

Publication Update—4/30/2009

We have received many questions from librarians regarding the recent changes in subscription costs for Biophysical Journal (BJ). We want to clarify that these changes are separate from our switch to Cell Press as our publisher. Because the Biophysical Society maintains ownership of BJ, we have complete control over editorial content, and we set the subscription prices for BJ.

The recent price changes resulted from the Biophysical Society Executive Board and Council decision to use a “tiered subscription” price model, without an increase in the total institutional subscription revenue. This meant that while larger institutions saw a price increase, smaller institutions saw a price reduction. We hope that this enables BJ to reach a broad constituency of biophysicists who work outside the largest research institutions. This constituency comprises many of our members and annual meeting attendees.

The initial planning for this pricing shift began more than two years ago. We know that the new pricing model arrives during unfortunate financial conditions for many of our institutional customers. However, even at the highest subscription tier, BJ, which published 12,000 pages in 2008, remains an excellent scientific value compared with its peer journals.

We have begun the agreement with Cell Press after many years of self-publishing BJ, and we look forward to many benefits for the Journal. We expect to see improved efficiencies, including a briefer time between acceptance of the manuscript and its publication. We also expect that Cell Press will bring us new sources of online advertising revenue, which were previously not accessible to us as self-publishers. As we move forward with these innovations, we always strive for cost-effectiveness for our authors, subscribers, and members. We firmly believe that these developments will benefit all of them.

In short, both the new pricing model and the Cell Press agreement will allow the Biophysical Society, via BJ, to publish high-quality research efficiently for a broad and appropriate audience.

—Henry Lester, Biophysical Society President