

Sustainability: An Open Letter to our Authors and Readers



The Journal of the ASEAN Federation of Endocrine Societies (JAFES) stands at a crucial juncture as we navigate the evolving landscape of academic publishing. Our commitment to **open access** publishing has fostered a rich environment for enhancing research and collaboration. This accessibility is vital for advancing the field of endocrinology in our region, where disparities in healthcare resources often limit access to essential research findings. However, maintaining the quality and accessibility of our journal requires a sustainable financial model that supports our operational needs. The costs associated with editorial management, peer review, and online hosting are substantial.

JAFES' publisher, the seven country societies making up the Federation, have faithfully provided financial support to the journal, allowing the Philippine team to build capacity and to professionalize its operations. This support has enabled us to publish the journal without need to levy any expenses to authors who submit their work. We remain grateful to be given this privilege of hosting the JAFES and steering it to its current stature.

Sustainability is key as we move towards our 15th year of hosting the journal. This concern was discussed in length at a special session at last year's AFES Congress in Thailand, officiated by Endocrine Society of Thailand President Chaicharn Deerochanawong. (Figures 1 to 3).

To ensure that JAFES can continue to serve our authors, readers and the community effectively, we must introduce an Article Processing Charge (APC). This decision is not taken lightly; it stems from a commitment to uphold the integrity and quality of our



Figure 1. JAFES Core Team with MEMS and PCEDM Presidents at the AFES Presidents' Meeting in Queen Sirikit, Bangkok, Thailand on November 18, 2023 [from L-R: Gabriel V. Jasul Jr. (Associate Editor), Cecilia A. Jimeno (Vice Editor-in-Chief), Elizabeth Paz-Pacheco (Editor-in-Chief), Nurain Mohd Noor (MEMS President and JAFES Editorial Board Member), Marjorie A. Ramos (PCEDM President), Melissa Tandoc (JAFES Secretary)].



Figure 2. AFES Presidents [from R-L: Ketut Suastika (ISE), Nurain Mohd Noor (MEMS), Ko Ko (MSEM), Tran Huu Dang (VADE) Chaicharn Deerochanawong (EST), Marjorie A. Ramos (PCEDM), Kek Peng Chin (EMSS)], and JAFES [Elizabeth Paz-Pacheco (Editor-in-Chief), Gabriel V. Jasul Jr. (Associate Editor), Cecilia A. Jimeno (Vice Editor-in-Chief)], convene to discuss the journal's sustainability and future directions.

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Figure 3. AFES Country Presidents and representatives following the meeting in Bangkok [from L-R: Tran Huu Dang (VADE President), Marjorie A. Ramos (PCEDM President), Vivien Lim (AFES 2022 President), Kek Peng Chin (EMSS President), Chaicharn Deerochanawong (AFES 2023 President, EST), Ko Ko (MSEM President), Ketut Suastika (past ISE President), Fatimah Eliana (ISE), Nurain Mohd Noor (MEMS), Roy Panusuan Sibarani (ISE)].

journal while ensuring that it remains open and accessible to all. The implementation of an APC will help cover operational expenses and provide the resources for continuous improvement in our publishing processes, including enhancing our editorial support, expanding our outreach, and investing in digital infrastructure.

At this juncture, the gradual introduction of an APC is a necessary step towards ensuring the long-term sustainability of JAFES. The details of the APC, including the specific fee structure and information on waivers or discounts for authors facing financial constraints, will be provided in the coming months. Our goal is to ensure that all researchers are able to continue to publish their work without barriers: this is JAFES' commitment.

As we move forward with this initiative, we invite dialogue with our authors, readers and other stakeholders. Your feedback is invaluable as we strive to create a model that balances sustainability with our mission to promote knowledge sharing and collaboration in the field of endocrinology.

Together, we can build a resilient platform that continues to advance endocrine research and practice. We appreciate your understanding and continued support as we implement this change. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to us.

Thank you for your commitment to advancing endocrinology research in our region.

Elizabeth Paz-Pacheco
Editor-in-Chief