Peer review and the *International Urogynecology Journal*

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Peer review is critical to ensure the quality of scientific publications. Since its inception, the *International Urogynecology Journal* has relied on peer review from the international community in order to improve our journal and ensure that only high-quality research and reviews are published in it. At its best, peer review is the frank and honest appraisal of the merit and validity of scientific writings. Through peer review, editors determine if work is worthy of publication, and authors are given valuable feedback on how to improve their work. Reviewing takes considerable time and energy. A good review comments on the strengths and weaknesses of a submission and suggests ways in which to improve the work. Peer reviewers should refrain from promoting their own personal research agendas and reveal when conflicts of interest exist. While peer reviewers play an essential role in the review process, they should refrain from offering an opinion as to whether or not a work is worthy of publication, as acceptance or rejection of manuscripts is at the discretion of editors.

How does peer review work in the IUJ? Once a manuscript is submitted, it is assigned to one of our international teams of editors. That editor assigns the paper to at least three peer reviewers obtained from a list maintained by the journal. In addition, each paper is assigned to one of the members of our editorial board to review. Once the reviews are completed, the editor then makes a decision about whether or not the paper should be rejected, revised, or accepted. A paper may undergo several iterations of this process. We are very grateful to reviewers who have provided their input to our journal.

To recognize the key role that peer review plays in scientific publishing, Peer Review Week was founded in 2014. This year, Peer Review Week will occur from 10–15 September with a central theme of “Diversity and Inclusion”. The IUJ promotes diversity and inclusion by representing urogynecologic

research globally and using reviewers from around the world. We are proud to share that our ad hoc reviewers represent 70 countries and our editorial board members represent 28 countries. To celebrate Peer Review Week, the IUJ will be highlighting the exceptional work of our peer reviewers on social media. We encourage you to follow #PeerRevWk18 and #PeerRevDiversityInclusion on social media and to check out <https://peerreviewweek.wordpress.com> to learn about various virtual and in-person activities taking place that week.

How can you be involved with the journal and join your peers in determining what is published in our journal? One way to contribute is to become a reviewer. If you have not reviewed for the IUJ previously but would like to do so, contact Lindsay MacMurray, our managing editor, at ijeditorialoffice@gmail.com. If you feel unsure about whether or not you are comfortable reviewing by yourself, the IUJ has a mentored reviewer category. Mentored reviews are performed in conjunction with someone who has more experience in reviewing and allows mentorship of early reviewers as they hone their skills in peer review. In addition to peer reviewing, you can become involved by submitting your research, writing editorials, letters to the editors, and commentaries. If you would like to become more involved, please contact Lindsay MacMurray at ijeditorialoffice@gmail.com.

While we appreciate all our reviewers, we would like to take this opportunity to recognize the top ten reviewers from the past year. These individuals provided timely, high-quality reviews of a large number of papers over the last year. To them, and to all our peer reviewers, we thank you!

1. R. Keith Huffaker (USA)
2. Tsia-Shu Lo (Taiwan)
3. Danny Lovatsis (Canada)
4. Luiz Gustavo Oliveira Brito (Brazil)
5. G. Alessandro Digesu (United Kingdom)
6. Michael Moen (USA)
7. Jittima Manonai (Thailand)
8. Aparna Hegde (India)
9. Jonathan Duckett (United Kingdom)
10. Pallavi M. Latthe (United Kingdom)

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