

An outstanding Journal requires exceptional reviewers

Dennis M. Levi

University of California, Berkeley, School of Optometry,
Berkeley, California, USA



Journal of Vision is an outstanding journal, in large measure because of the contributions of the reviewers who give so freely of their time and expertise to critically evaluating manuscripts for the journal.

We always attempt to ascertain reviewers who not only provide the necessary expertise, but are also fair in their judgment, reflecting the significant responsibilities of reviewers to the editors, authors and readers of the journal (see below, based on the Council of Science Editors White Paper on Promoting Integrity in Scientific Journal Publications: <http://www.councilscienceeditors.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3356>).

While the Editorial Board Members ultimately make the decisions, they rely on our expert reviewers to:

- Provide a thoughtful, fair, constructive, and informed critique of the submitted work.
- Determine the scientific merit, originality and scope of the work, indicating ways to improve it.
- Note any ethical concerns, and alert the Editor of any potential conflict of interest.

Likewise, authors rely on our expert reviewers to:

- Provide unbiased feedback on the scholarly merits and scientific value of the work in a timely fashion.
- Indicate whether the writing is clear, concise, and relevant, and rate the scientific accuracy, originality, and likely interest to the readers.
- Avoid personal comments or criticism.
- Maintain the confidentiality of the review process.

And our readers rely on the reviewers to:

- Ensure that the high standards of the *Journal of Vision* are maintained.
- Protect readers from incorrect or flawed research.
- Ensure that the article cites relevant work.

In short, reviewers are the backbone of the journal, providing critical input to the editors, authors, and readers. Two years ago *Journal of Vision* initiated a program to recognize reviewers who go “above and beyond” to assist authors in improving their work by making helpful suggestions or providing new insights. In these cases, an Editorial Board Member can designate the review as “Exceptional,” and the exceptional reviewer receives a note from the Editor-in-Chief, thanking them for their contribution to *Journal of Vision* and to the field.

This year, almost 700 reviewers generously contributed their time and expertise to reviewing manuscripts for *Journal of Vision* (many providing multiple reviews). One hundred and twenty eight (roughly eighteen percent), received the Exceptional reviewer designation, and they should be proud of the service that they provided to the editors, authors, and readers of *Journal of Vision*.

In closing, I would like to thank each of the almost 700 colleagues who reviewed manuscripts for *Journal of Vision* in the last year. *Journal of Vision* would not be the outstanding journal that it is without your generous and expert contributions.