

6. *Journal of Quaternary Science* Editor's report for 2022 to QRA AGM (Jan 2023)

Editorial matters

Nick Balascio's term of office as JQS Associate Editor for the Americas finishes at the end of 2022, after 5 years of fine service. Meredith Kelly (Dartmouth College) has been appointed as his successor from January 2023.

The latest 2-year Impact Factor, for citations during 2021 based on articles published in 2019 and 2020, rose slightly from 2.738 to 2.769. Wiley, as a signatory of DORA, is no longer using IF as the sole metric, but is taking into consideration other indexing methods/metrics.

The introduction of New Journal Design (NJD), a way of streamlining journal formats and minimizing publication errors, has been delayed but is likely to begin in 2023. The editor and advisory board have been keen to ensure that both the QRA logo and full journal title appear on the banner near the top of the title page for each article.

The number of regular manuscript submissions for 2022 is currently on target to be similar to 2020 (132) and 2021 (121). However, in the absence of any current Special Issues (see below), the total number of new submissions for 2022 will be lower than in recent years. Disappointingly, there have been relatively few new manuscripts submitted from the UK during 2022.

JQS Volume 37 (2022)

All eight issues of the 2022 volume of JQS were published on schedule. The eight issues total 1479 pages, compared to 1447 pages in 2021, with 99 items (articles plus editorial, book review, correspondence, etc) compared to 94 in 2021.

This year the journal included two Special Issues and one special theme section:

- Peninsular southern Europe refugia during the Middle Paleolithic, guest edited by Milena Carvalho and Nuno Bicho, as issue 3 (April 2022)
- Northern High Latitude Lakes: Quaternary Environmental and Climatic History, guest edited by Martin Melles et al., published in July 2022 (issue 5).
- Pro-glacial lakes, guest edited by Cathy Delaney, 5 papers published as part of issue 8 (Nov 2022)

The current manuscript Acceptance Rate stands at ~60%, and the median manuscript turnaround time from initial submission to final acceptance is currently around 6 months, with no significant publication back-log (less than a month from acceptance to on-line publication on average).

Open Access and Data

Wiley has established Transitional/Transformational Deals with several European countries, including the UK via JISC (currently due to operate until 2023). This gives UK Universities access to Wiley's full portfolio of journals and allows their staff to publish open access in JQS

without charge, and is aligned with Plan S. **The annual JISC fund is no longer cash limited as it was in previous years. This deal provides a very strong incentive for QRA members, most of whom are UK-based, to publish their work in JQS as their journal of choice.** The full Article Processing Fee (APC) for Gold OA in JQS in 2022 was otherwise £2750.

The proportion of fully Open Access (OA) papers increased in 2022 to 48% (44% for regular submissions), up from 38% in 2021.

Discussions are on-going about Open Data badging for JQS, using FAIR Guiding Principles for scientific data management and stewardship (Findability, Accessibility, Interoperability, and Reuse).

Special Issues

Special Issues (SIs) can help to provide a steady flow of published papers in the journal. One of the unfortunate consequences of Covid-19 is that no new SI proposals came forward during the pandemic, as lockdowns caused face to face meetings and conferences to be replaced by virtual, on-line events. As a consequence, there will be no SIs published in JQS in 2023. With lockdowns now over in most parts of the world, and in person meetings re-starting, this would be a very good time for **ideas and proposals from QRA members about potential future SIs.**

Two specific initiatives are currently underway

1. A Virtual Special Issue, on “Palaeo-perspectives on anthropogenic soil loss and landscape resilience”, jointly with the journal *Geoarchaeology*, and co-edited with Kevin Walsh and Sarah Sherwood. The Scholar One management system will be open for new submissions to this VSI during the 2023 calendar year (i.e., from January to December). Papers will be fully published in one or other of the two journals following their acceptance and then brought together *post hoc* in 2024 to create the VSI. Invitations to potential contributors are being sent out, along with an open call for submissions. **Manuscripts from QRA members for this VSI will be most welcome.**
2. A proposal has been agreed for a special issue of JQS on “Southern Hemisphere records of Late Quaternary climate change, people and dust: papers in honour of Lynda Petherick” to be co-edited by Rewi Newnham, Jasper Knight, Kathryn Fitzsimmons, Lydia McKenzie and Patrick Moss. Lynda was, among other things, president of the Australasian Quaternary Association (AQUA) prior to her untimely death earlier this year, aged only 40. This SI will draw on papers being presented at two symposia convened in her memory, one at the AQUA conference in Adelaide in December 2022, the other at INQUA congress in Rome (July 2023).

Editorial Advisory Board (EAB)

The annual EAB meeting was held at the Geol Soc London on November 10, 2022, with an on-line link allowing participation for EAB members who could not attend in person. 12 EAB members and 6 former editors of the journal attended this along with the four current editors, Wiley staff, etc.

One of the main issues discussed at this meeting was how the journal should respond to the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Following this, EAB members supported the editorial policy decided in March 2022 by key QRA Executive committee members, JQS editors, Wiley and others, not to impose a boycott of manuscripts whose lead authors come from institutions in Russia or Belarus. Instead this group, after careful consideration, had decided to continue with current open-door editorial policy, while recognising that individuals may decline to handle or review papers involving Russian scientists. This followed guidance from COPE, and most national and international scientific bodies. On the other hand, this was not a universal view e.g., INQUA have said it was going to be boycotting Russian scientific institutions and organisations.

Outstanding ECR paper award

In November 2021, the EAB agreed to establish an annual award for an outstanding paper by an Early Career Researcher published in JQS. This is in the form of a public award and is designed to give kudos and recognition of their work to add to their CV/professional profile.

From an initial screening of papers fully published in the journal during 2021, a short-list was drawn up by the four JQS editors. The final choice was then made by a sub-group from the QRA Executive Committee, and the winner announced at the 2022 QRA AGM; she was Francesca Pasquetti (PhD candidate, University of Pisa) for her article entitled “On the chronology of the Mediterranean Sea-level highstand during the Last Interglacial: a critical review of the U/Th-dated deposits”.

The 2022 award process is currently underway, with the result due to be announced at the QRA annual general meeting in January 2023.

Can I thank the QRA members for their continued support for *JQS* both as authors and referees.

Neil Roberts (Editor in Chief)
3rd December 2022, Oxford