

Crossroad



For the recent 12 years, JAFES has maintained a nurturing approach for its authors, valuing manuscript acceptance over rejection, exerting as much assistance to authors as possible, seeing scientific merit beyond language barriers, and transforming submitted drafts into papers fully worthy of publication. Through the support of its member societies under the AFES banner, the journal has been able to survive and thrive for another decade and two, proudly showcasing Southeast Asian research on endocrinology.

You have been a witness to the steady growth of JAFES, incorporating international standards and best practices along the way, to be indexed in Scopus, Clarivate Analytics (formerly Thomson Reuters), and PubMed Central. The journal is constantly evolving for the better, and we in the Editorial Team have been hopeful that the improvements in policies, peer review, and manuscript production, will translate to more new submissions. However, the road is far from fully paved: given that JAFES *is for AFES*, we have yet to see the even increase in the number of articles received from all of our member country societies.

We continue to implement our society-funded Open Access model, such that article processing charges are 100% subsidized through the support of the AFES societies, and not to impose charges to authors. We look at this as a way of giving back to the society members and to encourage submissions from all the Southeast Asian countries. This financial model may need to be revisited by AFES in the context of sustainability.

The Philippine endocrinologists, especially those in fellowship training, through the society, continue to patronize JAFES as their journal-of-choice, and this is reflected in the number of articles published by the country. While Malaysia, Indonesia, and Myanmar are able to publish more articles in JAFES over the years, the growth is still modest in submissions and journal metrics (which are computed based on citation data of published articles). Metrics, as a measure of journal quality, are very much a reality in the academic or scientific world: JAFES would actually need more years of publication, and more citation data, to be able to achieve a level of metrics that would entice more authors to select it as their publication pathway.

Meanwhile we are attempting to enhance engagement further, through our visual abstract team, and by tapping into social media. This year we plan to hold a visual abstract workshop for interested researchers from the region to be able to summarize their manuscripts' key findings in one graphic, as a way of promoting the journal among readers. Perhaps, it is also time to consider more marketing strategies, given the sheer number of journals competing for researchers' attention.

Thanks to digital technology, we in the Editorial Team have been allowed to directly reach out to each country society, and ask them their individual needs and concerns, and their take on the future of JAFES. Mutually we are glad to be able to meet, discuss these important administrative matters, and, more importantly, to affirm our continuing commitment to quality and ethical publication.

There is a continuing journey ahead of us, but at this point JAFES has come to another crossroad. This year, 2022, there will be an AFES Congress. Although still virtual, this will still give us a chance to reconnect with our colleagues from across the region. It is our hope that the leadership of AFES, our publisher, will be able to set the direction and light the way once more for JAFES.

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