

GUEST EDITORIAL

Guest Editorial: The founding years

Now Transplant International celebrates its 25th anniversary, it is a nice occasion to look into the cradle and see how Transplant International was conceived.

It was at the Council Meeting in 1987 that the Council came to the conclusion that the intention to put the European transplant activities on the map was very well received with the biannual Congresses. They were well attended but there were no ESOT Congress Proceedings and even worse, no Journal to highlight the European activity in transplantation medicine.

At the Council Meeting in 1987 it was decided to start discussing with Publishers regarding a European Journal of Transplantation. Walter Land was in those days the dynamic President of ESOT. But who volunteered to become Editor in Chief of the new Journal? I was secretary to the Council and when several fingers pointed in my direction, I decided to volunteer. Walter Land had good connections with Springer Verlag, so we went to Heidelberg.

Our enthusiasm was enforced by the co-workers at Springer Verlag: Professor Dietrich Götze with a background in immunological research gave great support. Springer was willing to invest in the Journal by paying for the assistant to the Editor. They advised not to use the geographical term “European” in the name of the Journal. This had to do with Impact Factor and Citation Index. Although we did not understand the disadvantage, and I actually still do not today, we transferred the message to the Council: no “European” Journal!

Many titles passed in review. “Transplant International” won for the want of something better, and it may have been a somewhat difficult name for a starting journal. Sir Roy Calne once told me he had an association with “agriculture” when referring to Transplant International. The subtitle was “Official Journal of the European Society for Organ Transplantation”. It is good to read that today another two societies, “The European Liver and Intestine Transplant Association” and “The German Transplantation Society” have joined.

It was decided that the Journal should be free for members of ESOT.

I was lucky to find Pamela Falger-Cohen, a Native American and schooled in language editing; she was involved in the Educational Foreign Medical Graduate test that could be done at the American embassies every year and that allowed a non-American MD to work clinically in the USA. Pamela died recently and I had the opportunity in an obituary in our Journal to remember Pamela and to emphasize her contribution to the Journal [1].

We had a name, an office, an assistant, a Publisher and an Editor in Chief. An Editorial Board and an Interna-

tional Advisory Board were created in no time. Everybody was enthusiastic and willing to support this enterprise.

Hans Brynner was President in 1988 and he accepted the invitation to write a Preface for the first issue. He mentions that in the deliberations in the ESOT Council it was mentioned that there were “too many Journals”! He comments: “the future will show whether this is true or not” [2]. Nowadays we know the answer: Transplant International has deserved its place in the top ranking journals in the field of transplantation!

We started with the intention to have four issues per year and there were enough papers submitted to reach this goal. The first 5 years we stayed with four issues per volume, but in 1993 we switched to six issues in a volume and in 2002, under guidance of the current Editor in Chief, Ferdinand Mühlbacher, 12 issues per volume were realized! The Journal reached adulthood!

Pamela did the language editing in American English. She once asked me what to do with the language editing of the papers submitted by Native British authors. We decided to have those papers published in their own language. Transplant International had thus two languages, but I am quite sure nobody ever noticed.

I was initially reluctant to include Supplements in the Journal for several reasons: a lot of additional work in copy and language editing at the office, difficulty in having all the papers reviewed, should all Congress-papers be included, what might be the influence on the Impact Factor and last but not least: the costs. Nevertheless, one of the reasons to have a Journal was to have the Proceedings of the ESOT meetings published. So in December 1994, a Supplement of 683 pages of the 1991 Meeting at Maastricht was published. The finances were managed: one page free, every additional page 86 guilders (40 Euro). This was the beginning of a continuous flow of Supplements, up to three Supplements in 2009, two in 2010 and three in 2011.

The Impact Factor has gradually increased in the foregoing years and has now reached 3.211.

I congratulate Professor Ferdinand Mühlbacher and his excellent team with the success of Transplant International, at the occasion of the 25th Volume, and with the stable and consistent high Impact Factor!

Vivat Transplant International
Gauke Kootstra
Editor in Chief 1988–1998

References

1. Kootstra G. Obituary. *Transpl Int* 2011; **24**: 759.
2. Brynner H. Preface. *Transpl Int* 1988; **1**: 1.