

## EDITORIAL

# New year wishes and updates

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First I would like to wish you all a very happy and prosperous new year.

We have had another busy year in 2012 in which everyone involved with the *Journal of Human Genetics* (*JHG*) has been contributing to the further growth of the journal.

Since 2009, when the journal relaunched in its current format and on the nature.com platform, the number of submissions to *JHG* has been increasing and the editorial team is working hard to maintain our speed in processing papers to avoid delay. Currently, we are screening all manuscripts received, and send papers that pass this initial screening to the Associate Editors to handle through the peer-review process. I am feeling that the number of rejections we have to make at this stage has been increasing over last year, so that only those papers judged most likely to meet our editorial criteria are sent out for formal review. This also helps us to deliver decisions to authors promptly and saves the referees time. At the same time, I expect that this will also improve the quality of the journal.

I would like to introduce some new things happening in *JHG* in 2013 and beyond. As we announced in the November and December 2012 issues, the Japan Society of Human Genetics has relaunched an award; the *JSHG—Journal of Human Genetics Young Scientist Award* will identify articles that have made a significant contribution to *JHG* and have been contributed by young authors from around the world. Inaugural winners of the award will be selected from the articles that were published in *JHG* in 2011 and 2012, and will be announced at the 59th JSHG annual meeting in November 2013.

I should also mention that *JHG* introduced an open access option from November 2012, in which authors are offered the choice to publishing their papers open access under a creative commons license, to make it freely available online immediately upon publication.

Many journals now provide authors the option to publish their papers open access, and many new ‘fully open access’ journals are being launched. This is a recent model of publishing that has been well received and even demanded by the members of the scholarly community including researchers in genetics studies. Eventhough this model is currently less common in Japan and other regions of Asia compared with US or European countries, I think it is good time for *JHG* to introduce this option now.

Finally, I am very pleased to announce that *JHG* will start publishing special issues of solicited high-quality papers that fall under a specific topic of recent interest in the human genetics field. We will aim to publish one or two special issues every year, with guest editors appointed for each issue. Some of the articles from the special issues will be made free online and will be widely promoted to draw readers’ attention. I am sure that special issues will contribute a lot to an increased readership base. Since 2009, the monthly average number of visits to the *JHG* website has grown by 50%. I am keen to publish high-quality articles in these special issues, as well as in regular issues, to keep attracting our readers.

I am looking forward to working with Associate Editors and special issue guest editors in planning interesting issues over the years to come.

Finally, in closing this message, I’d like to acknowledge those reviewers who have helped us to read and assess manuscripts and make decisions throughout 2012. The *Journal of Human Genetics* relies on their expert knowledge and warm support. The following individuals have provided reviews of papers submitted to *JHG* since November 2, 2011.

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