Request for Applications for Position of Editor-in-Chief, *Cellular and Molecular Gastroenterology and Hepatology* (CMGH)

American Gastroenterological Association
4930 Del Ray Avenue
Bethesda, MD 20814
The American Gastroenterological Association (AGA) invites applications for the position of editor-in-chief (EIC) for Cellular and Molecular Gastroenterology and Hepatology, its official open-access, all-digital basic and translational science journal. The term of office is five years, beginning on July 1, 2024, and ending June 30, 2029.

About AGA
AGA is the nation’s leading society of physicians and scientists who study and treat digestive diseases. Founded in 1897, the AGA has more than 16,000 members from around the globe who are involved in all aspects of the science, practice and advancement of gastroenterology.

About the Journal
Cellular and Molecular Gastroenterology and Hepatology (CMGH) is AGA’s basic and translational open-access journal. It is ranked second among non-clinical journals in the GI and hepatology category with a 2021 impact factor of 8.797.

CMGH publishes papers on a broad spectrum of themes in gastroenterology, hepatology and pancreatology laboratory research, providing the latest advances in the biochemical, cellular, genetic, microbial, molecular, pharmacologic or physiologic aspects of digestive health and disease. The research is hypothesis-driven, mechanistically novel, and appropriately designed and powered and answers questions using tissues or cells from patients or appropriate animal models in order to translate basic science to human disease.

CMGH supports the submission of original research, solicited content, and has a transfer mechanism to publish high-quality papers that were originally declined by Gastroenterology but still represent outstanding science and therefore qualify for publication in a journal supported by the AGA brand.

Structure and Content
General
Content for CMGH is published continuously and then compiled into issues which post online monthly. Virtual special issues are also possible. Decisions on the timing and quantity of special issues are mutually decided upon by the editorial office staff, Elsevier and the EIC(s). A typical issue consists of original articles, reviews, and editorials. Issues may also include letters to the editor, research letters, features relating to the AGA Institute Council and AGA Research Foundation, Point-Counterpoint article series, and other special content.

Online
CMGH is an all-digital journal that publishes all content in a mobile-optimized, open-access format on the journal’s website (http://www.cmghjournal.org) and Elsevier’s institutional platform, ScienceDirect. The website supports multimedia files, supplemental data and graphical abstracts. Accepted articles are posted to the “Articles in Press” section of the journal’s website shortly after acceptance. Articles are placed into an “In Progress” issue once proof corrections are received and the article is assigned page numbers and each final article is deposited into PubMed Central, after which it becomes
searchable within PubMed. In addition to full-length original research articles and research letters, CMGH also publishes editorials, commentaries, and reviews. The journal’s social media offerings include regular promotion and engagement through Twitter and Facebook. Online advertising is permitted in accordance with the Policy Regarding Advertising in AGA Institute Periodicals.

**Article Processing Fees**
The journal charges an article processing fee, which is a primary source of financial support for the journal. For original research articles that are ultimately accepted, authors pay $2,750 per article. If the first or corresponding author is an AGA member, the fee is $1,650. For research letters, the fee is $1,375 for non-members and $825 for AGA members. Invited article types do not incur an article processing fee. AGA’s publishing partner, Elsevier, manages the collection of these charges.

**Key Journal Statistics**
The journal receives approximately 1,000 original manuscript submissions per year, 78 percent of which are from outside the U.S. For manuscripts that are externally reviewed, authors typically receive decisions within 29 days of submission. Twenty-six percent of submitted manuscripts are transferred from Gastroenterology. Approximately 48 percent of submitted full-length original articles are topics related to the alimentary tract and 52 percent are topics related to the liver, pancreas and biliary system. The current acceptance rate is approximately 15 percent.

**Organizational Structure**

**Board of Editors**
The journal’s board of editors (BOE) currently consists of two co-editors-in-chief (EICs) and up to five associate editors. Associate editors (AE) should be known experts in their respective areas. During their term on CMGH, members of the BOE are not permitted to serve on the BOEs of other GI- or hepatology-related journals. Also, the EIC(s) must not serve on the governing board nor regularly attend meetings of a governing board or finance committee of a major digestive disease organization. The EIC(s) and BOE are responsible for the intellectual quality of the journal, whereas the journal's online composition and format is the responsibility of the staff and publisher, with input from the EIC(s).

AE participate in the peer-review process by assigning reviewers to manuscripts they deem to meet the standards for external review, and, in cooperation with the EIC(s), determining manuscripts’ suitability for publication. They also provide ongoing counsel to the EIC(s) regarding the intellectual quality, policies, initiatives and direction of the journal. Additionally, the EIC(s) may request that they periodically write commentaries and reviews for the journal.

The BOE positions are volunteer positions and are not part of the association’s paid managerial staff. All positions receive an honorarium as approved by the AGA Institute Governing Board. All positions will be required to complete the AGA Institute’s Potential Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Disclosure Statement annually.

