

## Paying for open access

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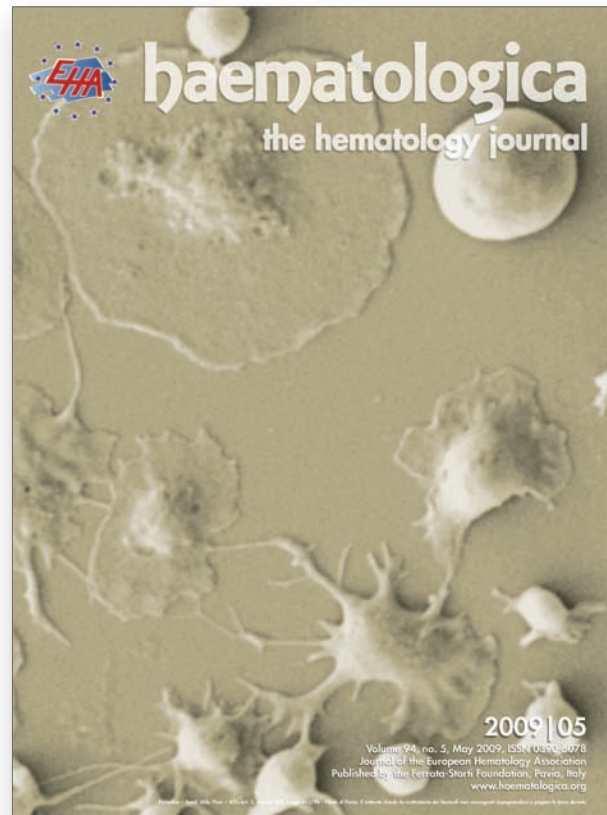
**H**aematologica is owned by a non-profit organization, the Ferrata Storti Foundation, and serves the scientific community with strict adherence to the principles of open access publishing.<sup>1</sup> Like the Public Library of Science, or PLoS (<http://www.plos.org>), Haematologica publishes only open access articles. In addition, the journal now makes every paper published immediately available in PubMed Central (PMC), the US National Institutes of Health (NIH) free digital archive of biomedical and life sciences journal literature. These initiatives are made possible also thanks to the vision and support of the European Hematology Association (<http://www.ehaweb.org/>).

The potential benefits of open access, not only for science but also for public health, are vast,<sup>2</sup> and this alone fully justifies this publishing model. However, in order to reach its objectives, open access needs to be combined with rigorous peer-review, scientific integrity and excellence. This means high costs, in particular for journals that, like Haematologica, have both online and print editions.

As a non-profit organization, the financial objective of the Ferrata Storti Foundation is to break even, and it is also prepared to face losses in order to keep the open access status of the journal. However, these losses must be limited and must not jeopardize the very existence of the journal.

In the last few years, the journal has improved considerably, and its impact factor is increasing steadily. Through Bench>Press™ and HighWire Press® the journal now has both a very efficient manuscript submission and tracking system, and an enjoyable online edition.

All these initiatives have had a significant impact on production costs. To continue to provide open access, the journal now needs to share these high costs of publication with authors. Therefore, authors are now required to pay page charges. Considering the total cost of the average study, page charges will, in any case, represent only a small fraction. In addition, as



underlined by the Editors of PLoS Medicine,<sup>2</sup> funders of research are increasingly aware of the benefits of the open-access model of publishing and are willing to support its cost.

### References

1. Anonymous. Open access (publishing). Wikipedia, 2009. Available from: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open\\_access\\_\(publishing\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open_access_(publishing))
2. Editors. The impact of open access upon public health. PLoS Med 2006;3:e252.