Let’s talk about Reviewer Rewards

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The JCI and *JCI Insight* announce the Reviewer Rewards program to recognize the outstanding contribution of peer reviewers to our evaluation process. As a token of our appreciation, eligible reviewers who have completed 3 or more reviews may designate one of their own research manuscripts for guaranteed external review when they submit to the corresponding journal.
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Assessment of science, whether it be in the form of grants or manuscripts, relies heavily on evaluation by expert peer reviewers. This system is unique in that it depends almost entirely on scientists who volunteer their time to provide critical assessments of the scientific work. The incentive for reviewers to participate is two-fold: (a) reviewers are a standard bearer for their field, ensuring that acceptable experimental design and practices are followed, and (b) reviewers themselves rely on this same system when their own work needs to be evaluated; thus, this community service is an expected duty. Because the system relies on the goodwill of individuals, anonymously in most cases, participation varies wildly, and the benefits of reviewing are more philosophical in nature than concrete.

At the JCI and JCI Insight, we have been asking ourselves if we can do more to recognize the contribution of our reviewers, whose assessment of the many manuscripts we receive is a foundation of the journals’ work. The incentive for our review community to send us their high-quality manuscripts is that timely review of papers is important to our authors, just as it is to our reviewers when they are authors themselves.

In announcing this program, we are immediately making this benefit available to individuals who completed reviews meeting these criteria from July 2017 through December 2018. Qualifying individuals will be notified directly by email. Going forward, we will send out notifications for Reviewer Rewards annually in January, and as authors you may elect to use the reward at any point during the calendar year. We sincerely hope that this new program makes clear to our reviewers how important their work is to us.

I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the contribution of David Virshup, an ASCI member, a JCI consulting editor, and a former JCI associate editor, who was instrumental to the creation of this program. He developed the basic framework of the Reviewer Rewards concept, which resonated with the editorial teams of both journals. We are pleased to implement his suggestion and turn the theoretical concept into reality.

To our reviewers, we are grateful, as always, for your enormous contribution. We value your input and hope you will enjoy the benefits of the Reviewer Rewards program. We look forward to seeing your best work.

Sarah Jackson
Executive Editor

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