Editorial

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1 COVID-19

The pandemic has impacted everyone but in different ways. For many journals, it has meant an increase in submissions, probably because efforts on designing and conducting research shifted to analyzing data and writing articles. Where ESM had about 300 submissions per year from 2014 to 2018 (see Bakker, 2020), we received 426 submissions in 2019, 430 by the end of September 2020 (Table 1), and 537 by December 19, 2020.

The pandemic seems to have enlarged existing disparities, for example, in terms of the digital divide (Zhong, 2020) and research output between female and male scientists (Oleschuk, 2020). We are seeing more and more potential reviewers respond to peer review requests with accounts of their challenges with the many new demands on their time, including the work of reconfiguring their teaching for the alternative mediums that have become necessary, family responsibilities relating to the new realities of social restrictions and institutional shutdowns, and even sickness from the virus itself. The resulting challenges to find the most appropriate reviewers remind us of the gratitude the field owes to the unpaid service provided by reviewers and others. We sympathize with all the people who are struggling in this new reality.

2 Some statistics

We regularly get inquiries about the rejection rates of ESM. Although we do not think that such statistics or impact factors are good indicators of quality (Andrade-Molina, Montecino, & Aguilar, 2020), they may still be informative to readers (see Table 1).

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Table 1 Some ESM statistics (2016–2020)

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020 (September)
# Submitted	281	322	301	426	430
# Accepted	60	51	69	49	58
# Downloads	163,111	179,618	210,962	258,393	217,712
2-year impact factor	0.959	1.100	1.292	1.500	

3 Special issues

In March 2020, we sent out a call for submissions to a special issue on the pandemic (guest-edited by Man Ching Esther Chan, Cristina Sabena, and David Wagner). The guest editors were overwhelmed with many expressions of interest, and ultimately 160 full manuscripts were submitted. The guest editors selected 26 of these to be submitted to ESM for potential inclusion in a double special issue. Also the calls for the special issues on race (guest-edited by Danny Martin, Luz Valoyes-Chavez, and Paola Valero) and on using eye tracking (guest-edited by Maike Schindler, Anna Shvarts, and Achim Lilienthal) generated a lot of interest. We welcome new proposals on relevant topics.

For guidelines on how to submit a special issue proposal, see the editorial by Goos (2018). One change compared to the 2018 guidelines is that ESM has room for larger special issues with up to twelve articles, as it can now publish at least 81 articles per year. We accept two types of proposals: with a predefined set of contributions or with an open call. The latter has the advantage of reaching out to new scholars, especially those who might not be able to attend conferences and might therefore be unknown to the guest editors.

In the near future, we expect the following special issues to appear:

- Davydov's approach in the twenty-first century, guest-edited by Linda Venenciano, Elena Polotskaia, Maria Mellone, and Luis Radford
- Innovations in measuring and fostering modeling competencies, guest-edited by Gabriele Kaiser and Stanislaw Schukajlow

4 Arthur Bakker and David Wagner are now joint editors-in-chief

The increasing flow of submissions has made it apparent that there is potential for significant disruption to our processes if we rely on one editor-in-chief, through whose hands all submissions first pass. We aim for a smooth flow of manuscripts by expanding this role with David Wagner now serving with Arthur Bakker as joint editors-in-chief.

5 New associate editor: Hamsa Venkat

We are also delighted that Hamsa Venkat from the University of Witwatersrand, South Africa, will join the team of associate editors in March 2021. Her teaching experience in high schools in London, vast research experience with primary mathematics education in South Africa, and leadership among mathematics educators in Southern Africa will be very valuable, alongside her knowledge of education internationally.

6 Editorial board members

We heartfully thank Keith Jones, Gelsa Knijnik, Salvador Llinares, and Rudolf Sträßer for their years of service as editorial board members. We are currently recruiting new board members, whom we will announce on the journal website at a later stage.

7 Thanks

Last, we would like to express our gratitude to the associate editors, all editorial board members, and reviewers who continue to write high-quality reviews that help the authors and the field of mathematics education research further.

References

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