**Editorial Board**
The EIC(s) and AE select individuals to serve on the editorial board, which is an international group of regular reviewers. The editorial board also provides counsel to the BOE as needed. The EIC appoints members of the editorial board for a three-year term, with option for renewal. There is no required number or limit of editorial board members. They do not receive honoraria.

**Editorial Office and Publisher**
A permanent editorial office manages the submission, solicitation, review, pre-production preparation and proofing of the journal’s content. The editorial office staff, who are full-time employees of the AGA Institute, is also responsible for assisting in the development, implementation and evaluation of new content, initiatives, policies and procedures. The staff works closely with CMGH’s publishing partner, Elsevier, on matters related to production, digital presence, marketing and new business opportunities. An illustration and graphics team develops complex medical illustrations for select articles and provides support for special issue art.

**Authority and Reporting**
The EIC(s) reports to the AGA Institute Publications Committee, which provides general oversight of the journal. The EIC(s) are also invited to attend all committee meetings as non-voting ex officio members. Proposed changes that will significantly affect CMGH’s mission, structure, format, finances or editorial philosophy must be reviewed and approved by the committee and, in some cases, the AGA Institute Governing Board.

The EIC(s) has sole final authority over all decisions regarding the suitability of manuscripts for publication and all other matters related to scientific integrity. Final authority over journal operations, with the exception noted in the preceding paragraph, rests with the AGA Institute Governing Board.

**Responsibilities of the EIC(s)**

**General Responsibilities.** The fundamental duties of this position are as follows:

1. Maintain the highest standards of quality for the scientific content of the journal. In doing so, the EIC(s) will work cooperatively with the BOE, AGA staff, AGA Institute Publications Committee and Elsevier.
2. Assist the AGA staff and Elsevier in maintaining the online format and composition of the journal. All formatting modifications must align with the AGA brand policy.
3. Ensure the relevancy of the journal to the AGA’s research constituency, as well as to others interested in the basic- and translational-research aspects of the specialty.
4. Maintain the fiscal integrity of the journal in cooperation with AGA staff to ensure that the financial objectives established by the AGA Institute Governing Board are achieved. These goals will be accomplished under the operational authority and responsibility of the publications committee.
5. Grow the readership of the journal by providing direction for the editorial content and striving to enhance the quality and impact of the journal.
Continue to develop a strong reputation for the journal, making it among the top vehicles for investigators to publish their work.

Serve as the journal’s voice to various internal and external audiences, including the media. The EIC(s) is also responsible for representing the journal at major scientific meetings in order to attract submissions.

Maintain the quality, efficiency, timeliness, accuracy and fairness of the review process by directing the activities of the BOE and editorial office staff.

Work collaboratively with the editors of the other journals in the AGA portfolio, including participating in joint quarterly teleconferences, discussing the ultimate destination for certain types of content and implementing new initiatives, policies and procedures.

Collaborate with AGA staff and the EICs of other AGA journals to achieve objectives within the association’s strategic plan relating to AGA’s publications.

Specific Responsibilities. To accomplish the foregoing, the EIC(s) will be responsible for the activities described below.

1. Appoint an appropriate number of qualified AEs, coordinate their activities, including ensuring that they complete their duties in a timely and appropriate manner, and recommend editorial board members.

2. Lead a weekly meeting with the BOE to discuss and approve preliminary decisions. The EIC(s) retains final authority over and responsibility for those decisions.

3. Assign new manuscripts to AEs via the online manuscript management system.

4. Field personally or triage as necessary to the BOE and AGA staff all incoming communications related to journal content and publication policies or decisions. (Communications received by the editorial office will likewise be referred to the EIC(s) or others as appropriate.)

5. Lead annual BOE meeting, present the annual report, and discuss future initiatives.

6. Attend all publications committee meetings (there are two regularly scheduled meetings, one in April/May and one in September, and additional teleconferences as needed).

7. In cooperation with the AGA staff:
   a) Participate in any exercises initiated by the AGA staff to change the online composition, style and appearance of the journal. All design modifications must align with the AGA brand policy.
   b) Suggest and evaluate new initiatives related to content (type and delivery), policies and practices.
   c) Participate in regular strategy meetings with the AGA and Elsevier staff to discuss the journal’s future directions.
   d) Develop the content and concept for the cover of each issue.
   e) Be alert for and manage violations of ethical policies including plagiarism, duplicate submission/publication, image fraud and failure to disclose relevant conflicts of interest.
   f) Ensure that the peer-review processes are efficient and fair, and journal
policies are enforced.

8. In cooperation with AGA staff and editors of other AGA journals, select two fellows annually to receive training and mentorship on journal operations, as well as scientific publishing in general.

Tenure

The editorship will begin July 1, 2024 and conclude June 30, 2029. There will be a six-month transition period beginning January 1, 2024, during which the new editor will work with the current editors and AGA and Elsevier staff to ensure a smooth transfer of duties. Responsibilities during this transition will include consulting with the existing editors; attendance of weekly BOE meetings; and training on journal operations and policy with the AGA staff. There will also be a three-month period at the end of the EIC’s term, ending September 30, 2029, where they will serve as consultants and provide consistency and guidance for the new EIC(s). This may include attendance at the first annual meeting following the end of their official term, to offer consultation to the new board.

