manuscripts with an emphasis on originality and impact in the international community. In the clinical arena, we prioritize prospectively designed studies addressing current needs, although exceptional retrospective studies or meta-analyses are also considered. At the same time, we continue to encourage publication of advanced basic research in both malignant and benign hematology. As all considered submissions undergo rigorous prioritization and peer review, unfortunately the current reality is that some very good papers may not be published. In addition to regular articles, the journal publishes reviews, perspectives and editorials covering impactful areas of current interest. Most of these are invited manuscripts, although unsolicited submissions can exceptionally be considered. Letters to the journal are also encouraged. These are high quality manuscripts of novel or preliminary reports and undergo the same rigorous standard of peer review.

Several innovations were introduced in 2021, all with the hope of further stimulating interest in *Haematologica*. In this issue we start an exceptional review series led by Drs. Gilles Salles and Sonali Smith, which will include three important articles covering the major aspects of indolent lymphomas. The plan is for this to be followed in the first part of 2022 by another review series comprising classic contributions on the treatment of different thrombocytopenias. This will be headed by Drs. Carlo Balduini and Francesco Rodeghiero. Towards the middle of the year, Dr. Jerry Radich will be lead-

ing another review series on measurable residual disease in acute myeloid leukemia, acute lymphoblastic leukemia, chronic myeloid leukemia and chronic lymphoblastic leukemia, with several outstanding articles. Finally, down the line, toward the end of the year, we expect to have a major review series on acute myeloid leukemia, which will be led by Dr. Richard Schlenk.

As is fitting for the oldest existing hematology journal, we are also introducing an innovation paying homage to classic publications from previous generations. Starting with this issue, each month we will be publishing a short report entitled "Landmark Papers in Hematology" which will describe and highlight historic contributions made by past authors. An editor or an editorial board member will be responsible for each submission.

On the subject of the editorial board, we have completely replaced our previous board with more than 30 new members who actively assist in reviewing papers, suggesting topics for publication, and promoting the quality of the journal. Furthermore, to help our editors and reviewers, and in fairness to the authors, we are fortunate to have recruited a highly qualified statistical consultant. Finally, since the journal's format does matter, we hope that you will like our new graphic design, expected in the next few months, which will facilitate the assimilation of the scientific data by readers.

Over the past year, we have had considerable success in reducing the backlog of papers that, although published online as 'early view' within days of acceptance, had been waiting for up to nine months or even longer to enter the printed journal. This time gap has now been drastically reduced by over one third.

*Haematologica* faces many challenges, not least of which is the abundance of new academic outlets, both digital and various printed products. While recognizing the magnitude of these challenges, we are prepared to meet them head-on with enthusiasm and provide the highest quality hematology journal for our dedicated community of readers and tireless authors, editors and reviewers. The editors will always welcome constructive ideas or feedback from our readers.