

Frontiers' Partner Focus

Pathology and Oncology Research: a successful transition to open access



In 2020 Pathology & Oncology Research (POR) embarked on a new publishing partnership with Frontiers. Previously publishing under a hybrid-subscription model with Springer Nature, the transition to gold open access marked a major step forward for the journal.

We've been talking to POR's editors about the transition, which has resulted in increased citations, improved quality of submissions, and increased dissemination and engagement across the wider pathology and oncology research communities.

About Pathology and Oncology Research

Presenting research, reviews and topical reports at the interface of pathology and oncology, POR is a well-established international journal dedicated to keeping scientists informed of developments in its focused biomedical field and spanning the gap between research and clinical medicine. Founded in 1995, the journal is supported by a distinguished international advisory board and the Arányi Lajos Foundation for modern pathology. It has a special interest in promoting the publication of pathology and oncology research by specialists in Central and Eastern Europe.



Pathology & Oncology Research

Pathology &
Oncology
Research is an
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CHIEF EDITORS

László Kopper
Semmelweis
University
Budapest, Hungary

József Timár
Semmelweis
University
Budapest, Hungary

Transitioning to open access

The decision to move POR from a subscription model to open access was motivated by a desire within the community to be in step with the growing international expectation that research should be freely available to all, and by a requirement to develop a more sustainable business model for the journal.

The editors were strongly committed to the move, but naturally the journal's stakeholders had questions about whether open access would also bring some challenges. Professor József Tímár, one of the journal's editors-in-chief explains, 'we were very motivated to make the move to open access but did initially question whether we would be able to maintain the inflow of submissions under the new model.'

While the transition has undoubtedly brought about some changes, with submissions decreasing in the first year from regions including Central America and Southern Europe, this has been more than balanced out by the authors and visibility the journal has gained from the Frontiers Open Science Platform. For example, submissions have increased from researchers in Central and Eastern Europe, the community that POR's mission aims to support, including Hungary as well as Czechia and Slovakia. Submissions from other parts of the world are also meeting or exceeding expectations, with an overall increase from 2021 to November 2022 by 27%. Submissions increases are noted in countries including Switzerland and the US. Professor Tímár adds 'in our first year of publishing open access, publications have increased by 76% compared to 2020.'



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Professor József Tímár
Chief Editor, Semmelweis University, Hungary

Although the journal's overall Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) has decreased slightly between 2017-2021, this can be attributed to increased focus on quality and selectivity, which has seen the threshold for acceptance increase.

Working with Frontiers

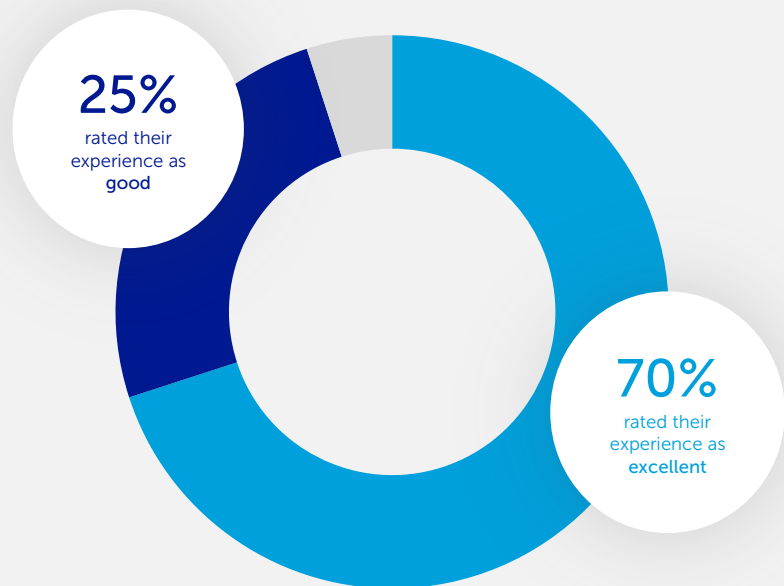
Operationally, the process of moving across to Frontiers has been a smooth one for POR. According to co-chief editor Professor László Kopper, this has been largely down to 'the professionalism and expertise of the team at Frontiers'. Professor Tímár continues 'we are very happy with the new editorial management system. We find it intuitive and easy to use – particularly when it comes to recruiting reviewers - and the follow up of the process is very clear.'



