Why Publish in the American Journal of Physiology-Heart and Circulatory Physiology?


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19 University of Maryland Medical School, Baltimore, MD; and
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Running title: Why publish in AJP-Heart and Circulatory Physiology?

Keywords: cardiac, vascular, physiology

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For senior cardiovascular scientists, it is well-known and accepted that the *American Journal of Physiology* (AJP)-*Heart and Circulatory Physiology* publishes important and long-lasting cardiovascular science (2). Early career investigators and trainees may be less familiar with the history of *AJP-Heart and Circulatory Physiology* and its importance in the cardiovascular research field. In the inaugural issue of *AJP-Heart and Circulatory Physiology* published in January 1977, Matthew Levy, the first Editor-In-Chief of the new APS journal format, briefly outlined the scope and range of articles that would be published in this journal (1). Over the past 40 years, the Journal has been true to Professor Levy’s vision, namely that we publish high-quality original research and review articles that advance the field of cardiovascular physiology. We have focused on studies that uncover underlying mechanisms of normal and abnormal cardiovascular physiology. The latter, of course, means that many of our papers describe models of disease that help in understanding the translational importance of physiology gone awry. The work published in *AJP-Heart and Circulatory Physiology* purposefully spans a wide range of cardiovascular investigation. We publish everything from genetic, molecular, and cellular physiology of the heart and vasculature to human and animal cardiovascular physiology under normal and stressed states. The editorial team ensures that the papers published undergo rigorous peer review and provide new mechanistic information to guide our continuously developing understanding of cardiovascular physiology. Consistent with this view, publication statistics indicate that papers in *AJP-Heart and Circulatory Physiology* have staying power, with an average citation half-life of almost 9.8 years! There are many outstanding cardiovascular journals that publish
important and high-quality work. Many of these journals, however, provide a relatively narrow niche in an area of cardiovascular science that appeals to a subgroup of investigators or clinicians. *AJP-Heart and Circulatory Physiology* differs from many competitor journals in the field of cardiovascular research not only in longevity, but also in having a broad scope of work published in our esteemed journal. This editorial will highlight the many benefits of publishing in *AJP-Heart and Circulatory Physiology*.

As the editorial team looks to the future, we will maintain our broad view of cardiovascular science. At the same time, however, an enhanced vision for the years ahead is developing. First, we must maintain our objective of publishing physiological research. As a result, *AJP-Heart and Circulatory Physiology* can provide a unique translational niche in linking fundamental scientific observations to animal and human pathophysiology. Investigators must incorporate functional mechanisms of normal or abnormal states in their work. Studies that are purely observational, descriptive, or anatomical will likely receive a low priority for publication. For methodological papers, the new methods must be critical in uncovering underlying physiological processes.

Second, we will continue to commission insightful, focused review articles from thought leaders covering all aspects of cardiovascular physiology. In addition, we will look closely at unsolicited review articles to determine if they will make a significant contribution to our readership. An important goal of review articles is to help the reader understand the pertinent literature, but also to synthesize new ideas that motivate investigators to take a field to the next level. This concept will be stressed in our review commissions. Often, our reviews will be tied thematically to one of our Calls for Papers.
Reviews, along with all the papers in a call, will be provided to our readers as a compilation for fast and easy access to pertinent subject areas. Third, readers can look forward to more Editorial Focus articles. These commentaries on selected articles will highlight the importance of the work and provide a translational perspective. We have asked authors of these articles to include one unifying summary figure that we believe our readership will find helpful.

