

EDITOR'S NOTE

The Future of *Circulation: Cardiovascular Imaging*

Expanding Our Reach and Enhancing Our Value

In its short life, *Circulation: Cardiovascular Imaging* has become one of the leading journals on the application of imaging in cardiovascular disease. Starting a journal from the ground up that has achieved such success is a singular accomplishment and a real tribute to the outstanding leadership, creativity, and diligence of Marcelo Di Carli and his editorial team. As the incoming Editor-in-Chief, I speak for our entire editorial team that we are very excited and deeply honored to take over the reins of *Circulation: Cardiovascular Imaging* from Marcelo and his team and to build on their success. I would also like to add a personal note of appreciation to Marcelo for his invaluable assistance in helping guide our team, particularly me, through the transition. Moreover, I want to thank Joe Hill and the team at *Circulation* for their gracious and incredibly helpful support and for permitting us to use or modify many of their innovations that have led to the tremendous success of their journal. Finally, I want to acknowledge the invaluable support provided by Mark Estes, the Chair of the Scientific Publishing Committee, Karen Barry, the Director of Journal Operations, and Heather Goodell, the Vice President for Scientific Publishing, throughout this entire process.

It is clear that the importance of journals such as *Circulation: Cardiovascular Imaging* will only continue to grow. There are numerous drivers of this growth. For example, given the burgeoning evidence that common cardiovascular diseases represent an amalgamation of constantly evolving subtypes determined, in part, by their epigenomics, macro- and microenvironment, and response to therapy, it is clear that the clinical applicability of preclinical models of various cardiovascular diseases is becoming more limited. As a result, the application of advanced multimodality imaging tools in humans will expand well beyond their typical role of disease detection, risk assessment, and guiding management strategies to delineating fundamental disease mechanisms. Moreover, advanced imaging tools, particularly molecular imaging, are playing an increasing role as possible surrogate end points for various phases of clinical trials and as potential partners for future therapeutic paradigms. Finally, successful implementation of the ongoing efforts to make precision medicine a reality will require integration of multiscale biological data with sophisticated imaging tools that can detect anatomical, physiological, and biological events *in vivo* to localize disease presence, to determine its status, and to monitor therapeutic response in an individual cardiovascular patient.

However, like all journals, *Circulation: Cardiovascular Imaging* faces significant challenges in how to adjudicate the importance of new biomedical information and disseminate it in a way that is aligned with how information is currently consumed. Indeed, these challenges, and potential strategies to overcome them, can be distilled to the singular goal of increasing the influence of a journal. Most commonly, influence or impact is defined or measured using various bibliometrics, or more recently altmetrics, but, ultimately, it comes down to the consumer, which,

Robert J. Gropler, MD

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in this case, are the readers and prospective authors. If the consumer finds a product adding value, there is an increase in readership and, in parallel, submission of quality content. Conversely, if the product is not viewed as providing added value, there is a decline in these metrics.

Our vision for *Circulation: Cardiovascular Imaging* is that it becomes the most authoritative and influential source of leading-edge imaging sciences content that transforms cardiovascular care. Although the primary focus for readership will continue to be cardiovascular clinicians and researchers, we plan to extend the reach of the journal to other key interested parties, such as those from other interested medical or scientific fields, industry, funding agencies, and regulatory bodies.

In the next few paragraphs, I will describe some of the potential strategies our editorial team has designed to enhance the value of *Circulation: Cardiovascular Imaging* and, thus, achieve this vision.

MORE VISIBLE INTERNATIONAL PRESENCE

Given the globalism of science and medicine and that nearly 50% of published manuscripts by *Circulation: Cardiovascular Imaging* are from outside the United States, it is critical we continue to increase our efforts to attract readers and authors from the international community. Strategies we are implementing include increased editorial team representation by international imaging leaders, heightened visibility at international meetings, and enhanced electronic interactions. Our editors will be present at national and international meetings to identify potential topics of interest and engage relevant authors for possible submissions of original manuscripts or review articles. Although no promises of acceptance for publication can be made, the editors will offer an expedited and fair review that they will personally oversee. Other approaches will include facilitating the use of editorial services offered by Wolters Kluwer and the translation of select journal content into non-English languages in key world areas.

IMPROVING THE COMMUNICATION INTERFACE

A key component of successful communication is an attractive and seamless interface between the provider and consumer of content. We will be executing several strategies to enhance this interaction. We will be using a new digital platform that is being implemented across the American Heart Association family of journals. This platform permits consumption of journal content on all common electronic devices ranging from desktop computers to smartphones when it is convenient for the

reader. Given we are an exclusive online journal and that optimal interpretation of imaging requires digital display, we will greatly enhance our digital media presence. Indeed, we have members of the editorial team specifically dedicated to this task. The goals are to augment the breadth and speed of our communications, as well as develop online discussions and communities. Our hope is that these innovations will facilitate the understanding and contextualize scientific topics of interest, signal new scientific directions, and perhaps stimulate new collaborations. Over the next few months, readers will see a further redesign of our homepage that we think will be more intuitive, facilitating navigation. In addition, we will use current and emerging forms of social media to communicate broadly and rapidly. We will also introduce podcasts that will provide another avenue for discussions on journal content or other contemporary scientific or professional topics of interest to our readers.