AEs will have a shorter three-month onboarding period before their official term, with similar responsibilities. AEs will train with their counterparts on the outgoing board and serve in a three-month consulting role at the end of the board’s term.

The EIC(s) would also have the option, in an open competition with other applicants, to recompete for one additional five-year term. An EIC selection committee would refer to performance and predictive analytics gathered in cooperation with the AGA staff, as well as the quality of new proposals, to inform their decision on whether to recommend renewal of the EIC(s) for an additional term vs. selecting a new EIC(s). Anyone approved to serve a second full term as EIC would not be permitted to reapply for a third term.

Honoraria and Expenses

The EIC will receive an annual honorarium of $20,000. Travel and lodging expenses for official business conducted at AGA’s request will be reimbursed as per AGA policy.

Requirements

Applicants must:

- Demonstrate an outstanding record of scientific achievement as evidenced by publications and professional activities.
- Possess a comprehensive understanding of biomedical publication issues and processes to include online submission, review and publication.
  - Past participation in the operation of a scientific journal as an EIC or associate editor is desirable.
- Be an AGA member.
- Complete the AGA Institute’s Potential Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement annually.
- Adhere to the journal’s conflict of interest policy for any manuscripts submitted to the journal during their term.
- Be able to devote sufficient time to the journal. This will likely necessitate relinquishing some current responsibilities and should be stated in the application.
It is anticipated that the new EIC(s) will be located at an academic institution and will be a full-time faculty member of advanced standing in a nationally and internationally recognized position.

**Selection Process**
All applications will be reviewed by an *ad hoc* selection committee whose recommendations will be made for review and approval by the AGA Institute Publications Committee and Governing Board. Final approval is anticipated by the end of July 2023.

**Application Process**
To be considered for this position, applicants should provide the following:

1. A current curriculum vitae.
2. A completed AGA Institute Potential Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement for you and your associate editors.
3. A statement of your views on the primary mission and audience(s) for *CMGH* (not to exceed 1000 words). This evaluation should include your assessment of the value of the journal to GI and hepatology investigators.
4. Your approach to ensure the relevancy of the journal to the AGA’s research constituency (not to exceed 500 words).
5. The specific objectives you want to achieve over the duration of your term and how you propose to achieve the objectives of the publications portion of the AGA’s strategic plan (not to exceed 1500 words).
6. Strategies to increase readership and reputation (not to exceed 1000 words).
7. Your approach to maintaining the quality, accuracy and fairness of the review process (not to exceed 1000 words).
8. An evaluation of *CMGH*’s current content, organization, physical appearance, and policies, along with recommendations for change, if any (not to exceed 1500 words).
9. The current issues facing the field of scientific publishing and how those issues might affect *CMGH* (not to exceed 1000 words). Examples include the push for open access business models, transparency, alternative metrics to the impact factor, predatory publishers, etc.
10. Your vision for how the AGA journals (*CMGH, Gastroenterology, Clinical Gastroenterology and Hepatology, Techniques and Innovations in Gastrointestinal Endoscopy, and Gastro Hep Advances*) can work collaboratively (not to exceed 1000 words).
11. Biosketches of each proposed associate editor. The application must include letters of support/interest from the appointees. As previously mentioned, the members of your BOE must comply with the AGA’s conflict of interest disclosure policy—i.e., they cannot serve on the BOEs of competing journals or have co-existing major leadership positions in other major gastroenterology-related organizations. Please take this into consideration when you are selecting your associate editors.
12. Any other information you deem appropriate.
Review Criteria

1. The candidates will be evaluated in terms of reputation, experience and integrity. The editor must be recognized by the national and international research communities and be credible to basic and translational researchers. The individual(s) must be perceived as unquestionably fair-minded and must be capable of leading a strong team. The EIC(s) must be progressive in his/her thinking about publishing, open to change and flexible in evaluating new publishing models. The EIC(s) must be sensitive to the economics of the publication and include business considerations in his/her decision-making.

2. The proposed members of the BOE will be evaluated in terms of their reputation, experience and integrity. The team will also be evaluated in terms of balance, diversity and should broadly cover the field of gastroenterology and hepatology. It is vital that the board of editors reflects the makeup of the GI community. To that end, and to align with AGA’s efforts around diversity, equity and inclusion, we strongly encourage you to consider the gender, race, ethnicity, and geographic location of the individuals you select for your board.

3. The EIC(s) vision for the publication will be evaluated in terms of the likelihood to maintain or reach its position at the top of its specialty. The challenges facing the publishing industry must be taken into consideration. A strong organizational plan should be articulated.

4. The strategic plan for the publication must be fiscally sound.

Any questions should be directed to Alexander Vaeth, managing editor, CMGH, avaeth@gastro.org, 301-941-2615.

Applications due: May 2, 2023
Applications reviewed and notifications sent: July 2023
Transition period begins: Jan. 1, 2024
Term: July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2029

All inquiries regarding this position are confidential.