

The editors of European Archives of ORL-HNS

The journal *European Archives of ORL-HNS (EAORL)* is a truly pan-European endeavour and has been hugely successful. With an Impact Factor (IF) of 2.6, it is now on a par with *Laryngoscope*. We spoke to some of the senior editors to get a sense of how the journal has thrived, and how the editors work together. Underlining the international nature of the journal, its first editor was Gordon Snow from South Africa; he was head of the department of ORL head & neck surgery in Amsterdam.



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A brief history lesson from Roland Laszig

The *EAORL* is the first and oldest scientific journal in the field of ENT. The journal was founded in 1864 by Anton von Tröltsch (Würzburg), Adam Politzer (Vienna) and Hermann Schwartz (Halle/S). The scope of this journal, the *Archiv für Ohrenheilkunde*, was the underrepresented field of otology, and the publisher (and even the founder) weren't sure that the journal would survive. The first publisher (Stahel'sche Buch- u. Kunstshandlung) was in Würzburg, followed by FCW Vogel in Leipzig from 1873, and finally Springer took over as publisher in 1921/22. Initially published in German, since Vol. 206 in 1974 it has been published in English by Springer, as the *Archive of Oto Rhino-Laryngology*, and then from 1990 (Vol. 247) adding 'European Archive' to the title. Finally, most recently we added 'and Head & Neck' to the name since Vol. 261 in 2004.

The journal was originally in German and then became an international journal in 1947; for many years the post was held by successive professors in Freiburg (Zöllner, Beck, Laszig, Knopf).

Roland, how did you get to be an editor of the journal?

In 2015 I was asked by Jochen Werner from Essen to take over his position as Editor in Chief (EiC). I started my work as EiC unofficially in 2015 and officially with Vol. 273 Issue 1 on 1 January 2016. One of the reasons to extend the number of editors was the increase in submitted

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IN CONVERSATION WITH

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manuscripts, so we asked Manuel Bernal Spreckelsen to join, firstly as assistant EiC and later as full EiC. In the years before 2016, our predecessors did a very good job and the journal was growing rapidly.

During the pandemic, the rate of submissions of manuscripts increased dramatically. To avoid a work overload, the publisher agreed to have a fourth EiC with Andreas Kopf. The journal editorial office (JEO) does a very effective job of pre-checking the submissions. One of our jobs as editors is to select appropriate reviewers for the articles. We do have a large list of reviewers which we update regularly, so this is a rotating system and kept up to date. I personally select six reviewers for each manuscript and ask the first two for the review. If they decline, we work our way down the list of reviewers. Failing this, the decision is made to send the manuscript back to the author or put it on the transfer-desk to another Springer Nature journal. So, it is a very fast procedure and the authors do not have to wait a long time for decisions to be made.

Marc Remacle

You are also one of the senior editors of the journal? How did that come about?

I was involved with the *European Archives* since 1996, when the European Laryngological Society (ELS) was founded. As ELS General Secretary, I wanted an official journal for our publication and we went on to have a very successful discussion with Springer. At that time, Jochen Werner and Jan Olofsson, both ELS members, were chief editors with Olivier Sterkers, an otologist from Paris. When the European Head & Neck Society was founded, Jan Olofsson added this society as a group subscriber.

In 2015, Jochen left the board and asked me to replace him – I was very happy to accept.

With the workload increasing, Roland suggested Andreas Knopf, who was also a very good choice and here we are!

The journal is a wonderful pan-European collaboration, but you have also a worldwide presence – how do you manage

the membership of the editorial board?

We try to make sure to invite people from the different continents who we know as experts to review for us. When we are able to develop a regular collaboration with them, they are invited to the board.

Manuel Bernal Spreckelsen

You are one of the senior editors of the journal. How did it start for you?

Well, back in 2016 I first started as an associate editor-in-chief for a couple of years. When the previous EiC retired, the workload started to increase, which is when the journal decided to have three EiCs. As a reviewer, my numbers in reviewing manuscripts were not bad and, moreover, I tend to reply fast. I assume that was a plus back then to support appointing me as associate EiC and, later, as EiC.

There are now four main editors? How do you distribute your jobs?

The Journal Editorial Office (JEO) checks each single manuscript for duplicate submissions and the percentage of copy-pasted text. A high suspicion of duplicity or copy-pasting is flagged in different colours and then checked by the assigned EiC. Each EiC is responsible for checking these figures and the manuscript for major errors or mistakes. He then decides to either reject the manuscript upfront or to invite at least two reviewers whose subspecialty matches the content of the submitted manuscript. With thousands of submitted papers (which increased during the pandemic) the fair distribution allows a similar workload for all of us four.

How is the journal run?

In the past, we had a regular meeting of the EiC and the editorial board members (EBM), mainly when a major European congress took place. The pandemic has shown that online meetings are just as efficient! We therefore now have one EBM meeting per year and three to four EiC meetings with Mrs Albrecht, who is the assistant publisher of our journal for Springer Nature. Here, we learn all the interesting figures, such as the number of downloads, online accesses, citations etc.

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We discuss interesting 'hot' topics and then assign a (temporary) responsible associate editor for such a hot topic. Recently, we have contacted the Young Confederation and Young IFOS groups for a closer, fruitful collaboration.

Andreas Knopf

You are the most recently appointed editor of the journal. How did you become one of the editors?

I feel a strong affinity to the journal and its scientific profile, first starting as author and later serving as reviewer. In 2019, I became head of the department of ENT/ Head and Neck Surgery in Freiburg, and therefore being the successor of Roland Laszig, one of the journal's senior editors in chief. With detailed insights into my clinical and scientific background and most likely respecting my work as author and reviewer for the journal, the editors in chief introduced me as associate, and later 'regular', editor in chief for the steadily growing journal.

The journal has now an IF of 2.6 and has moved up to 12 in the ranking of ear nose and throat journals together with the *Laryngoscope*. Why do you think the journal has climbed to this position? What is the secret of the journal?

The journal covers the broad variety of head and neck diseases with an inherent focus on clinical and translational research. We constantly try to identify upcoming hot topics as well as to maintain established research fields. High-quality reviewers and editorial board members help us to achieve a concise, fair and transparent review process that is attractive for potential authors.

INTERVIEWED BY



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