CONTINUING MEDICAL EDUCATION AND OTHER FORMS OF INTERACTION

Circulation: Cardiovascular Imaging will offer the opportunity for the reader to demonstrate attainment of new knowledge and to permit benchmarking with peers. Using the previously described interface improvements to permit online assessments, we will provide Continuing Medical Education offerings in a variety of formats, such as original articles, case studies, and review articles. To further enhance the interaction experience for our readers, we will be exploring strategies that permit rapid assessments of performance, such as unknown cases where one can quickly compare their answers with peers. To ensure the success of these innovations, specific members of the editorial team will dedicate their efforts to these activities.

NEW CONTENT AND FORMATS

Our content format will evolve as new science emerges and to stay aligned with the interests and information consumption habits of our readers. Thus, numerous types of content categories and formats will need to be offered and their success measured. For example, in addition to advances in various imaging modalities and their clinical and research applications, we will further highlight the multidisciplinary and systems biological nature of cardiovascular disease and how imaging provides linkage across these various domains. We will also present preclinical studies that are accompanied by editorials that position the reported findings from a clinical perspective potentially presaging new imaging methods for patient management. It is likely that the admixture of offerings will be constantly changing based on new scientific discoveries, the feedback received from

the readership, and observed trends in publishing of biomedical journals.

FURTHER IMPROVEMENTS IN THE REVIEW PROCESS

A goal common to all journals is the continued shortening of the timeline from submission to final adjudication of a submitted manuscript. Clearly, the desire for speed must always be tempered by a journal's ultimate responsibility of publishing information that is impactful, of the highest integrity, and is accurate. Moreover, authors want and should expect a fair appraisal of their submitted manuscript that provides clear and constructive criticism delivered in a respectful tone and that results in a timely editorial decision. Although *Circulation: Cardiovascular Imaging* has done well in this regard, our team will be instituting several strategies that we think will further enhance the review process.

Given that only a small fraction of all submitted manuscripts are ultimately published by *Circulation: Cardiovascular Imaging*, we will be greatly reducing the number of newly submitted manuscripts that are sent out for external review. The initial review will be performed internally by the editorial team, and those manuscripts judged to be of a priority that is unlikely to result in publication will be returned to the authors. In our correspondence to the authors, we will summarize our reasons for coming to this decision. Although such a decision is a bit disheartening for the authors, it does permit them to more rapidly resubmit the manuscript to a different journal. And perhaps our suggestions may help further improve the manuscript and its chances of success for publication.

Too often, authors receive reviews that are either unclear in their concerns, unrealistic in their expectations, or contradictory in their suggestions. To help minimize these occurrences, our editors will take a more active role in the review process. This will include a summary of the key issues that should be addressed in their response letter to the authors (analogous to the

review summary one receives for an National Institutes of Health grant application). Moreover, the assigned editor will be available to provide advice to the authors.

Our manuscript review process is only as good as the efforts of our external reviewers. These accomplished and busy investigators volunteer significant time and energy to provide timely and high-quality evaluations of submitted content. The journal will be offering Continuing Medical Education and other forms of recognition for outstanding review performance. We believe that these initiatives will help ensure *Circulation: Cardiovascular Imaging* continues to attract and retain the highest level of scientific talent to provide this critical function.

Carrying out these innovations is our new editorial team composed of internationally recognized experts in the various cardiovascular imaging methods and their applications. They were selected not just for their scientific acumen and experience but also for their commitment to the scientific publishing mission. Our team is excited to embark on a new chapter in the life of this prestigious journal. We invite you to sample these new initiatives and features as they rollout over the next few months. We would greatly value your feedback. Our goal is to provide relevant and up-to-date content in an efficient and timely manner on platforms most suited for contemporary learning so that *Circulation: Cardiovascular Imaging* provides optimal value to enhance your clinical, research, and professional activities.

ARTICLE INFORMATION

Correspondence

Robert J. Gropler, MD, Cardiovascular Imaging Laboratory, Division of Radiological Sciences, Mallinckrodt Institute of Radiology, Washington University School of Medicine, 510 S Kingshighway, St Louis, MO 63110. E-mail Groplerr@mir.wustl.edu

Affiliations

Mallinckrodt Institute of Radiology, Washington University School of Medicine, St Louis, MI.

Disclosures

None.

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Robert J. Gropler

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