

# Virulence

## Three years and counting

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As *Virulence* is approaching its 3 year anniversary, we would like to take this opportunity to highlight the most recent developments and the course of the journal.

In June this year, Thomson Reuters (formerly ISI) Web of Knowledge released the first impact factor (IF) for *Virulence*: 2.264. Certainly we have some way to go in order to reach our goals but this is a positive first step. We are dedicated to further improving our journal both in content and in size, and with the ongoing active support of the research community we shall continue to make improvements.

The steadily increasing number of high quality content shows that *Virulence* has quickly become accepted in the community, and allows us to increase the number of published issues to eight per year in 2013. This is an important step for the journal. The new schedule will allow even more rapid publication of your research and provide us with more space for timely special features.

*Virulence* has a strong international editorial and advisory board, which guarantees the editorial independence of the journal and ensures the quality and high scientific standard of the published articles. *Virulence* editorial board members are assigned for a term of three years, thus, some board members will leave and a few new ones will join in 2013. This regular restructuring of the board should be a source for fresh wind and new ideas for the journal. We want to take this opportunity to thank the outgoing editorial board members for being actively involved in developing and improving our journal in the past three years, and welcome all new board members.

*Virulence* is all set to continue improving and increasing its content. Our journal

focuses on microbial pathogenicity, the infection process and host-pathogen interactions. In contrast to many other journals on infection and host-pathogen interactions that focus either on basic or clinical research, *Virulence* strives to unite these themes and foster inter-disciplinary studies. The ten most assessed and cited papers in the last 18 mo<sup>1-10</sup> give a flavor of the impressive diversity of topics covered in *Virulence*, ranging from immunology to virology, mycology and bacteriology. For example, some of our most popular papers in the field of immunology discuss antimicrobial peptides and their role in human immunity,<sup>1</sup> antiviral immune responses<sup>2</sup> or the role of IL-17 in protective immunity to intracellular pathogens.<sup>3</sup> Other highly assessed papers focus on bacterial pathogens including *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Acetivobacter baumannii* and *Xantomonas campestris*.<sup>4-7</sup> *Virulence* has also featured excellent papers on the association of schistosomiasis and bladder cancer,<sup>8</sup> the human microbiome as a diverse reservoir of antibiotic resistance genes<sup>9</sup> or the model organism *Galleria mellonella* for studying fungal pathogenesis.<sup>10</sup>

In the year ahead we plan to maintain established popular formats, such as our auto-commentaries named News and Views, and try to further diversify the offerings to our readers. Original research papers will be complemented by various contents such as timely review articles, commentaries and editorials. We will continue to publish Special Focus series, with specials on “Antimicrobial Stewardship” and “Biodefense” in preparation. Earlier this year we published a comprehensive Special Focus on “Blood-Brain-Barrier” in issue 3:2 (March/April). The accompanying editorial by Dr. Joseph El Khoury highlighted the variety of pathogens that

can infect the brain and the various pathways involved in pathogenicity of such infections.<sup>11</sup> The current issue features a Special Focus on “Roles of dendritic cells during infection.” Dr. Jatin Vyas provides an excellent overview of the topic in his editorial.<sup>12</sup> Our upcoming Special Focus topics are regularly announced on our website and of course we welcome your suggestions for future Special Focus series.

It is our aim to provide a balanced mix of solicited contents and original research papers to our readers. To achieve this, we encourage you to consider *Virulence* for publishing your research in the future. We realize that authors can choose from a variety of journals to publish their results, but *Virulence* offers several benefits, such as a fair and quick peer-review process, and a flexible open access (OA) policy. We recognize that some authors prefer that their research be freely available to all potential readers upon publication and that certain funding agencies request open-access within 6 to 12 mo of publication. Thus, all articles published in *Virulence* become OA one year after publication. Alternatively, *Virulence* offers highly competitive OA fees to authors who wish to purchase immediate OA for their paper. Importantly, *Virulence* participates in WHO's Access to Research Initiative (HINARI) ([www.who.int/hinari/en/](http://www.who.int/hinari/en/)) to provide free online access to all papers published to scientists in developing countries worldwide.

We look forward to further improve and develop *Virulence* in 2013, and hope that you will continue to enjoy and support our journal in the future. Your ideas and suggestions are always welcome.

Sincerely, the *Virulence* Editorial Team

## References

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