Editorial

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With the retirement of Professor Marc van Regenmortel following his 20-year appointment as Editor-in-Chief, this August issue of Archives of Virology marks a turning point in the history of the journal. During his tenure, Marc has had a tremendous influence on both the scope and the success of the journal. With over 400,000 pdf downloads in 2017, Archives of Virology is clearly providing a tremendous service to the virology community. A further indicator of the success of the journal is the rise of submissions. Since 2005, the start of electronic submission to Archives of Virology, the number of submissions has risen from under 500 per year to over 1200 in 2017.

The rising importance of Archives of Virology to the community during Marc's tenure was based on a number of factors. First, Marc ensured that the most important criteria for publication in the journal were scientific accuracy and rigour in the field of virology and closely related ones such as immunology, vaccinology and epidemiology. Second, Marc emphasised to handling editors the importance of a rapid but nonetheless thorough review process to maintain the quality and the impact of the journal. Third, Marc's passion for the correct use of taxonomy and the importance of clarity of language was evident in his insistence on having every article read by expert language and taxonomy editors. Fourth, Marc's editorials on the nature of viruses, on their taxonomy and on matters arising such as the design of vaccines and the claims for bacteriophage cooperation were a regular feature that complemented the research papers.

To celebrate Marc's period as Editor-in-Chief, Springer Nature and the Medical University of Vienna organised a symposium on 29th June 2018. This issue contains articles written by the speakers based on their presentations as well as some tributes from former colleagues. Not only do these contributions pay tribute to Marc but they also discuss some

very important virological issues of the present day such as the reasons why a select group of patients infected with HIV continue to control the infection and how the generation of new viral sequences is impacting on virologists' attempts to classify viruses.

It has been my pleasure to serve as handling editor with Marc since 2004. This has allowed me a close insight into his attention to detail, his care for the journal and above all his life-long interest not only in all aspects of virology but also in biophysics, biochemistry, molecular recognition, taxonomy in all of biology and philosophy. After these 15 years as a handling editor, I now have the honour to follow in Marc's footsteps as Editor-in-Chief. I know that I will need an extraordinarily large pair of shoes to fulfil this task, but I will endeavour as best I can to maintain Marc's standards of excellence and speed so that Archives of Virology can maintain its quality service to the community.

Marc and I have jointly carried out the tasks of Editor-in-Chief since the beginning of the year. As of 30th June 2018, almost 600 submissions had been received, of which over 60% have been or will be rejected. In this first editorial, as a support for prospective authors, I would like to outline the most frequent reasons for the rejection of manuscripts to Archives of Virology and thus increase the probability of a successful outcome.

Perhaps the most common reason for rejection is that the advance in knowledge in the publication is insufficient to merit publication in Archives. The results presented may just be confirmatory or apply the same investigations to another member of the same genus or may contain an insufficient number of samples to justify the conclusions drawn. A variation on this theme is that the advance in knowledge is sufficient but that it has not been properly communicated to the editors and/or the reviewers in the title or in the abstract. A further parameter that restricts the advance in knowledge is a limited geographical area of study so that the results will only be of interest to a local audience but not to the international audience of Archives of Virology.

Three reasons which preclude manuscripts being passed on to handling editors for peer review are plagiarism, an

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incorrect format and/or a poor level of English. Authors should note that every manuscript submitted to Archives of Virology is subject to an automatic search for plagiarism. Articles that are flagged by the software will be summarily rejected. Problems with an incorrect format often occur with manuscripts that just contain sequence data. The correct format for such articles is the “annotated sequence record”. The sequences reported should be of complete viral genomes and should be appreciably different from current entries in the databases. Manuscripts submitted as “original articles” with fewer than three figures or tables that should be in the “brief report” format will also be returned to the author to be converted into the correct format. Finally, as often stated by Marc, clarity of thought is vital for successful manuscript writing. Submissions with a poor standard of English or other writing issues are also returned to the author forthwith.

I hope that the above summary will help authors to publish successfully in Archives of Virology. The field

of virology is in a very dynamic state with topical issues including the endgame in the fight to eradicate poliovirus, continuing epidemics of measles virus, the spreading in unknown ways of important veterinary viruses such as African swine fever virus and the effect on crops by plant viruses such as potato virus Y. Lively times lie ahead for virologists. I will do my utmost to ensure that Archives of Virology makes a contribution to the reporting and discussion of future advances.

Compliance with ethical standards

Conflict of interest The author declares that he has no conflict of interest.