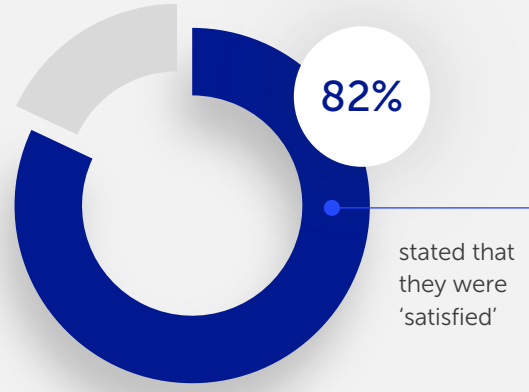
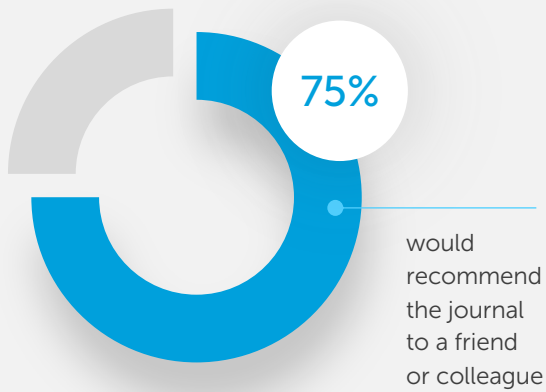
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Authors, reviewers, and editors have also reported their positive experiences since POR's transition. In an ongoing post-transition survey launched in January 2021, 70% of authors, reviewers, and editors rated their experience with the journal's review process as 'excellent', while 25% rated this as 'good'.



75% also said that they would recommend the journal to a friend or colleague. In addition, when asked how satisfied respondents were with the support from the publisher's office, 82% stated that they were 'satisfied'. 66% of respondents also stated that Frontiers' platform is 'a significant improvement over traditional peer review platforms' and 64% agreed that they would submit a manuscript to the journal again in future.



Citations and **impact**

Key figures for POR since 2021

The total number of citations collected per year has increased in 2021 compared to previous years, as reported both in Dimensions and JCR.

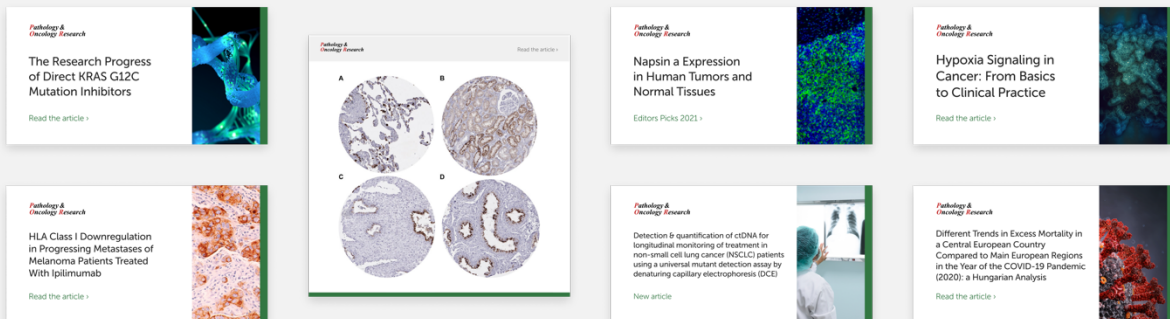


Altmetric attention is higher in 2021 compared to previous years with Twitter and Patent mentions leading these numbers.



In 2021 POR's total number of citations increased by 9% (4,387 citations) and 6% (3,900 citations), as reported in both Dimensions and JCR respectively. According to the JCR data, POR also received a higher number of citations from Frontiers journals in 2021 compared to previous years.

POR has naturally benefitted from increased visibility within Frontiers' community of researchers. In 2019, when POR was published by Springer Nature, the journal received 23 citations from eight Frontiers journals. **In 2021 there has been a natural and unprompted increase to 147 citations by 10 Frontiers journals.**



Professor Timár offers an interpretation of this change: 'The increase in citations of POR from Frontiers journals suggests that the combination of Frontiers' support in disseminating our journal articles and the Frontiers Open Science Platform, have enabled us to benefit from an increase in independent citations from within the Frontiers proprietary portfolio.'

He continues, 'looking ahead we believe that signs are positive for increases in Impact Factor, given growing number of citations and our clear focus on quality and selectivity in our first year of open access.'

POR has also seen positive engagement with the wider pathology and oncology research community during 2021, as measured by Altmetric scores. In 2019 the journal received 0.7 average mentions per published closed access article. In comparison, POR has received 1 average mentions per article published with Frontiers in 2021.

Total Altmetric mentions have **increased by 88%**, from 43 to 81 mentions of articles published in 2019 and 2021 respectively.

What does the **transition to open access** mean for **POR** in the longer term?

Professor Tímár explains that the new publishing model is helping to make the journal more sustainable in the long term 'POR is owned by the Arányi Lajos Foundation for Modern Pathology. Before our transition to open access, we were not able offer funding to support researchers – now we are able to do so.



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Professor Tímár Chief Editor Semmelweis University, Hungary

We are also able to compensate our editors-in-chief for the work they do which will have a very positive impact on the long-term future of our journal'.

Frontiers is proud to collaborate with POR to ensure that the journal not only continues to publish the highest quality content, but is also financially able to support the Foundation, and reinvest back into the research community through publishing funding initiatives.