

The Next Chapter for *Stem Cell Reports*

There is a time to come and a time to go. After six years as founding editor and Editor-in-Chief of *Stem Cell Reports*, this will be my last issue. It has been a fantastic journey, beginning with the ISSCR board decision to set up its own journal, in part recognizing the urgent need to contribute to setting standards in the stem cell field, and to provide a forum for members and others to present their stem cell research. We publish original research in multiple formats and also serve as a platform to publish confirmatory studies—firmly believing that the second paper following a major breakthrough is almost as important as the first—and we publish studies that apparently contradict or fail to confirm earlier work. We set the bar high for that reason: our ambition and hope remain that if it is published in *Stem Cell Reports*, it is likely to be true and correct.

How did it all happen from those first ISSCR board discussions? The Publications Committee led by Haifan Lin explored many options for publishers. Through contacts made by Shinya Yamanaka, the decision was made to go with Cell Press. Many of the ISSCR board members were already involved with *Cell Stem Cell* through its editorial board, but the difference with *Stem Cell Reports* would be that it would be fully owned by the ISSCR. Contracts were signed, and I was delighted to be invited by the ISSCR board of directors to become the first editor-in-chief. My original term was intended to be five years as we all believe that it is healthy for a society journal to have turnover in its editorial team. In the end it became six years, but I am still delighted to hand over editorship to an extremely worthy successor, my friend and ISSCR colleague Martin Pera. Many of you will know Martin's careful work on hESC isolation and characterization and of late his focus on neural differentiation. Martin taught me and two of my techs mechanical passage of hESCs in his Melbourne lab almost 20 years ago!

We invited four associate editors to help us, all active scientists with busy labs: Thomas Graf, David Scadden, Nissim Benvenisty, and Hideyuki Okano. And we appointed a managing editor most of you will know: Yvonne Fischer. Together we had expertise in most fields in which we expected to receive papers, and we were located all over the world, as it should be for an international society. The associate editors would serve for four years, but we realized later it was not such a good idea for all of them to be replaced at the same time, so we have staggered it: Amy Wagers followed up David Scadden in 2016, and Jun Takahashi will replace Hideyuki Okano in 2019.

In December 2012, the first calls for papers went out. Heather Rooke was our extremely efficient point of contact



Christine Mummery, Editor-in-Chief, *Stem Cell Reports*

with ISSCR (that contact is now Jack Mosher), Atie Gathier helped as editorial assistant, Nancy Witty was our adviser, Keith Wolman was our Cell Press business contact, and Diana Oesterle has been our wonderful journal manager at Cell Press who has overseen the last stages of article production. The ISSCR board of directors was remarkably loyal and submitted multiple papers for the first issues, showing a leap of faith in the journal. We worked with Cell Press to design the journal format and determine which font to use, which color for the logo, and other style issues. *Cell Stem Cell* shared their database of reviewers with us, and Debbie Sweet was our “Alma Mater,” providing advice on difficult editorial decisions or any disputes that were challenging to resolve. The ISSCR board of directors assisted with editorial functions in the early days. At the ISSCR Annual Meeting in June 2013, the first issue of *Stem Cell Reports* was presented, and the rest is history. To date we have handled more than 3,000 manuscripts, and in all cases, whatever the decision has ultimately been, we have tried to provide the authors with the underlying reasons for our decisions. In some cases, authors have thanked us for a “reject” verdict, saying our feedback was helpful. Of course, they thank us even more for an “accept.”

It has been a delight to work with our responsive and knowledgeable editorial team, who are very fair in dealing with papers and authors, treating them as they would hope to be treated themselves when submitting papers. The journal received its first impact factor after three years, and again now after six years, establishing a reputation for publishing high-quality research as well as for providing fair and efficient evaluation of submitted articles.





My stepping down will certainly leave a gap in regular lab activities and in my life in general! I am eagerly looking forward to fulfilling another role with the ISSCR, that of vice president in 2019, and then president in 2020. I hope that all of you will be at the annual meeting in Hamburg that year, and of course at every ISSCR annual and regional meeting in between. In closing, I wish Martin a very enjoy-

able term as editor-in-chief and, with the editorial team, every success in moving *Stem Cell Reports* into its second chapter.

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<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.stemcr.2018.10.021>