Neurological Sciences: a roadmap for the future

A message from the new editor-in-chief

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It is for me a great honor to serve as the Editor-in-Chief of Neurological Sciences, the official journal of the Italian Neurological Society and a key vehicle to promote and disseminate knowledge on the pathophysiology, diagnosis, and treatment of neurological disorders, which should ultimately result in the best possible patient care.

My decision to accept this demanding commitment has an emotional component, as the journal was founded by Renato Boeri at the “Carlo Besta” Neurological Institute where I carried out most of my clinical and research activities: I feel this is a way to give back some of what I received from that prestigious institution.

In taking on this role, my thoughts go to Giuliano Avanzini and Antonio Federico who have built on the ground-work laid by Renato Boeri. Their vision, competence, and dedication have given the journal an international profile. I sincerely want to thank them, as well as the Associate Editors and the Advisory Board members, for their outstanding contributions.

In the last few years, the journal’s IF has increased significantly to its current value of 3.3, so that Neurological Sciences is currently placed in the second quartile of “clinical neurology” journals ranking. This growth has been accompanied by a marked increase in number of submissions from all continents ($\approx 2.500/\text{year}$), published articles ($\approx 700/\text{year}$), and full-text downloads and citations, making Neurological Sciences an increasingly appealing choice for neurologists and neuroscientists. The challenge is to further improve the quality of the journal and progressively reach a wider audience of researchers interested in publishing and reading excellent papers.

To take this important legacy forward and engage in the further development of the journal, I will work with the editorial board and the reviewers, focusing primarily on what authors and readers want: a high overall scientific profile; fast, fair, and soundly motivated decisions on submitted papers; and timely publication of cutting-edge topics. These drivers of attraction will lead to a progressive increase in quality of publications and number of citations, inducing a positive loop that should eventually increase the IF and the journal’s prestige, thus making Neurological Sciences more and more appealing and competitive.

In order to continue with the excellent work done in recent years, I propose a series of measures and approaches to be pursued in the near future, all of them aimed at continually improving the quality of our journal:

- New editorial board members will be appointed to further enhance the internationalization in key branches of the clinical and pre-clinical neurosciences, emphasizing the role of the editorial board as a source of ideas, content and networking, and of its members as ambassadors for the journal.
- The manuscript review process will be monitored to improve the timelines; the best-performing reviewers will be empowered to further raise the editorial standards.
- Hot and controversial topics will be discussed timely, providing fast-track publication for relevant editorials and articles.
- The publication of high-quality reviews and original articles with substantial conceptual advance will be pursued.
- Transdisciplinary communication between clinicians and basic scientists will be fostered through paired point/counterpoint clinical and preclinical articles on a given topic, to recognize the value and limitations of experimental models for understanding human diseases and help address translational challenges.

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- Cutting-edge themes such as neurogenetics, neuroimaging, neuropathology, and rare neurological disorders will be further developed through topical collections coordinated by international Guest Editors.
- The Open Access option and the transition to fully Open Access publishing will be promoted to reach more readers and increase citations, downloads, and the impact of articles. With the same purpose, authors will be encouraged to share the view-only version of their papers by posting links on social channels, institutional repositories, the authors' own websites, and collaborative networks.
- The principles of open science will also be supported by encouraging and facilitating authors to deposit the raw data of their publications in accessible repositories.

Lastly and crucially, the new challenges that stand before us can only be faced with your contribution, dear reader and

author. We live in promising and exciting times, as we have entered an era of diagnostic and therapeutic revolution for several neurological disorders, and Neurological Sciences has an important role to play in sharing your findings and knowledge.

With this in mind, I wish you all the best for 2022.

Declarations

Conflict of interest The author declares no competing interests.

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