Authors, we know you have many options when choosing where to submit. Here, we will highlight a few compelling reasons to submit to *AJP-Heart and Circulatory Physiology*. There is added value to publishing in our journal (Table 1). Our articles have no page nor word limits. APS members are not assessed fees for scientifically warranted color figures. Because a high percentage of our articles include immunofluorescent images, pseudo colored optical maps and other types of images where color enhancement is necessary, this benefit provides substantial savings for investigators. Authors are encouraged to include detailed methodology within the body of the article and take the necessary space to develop and explain key concepts emerging from their studies. The American Physiological Society (APS) publications department provides outstanding copyediting services—correcting spelling, grammar, and unclear writing. Each figure is scrutinized for clarity and mistakes, and the authors are given the opportunity to correct them. Importantly, these checks are performed pre-publication, which greatly reduces the chance for inadvertent errors advancing to publication. Our editorial staff provide a tremendous service to authors by promoting every published article on *AJP-Heart and Circulatory Physiology* social media sites (Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn) and through
direct email marketing efforts to relevant potential readers. Editor-in-Chief Irv Zucker also produces monthly videos on the *AJP-Heart and Circulatory Physiology* YouTube channel, giving viewers a personal guided tour with detailed highlights of some of the great work published each month. We would be remiss if we did not mention our world-famous podcasts! If you have not listened to one of our podcasts we urge you to go to [http://ajpheart.podbean.com](http://ajpheart.podbean.com) and listen. As of May 2017, our podcasts were downloaded over 43,000 times! So, even if you think you are too old and set in your ways for podcasts, give them a try. Our author interview podcast format lends itself to truly candid conversations between the lead author, one of our editors, and a leading expert in the field. This is a great way to find out the key aspects of the article in under 12 minutes. Finally, our readership should know that we now publish selected original research and reviews that were part of APS sponsored conferences. These, too, will ultimately be provided as compendia for easy access.

Our editorial team is committed to providing critical but helpful reviews and advice for authors. Because our time to a first decision is 18.7 days, authors will know rapidly if their paper is acceptable or needs revision, or if the manuscript is not acceptable, allowing authors to move on without delay. Our process for deciding on what kinds of research to publish always involves consultation at multiple levels with appropriate feedback given to authors. Our editorial board has recently had in-depth discussions regarding reviewer calibration and making sure that our reviewers understand what is sufficient and novel data for manuscript acceptance. We continue to ask our readers to provide us with feedback regarding this topic. While not every kind of cardiovascular
study may be appropriate for *AJP-Heart and Circulatory Physiology*, we are one of the few physiology journals that publishes an array of mechanistic physiology focusing on the heart and blood vessels at the molecular, cellular, and integrative levels. We are totally committed to promoting your work and moving cardiovascular science forward. As always, we value your feedback and look forward to receiving your manuscripts. For a list of our current and upcoming calls for topics, please see [http://www.thes-aps.org/mm/Publications/Journals/AJP-Heart/Special-Calls](http://www.thes-aps.org/mm/Publications/Journals/AJP-Heart/Special-Calls). Thank you for supporting *AJP-Heart and Circulatory Physiology*. We look forward to receiving your next submission and helping you to publish the best cardiovascular science.

**Acknowledgments:**

The editors gratefully acknowledge the work of *AJP-Heart and Circulatory Physiology* editorial staff Kara Hansell Keehan, Executive Editor, and Michelle Gaffney, Editorial Consultant. In addition, the editors acknowledge the support of the American Physiological Society staff, in particular Christina Bennett, Stacey Brooks, Teki Bynum, Audra Cox, Gil Ebner, Joseph Girouard, Karie Kirkpatrick, Jane Marklin, Eric Pessanelli, Kathleen Pleet, Veronica Purvis, and Rita Scheman.

**References**

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<th>Table 1. Top 10 Reasons to Publish in <em>AJP-Heart and Circulatory Physiology</em></th>
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<td>No Charges for Color Figures for APS Members</td>
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<td>Broad Scope of Cardiovascular Physiology</td>
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<td>No Page or Word Limits (all details within the manuscript)</td>
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<td>Popular Podcasts on Selected Articles</td>
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<td>Intense Editorial Promotion on Social Media</td>
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<td>Delivery to PubMed Central of NIH-funded Articles by APS on Behalf of Authors</td>
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<td>Rapid Time to First Decision 18.7 Days</td>
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<td>Outstanding Copyediting and Figures Checked Pre-publication for Clarity and Errors</td>
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<td>9.8 year Citation Half Life</td>
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