The delicate topic of mentorship

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Mentoring requires a generosity of time, empathy, a willingness to share knowledge, and enthusiasm [1].

During the past 20 years, the editorial office has sent annual requests to the Editorial Board—would anyone like to be a mentor—usually we receive no replies to the email. We do understand this state of affairs since mentorship can result in additional work for the board members—who may have time constraints [2]—and are usually active on editorial boards of other journals, in addition to our journal.

This year 2019, however, with a new and updated editorial board and 2 additional new editors-in-chief, a change occurred to this state of affairs.

When in January the welcome email to the editorial board was sent, we received 3 positive responses from Igor Kozak (United Arab Emirates), Tunde Peto (Belfast), and Andrzej Grzybowski (Poland). The *Graefe's Archive* mentorship program was launched.

Of course, we had to wait for suitable papers to be submitted and pass through the initial peer-review process.

The papers selected for the mentorship program were papers from the former Eastern European countries (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Belarus, Moldova, Ukraine) [3].

Mentorship could be given to the co-authors/senior co-authors in those only papers where the whole group of authors were based in an Eastern European Country.

The papers are initially proceed as regular papers; however, upon receipt of both reviewer comments, the geographic

location of the authors is checked; if the paper receives a recommendation of “revision,” the mentorship team is then invited to look at the paper and advise if suitable for the mentorship program.

This year, we had 1 paper which received advice from the mentorship team but the corresponding author decided to withdraw the paper; another paper which the editorial office thought would be suitable was found not to be suitable by the mentorship team since the co-authors were senior scientists based in European countries and should have offered the mentorship to the corresponding author.

However, this issue includes a paper which received input from our mentorship team [4].

We do hope that authors from former Eastern European countries will not feel disadvantaged and that we will continue to receive good scientific submissions which our mentorship team will indeed be able to help and offer advice to enable the dissemination of good science.

Compliance with ethical standards

Conflict of interest The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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