Reac Kinet Mech Cat (2013) 110:1–3
DOI 10.1007/s11144-013-0622-x

Editorial

István Fábián · Gábor Lente

Received: 1 August 2013 / Accepted: 1 August 2013 / Published online: 24 August 2013

The June of 2013 was an important month in the life Reaction Kinetics, Mechanisms and Catalysis. After a title change from Reaction Kinetics and Catalysis Letters in 2010, this was the month when Thomson Reuters published the first full impact factor of the new title. The value, also printed on the cover of the journal, is 1.104, which is far the highest in the history of the journal.

We know that the impact factor is important for many authors, as it is one of a few indicators that are used to evaluate their performance by funding agencies. Yet this over-reliance on scientometrics is against the clearly expressed advice of Thomson Reuters, the very company publishing the impact factors [1]. The recently published San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA) [2], started by the American Society for Cell Biology but also supported by the editor of Science magazine [3], aims to stop the use of the impact factors as an indicator in judging an individual scientist's work. If the work of a scientist cannot be judged based on impact factors, neither should individual articles be assessed on such numbers. As scientific editors, we have always looked for scientific value in the submitted manuscripts, which we think is quite often different from the potential of an article for making an impact. DORA has strengthened our resolve to continue this practice and we fully agree that impact factors should be used only for portraying scientific journals.

The primary objective of the title change in 2010 was to encourage authors to submit full accounts of research rather than short letters. We still believe that detailed papers serve the interests of science better than preliminary communications. Therefore, submissions that are seen as fragmented have been and will be rejected without review. On rare occasions, we also consider reviews for publication, but only if they are invited by the editors.

I. Fábián (✉) · G. Lente
Department of Inorganic and Analytical Chemistry, University of Debrecen, Debrecen, Hungary
e-mail: rkcl.eic@science.unideb.hu

In 2010, new submission guidelines were introduced together with an electronic submission system. Unfortunately, some of the submissions we receive do not follow the guidelines. For example, suitable titles or abstracts are not provided. Titles should identify the investigated topic unambiguously and should only contain abbreviations if they are in very common use (e.g. NMR). An abstract should focus entirely on the achievements reported in the submission. A mini-introduction describing the significance of the topic or the general state of science in a field is absolutely unnecessary in an abstract. Neither titles nor abstracts should contain chemical structures or mathematical formulas as these are often entered into text-only databases that cannot handle this sort of information. Brevity for abstracts is also an important service for the readers, though we do not have any stated limits on length. The editors will continue to enforce these rules.

As a specialized journal in kinetics, mechanisms and catalysis, we feel inclined to call our reader's attention to the fact that there is an ongoing debate on the use of turnover frequencies (TOF) and turnover numbers (TON). We would like to ask all interested readers to overview the relevant background information in recent publications [4–8]. The editorial office recommends using reaction rates instead of TOF values. When TON values are reported, the special care described in the literature [4–8] should be exercised.

We would also like to take the opportunity to declare our policy on manuscripts uploaded to pre-preprint servers (such as *arXiv.org*) before submission. We understand that pre-print communication of scientific results is encouraged in physics and mathematics. The majority of chemical journals have a different attitude, though, and consider pre-print as previous publication of the manuscript. We follow the same policy. Therefore, submissions already uploaded to a public pre-print server cannot be considered for publication in Reaction Kinetics, Mechanisms and Catalysis.

A troubling recent development is the growth in the discovered cases of scientific misconduct, mostly in the form of plagiarism or self-plagiarism. The editorial office usually follows the recommendation of the Committee of Publication Ethics [9] in these cases: the submissions are not simply rejected, further action is pursued. The corresponding author of such a manuscript is usually banned from the journal for 5 years, and the leader of the research institution of the author is contacted and advised to begin an ethical investigation. Through these policies, we hope to serve an increasingly diverse scientific community and ensure the reliability of published papers.

Finally, we would like to thank the contribution of all authors, reviewers and the editorial board which was essential in maintaining the quality of the journal. We strongly believe that our joint efforts will establish Reaction Kinetics, Mechanisms and Catalysis as a main forum for researchers active in this field.

References

1. http://community.thomsonreuters.com/t5/Citation-Impact-Center/Preserving-the-Integrity-of-The-Journal-Impact-Factor-Guidelines/ba-p/1218
2. http://am.ascb.org/dora/files/SFDeclarationFINAL.pdf

3. Alberts B (2013) Science 340:787
4. Science magazine online letters, http://www.sciencemag.org/content/333/6050/1733/reply#sci_el_16401
5. Kozuch S, Martin JML (2012) ACS Catal 2:2787
6. Kozuch S (2013) ACS Catal 3:380
7. Lente G (2013) ACS Catal 3:381
8. Ritter SK (2013) Chem Eng News 91(9):46
9. http://publicationethics.org/