

A Vision for the Future – Honoring a Legacy and Defining a Path Forward

To our readers, authors, reviewers, editors, and the global physiology community

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With the publication of this issue of the Jundishapur Journal of Physiology, we find ourselves at a moment that requires both reflection and renewed momentum. At their most effective, editorials, function as bridges, linking our historical foundations with the aspirations that guide us toward the future. In this context, we take the opportunity to honor a distinguished figure within our scientific community, to reaffirm the principles that continue to direct our course, and to articulate a collective vision for the journal's future development.

A Legacy of Leadership: Honoring Professor Alireza Sarkaki

With profound respect and deep appreciation, we acknowledge the retirement of **Professor Alireza Sarkaki**, whose decades of scientific, educational, and administrative service have profoundly shaped not only the Physiology Research Center but also this journal itself. His leadership was visionary, steadfast, and tireless. Under his direction, the Jundishapur Journal of Physiology was established an ambitious undertaking that required resilience, foresight, and unwavering dedication. Establishing a

scientific journal is never a minor achievement; it demands a conviction that rigorous knowledge deserves a global platform, and that a community of scholars can be built around shared values of integrity, mentorship, diligence, and responsibility. Inspired by the distinguished legacy of Jundishapur, a historic center of intellectual exchange, cultural convergence, and the advancement of knowledge for the benefit of humanity, Professor Sarkaki made extraordinary contributions to the training of students of international caliber and played a pivotal role in strengthening both the Department of Physiology and Ahvaz Jundishapur University of Medical Sciences. A full account of his contributions cannot be captured within the limits of this editorial. Yet, his legacy is perhaps best honored not only through remembrance, but through action: by upholding and advancing the very standards of excellence, inclusivity, and integrity that he so powerfully championed.

Jundishapur as a Guiding Compass

The name Jundishapur is not merely a historical reference; it serves as a living compass. It evokes a scholarly tradition in which intellectual

exchange transcended borders, mentorship was valued as the foundation for nurturing future generations, and rigorous scientific inquiry was celebrated as a collective endeavor. In essence, it embodies the principle that “knowledge is the shared heritage of humanity, dedicated to improving the quality of life for all.”

In alignment with this legacy, we reaffirm our commitment to three guiding principles:

- 1. Rigorous Peer Review:** Safeguarding methodological quality, scientific validity, and transparency.
- 2. Ethical Publishing:** Upholding the highest standards of research ethics and integrity, fairness, and accountability.
- 3. Inclusive Mentorship and Support:** Fostering an environment that welcomes diverse perspectives, bridges national and regional heritage with global science, and reduces barriers to participation.

These principles are not abstract ideals; they represent the very foundation upon which we shall continue to build the future of the journal.

A Transition to Collaborative Leadership

Professor Sarkaki's leadership set a high standard, but perhaps more enduringly, he exemplified a conviction that management and leadership are not possessions to be held, but responsibilities to be shouldered. As we move into this new phase, we embrace a model of distributed, collaborative governance. This transition reflects the evolving realities of academic publishing, where resilience and sustainability depend on inclusivity and shared responsibility. Editors, reviewers, authors, and readers alike are all stakeholders in the life of a journal. By engaging the community more broadly in decision-making and policy shaping, we aim to build structures that are transparent, participatory, and durable.

Our Strategic Roadmap: Challenges and Commitments

Attracting high-quality manuscripts is essential for establishing the journal's scholarly legitimacy and long-term impact. As a young journal, we are fully aware of the challenges that lie ahead, but we also recognize them as opportunities for growth. Our strategic orientation is anchored in four key commitments:

1. Building Credibility and Indexing: Establishing legitimacy through the consistent publication of transparent, reproducible, and impactful science, thereby paving the way for recognition in major indexing databases.

2. Balancing Speed and Rigor: There is usually a tension between rapid publication and methodological rigor. Streamlining publication workflows to support efficiency and timeliness, while upholding uncompromising standards of accuracy. Clear author guidelines, transparent review timelines, and constructive feedback will remain central to our editorial process.

3. Strengthening Editorial Processes: Expanding and diversifying our reviewer pool, refining editorial procedures, and ensuring authors receive feedback that not only evaluates but also strengthens their work.

4. Attracting High-Quality Submissions: Promoting excellence through special issues on emerging topics, engaging leading experts as reviewers, and lowering barriers to participation by providing guidance and support to all scholars, with particular attention to early-career researchers and those from underrepresented or resource-limited regions.

A Collective Invitation

Our aspirations are clear, collective, and admittedly ambitious, yet necessarily so, for the challenges before us demand nothing less. We aim to establish the Jundishapur Journal of Physiology as a trusted and respected platform for rigorous scientific inquiry, one that connects local and regional scholars with global audiences, supports early-career investigators, fosters interdisciplinary dialogue, and upholds the principles of open science.

However, the realization of this vision cannot be achieved by the editorial board alone. Its fulfillment demands a coordinated and sustained effort involving the entire physiology community and allied disciplines. Accordingly, we extend a sincere invitation to scientists across all areas of physiology and related fields, at every career stage, to join us in this collective endeavor:

- Contribute your best work to help shape the scientific record.
- Serve as a dedicated reviewer to uphold the standards of rigor and integrity.

- Engage with us in shaping policies that foster fairness, inclusivity, and scientific excellence.

Together, we can ensure that this journal not only upholds the distinguished legacy embodied in its name but also serves as a source of inspiration and empowerment for the next generation of scientists. With optimism, humility, and determination, we look forward to the path ahead, and we warmly invite you to join us on this journey.

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