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The future of *Scandinavian Journal of Work, Environment & Health* in the era of open science

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The future of *Scandinavian Journal of Work, Environment & Health* in the era of open science

Open access and open science

Scientists live in interesting times. Some colleagues have argued that a considerable proportion of scientific articles is simply research waste. It is proposed that we should produce less but better research that provides unequivocal answers to societal needs. At the same time, funding agencies and users of scientific information are very vocal in requiring scientific research to be accessible to all levels of society. The Open Science movement has taken this one step further with the Plan S initiative, which pushes for all scientific research funded by public grants to be published in "Gold" (or 100%) open access journals. While we support the principle of accessibility – as evidenced by the high percentage of unlocked articles we publish and that all our content is open access after two years – this new era of Open Science poses several challenges for a non-commercial, niche journal like the *Scandinavian Journal of Work, Environment & Health*. Simply put, without significant support from alternative sources, open access journals need to publish at a high rate to offset lost income from subscriptions. Journals like *PLOS One* or *BMJ Open* publish many thousand articles per year. With the current speed of publications, it may be questioned whether we too should adopt a similar policy and simply publish all submitted research of good quality.

In this contribution, we outline our guiding principles for the future of the journal.

Strong focus on scientific quality and innovative research

With the huge scientific production of every day in mind, *Scand J Work Environ Health* wants to make a difference by providing its readership with guidance on new topics and innovative methods. In recent years we have published on emerging topics, for example health effects of precarious employment (1), and regularly revisited hot topics such as shift work and cardiovascular diseases (2). We strive to publish exemplary papers on analytical methods that may guide researchers how to adopt these innovative methods in their own studies, such as trajectory analysis (3) and latent class growth analysis (4). In essence, papers of good quality can be published in many journals, but *Scand J Work Environ Health* aims to attract those original articles that *progress* scientific understanding on how we can make the workplace a healthier environment. Thus we apply a rigorous peer-review system and have an acceptance rate of less than 20%.

Broad profile in methods, focused profile in content

For a specialized journal like *Scand J Work Environ Health,* we try to strike a good balance between innovative methods and important subject matter. Innovative methods will attract our attention, specifically when a study demonstrates how this new method contributes to existing evidence in the literature on risk factors or effectiveness of interventions. A prime example is our current interest in statistical methods for causal interference in observational studies (5, 6). With regard to important topics that also catch our eye, we envisage the journal as primarily one with roots in occupational epidemiology, with the occasional excursion into other type of studies that are of relevance to occupational health.

Applying this editorial policy, we hope to create a community of dedicated readers and writers with a keen interest in promoting the health and well-being of the workforce. We have strengthened our editorial team in order to promote *Scand J Work Environ Health* as a leading journal in occupational epidemiology. We acknowledge that we are standing on the shoulders of our predecessors. We would like to extend our gratitude for the great contribution of Eira Viikari-Juntura, who served the journal as Deputy Editor-in-Chief for the past 15 years. Her role has been essential in achieving

the journal's ambition to publish scientific papers that really matter. The new editorial team is committed to continuing this legacy, publishing excellent studies that address pertinent questions in occupational health.

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