



Editorial

How to become a good reviewer for Foot and Ankle Surgery



The very positive development of our journal led to an increased Impact Factor (IF) over the last years with 2.705 in 2020. This development is based on an increasing number of submissions that leads to an increasing rejection rate. This results in higher quality of accepted articles that results then in an increasing number of citations. This then again results in a higher IF and this results in an increasing number of submissions, and it starts all over. These submissions are managed by the Managing Editor (Jo Hodgison) to check for correct format before entering the review process. The review process is managed by the Associate Editors (Kris Buedts, Daniele Marcolli, Jesus Vila y Rico, Ian Winson) under supervision of the Editor (Martinus Richter). The reviews as such are performed double blinded (peer) by the reviewers. At least two reviewers are assigned to each submission. The more submissions - the more reviews and reviewers are needed. Consequently, Foot and Ankle Surgery, as all other journals with review process, is permanently looking for new reviewers. You all are potential new reviewers. How do you become a reviewer, how do you do the job right and what is the reward for this? To start with the last point, this is a voluntary position and no money is paid. The reward is mainly to help Foot and Ankle Surgery, EFAS and the foot and ankle surgery community. The best performing 75 reviewers are listed in the journal which is normally considered as an honor and reward. Convinced? OK, then how to become a reviewer? What are the requirements? You do not have to be an experienced reviewer and/or researcher, but some experience in one or both would be helpful. You need time (at the beginning approximately one hour per week) and motivation. Still with it? Then send your application including a CV and personal publication list by email to the Managing Editor (fandasurgery@gmail.com). Your application will be forwarded to the editors who decide about acceptance. Once you are accepted, you receive your account and all needed instructions and you can start under guidance and supervision of the editors. You do not know how to do it? This is the same for most new reviewers, and there are many points to consider. Elsevier has created a whole website for reviewers with all necessary information (<https://www.elsevier.com/en-gb/reviewers>) including newest information within the Reviewers' Update section (<https://www.elsevier.com/connect/reviewers-update>). The review as such shall primarily assess the scientific value of the manuscript. The type of investigated foot and ankle surgery is not of the same importance.

The following questions should be answered. Is this new information? Does the introduction describe background, purpose and hypothesis? Are the methods sufficient (Case number, follow-up time, measures, intra-/interobserver reliability, control group or experimental setting)? Are the results adequate? Is the discussion of relevant literature, study results and shortcomings complete? Are the conclusions supported by the results of the study or overdrawn? Are the references complete and actual? Are the images and tables adequate? Is the wording acceptable? The answers are the basis for the later recommendation. The review should be detailed enough. Comments like "Good paper, publish it", or "Don't like it, reject" are not adequate. On the other hand, the analysis of the manuscript word by word is not needed. The shortcomings and queries should be clearly stated and the recommendation "Accept", "Revise" or "Reject" should be given. The Associate Editor will then have a good basis for his decision which will then be finally approved by the Editor. However, the most important issue of the review is the timing. Do not delay your answer to accept or to not accept an invitation to review. When you as reviewer do not have the time to do a specific review timely, i.e., within two weeks, do NOT accept the invitation. When you accept the invitation and do not timely deliver the review, the entire process is blocked and therefore delayed until you will be unassigned and a new reviewer will be assigned and complete the missing review. To become a good reviewer is not easy and time consuming and there is a learning curve. The editorial team can help you with principle advice. However, they cannot help with a specific review as they are not blinded because they know the author(s). At the end of this learning curve an adequate review will still take around 30 min. Please consider to dedicate this time and effort to Foot and Ankle Surgery, EFAS and the foot and ankle surgery community. Your commitment and contribution are needed and much appreciated!

Martinus Richter¹

Department for Foot and Ankle Surgery Nuremberg and Rummelsberg, Location Hospital Rummelsberg, Rummelsberg 71, 90592 Schwarzenbruck, Germany

¹Homepage: www.krankenhaus-rummelsberg.de (Quick access department: www.foot-surgery.eu). E-mail address: martinus.richter@sana.de (M. Richter).