

# Banner year for the *Journal of Investigative Medicine*

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Accepted 22 March 2022

Colleagues, I am writing to update you on the productivity of the *Journal of Investigative Medicine* (JIM) in 2021. I am very happy to report that indeed it was a banner year for the journal, as evidenced by a 17% increase in submissions compared with 2020 and a 17% increase in acceptances—both continuing the upward curve that began in 2020 (figure 1). This suggests that, during this COVID-19 pandemic, investigators found the time to update and finalize their data and complete manuscripts that may have been sitting on their desks for some time. With less opportunity to travel, attend meetings, and present abstracts in person, authors also may have chosen to expedite publication of their work.

The overall acceptance rate for original research was 27% and for all submissions the acceptance rate was 33%. The instant rejection rate increased from 28% in 2020 to 40%.

The time to first decision on all submissions averaged 1 month and the time to first decision for reviewed submissions averaged 6–7 weeks. To decrease our decision times, we have been focusing on trying to expedite the time required for identifying reviewers for each manuscript, including recommending that Editorial Board members with expertise in a specific field be approached as reviewers. Currently, the mean time to final acceptance for all papers is approaching 3 months. While overall these data are stable, there is room for further streamlining this process.

While the majority of accepted submissions are from the USA, followed by China, JIM

continues to publish content from a global authorship. Not unexpectedly, the most downloaded articles in 2021 from JIM were dominated by COVID-19. JIM's most popular article type, as evidenced by download data, are Original Research articles, followed by Brief Reports, Reviews, Letters to the Editor, Editorials, Research Tools and Issues, Experimental Biology Symposia, and Faculty Development.

Open access in JIM continues to increase and is now approaching 20% of all published papers. Website usage has been a focus of our Editorial Board efforts and we saw a very solid improvement in 2021, as summarized in figure 2, with an approximate 30% overall increase in traffic accompanied by a 47% increase in google traffic and a 93% increase in PubMed searches over 2020. JIM continues to be a worldwide journal, with traffic seen from all continents and major countries. Another component of our increased visibility is the monthly podcast, where the number of listens increased by 14% over 2020. I began this soon after becoming Editor-in-Chief and we now have over 20 podcasts highlighting articles and authors from JIM, as well as guest speakers discussing the 'Disease of the Month', the most recent of which is our March podcast, recorded with Dr Al-Bayati from Texas Tech El Paso for Colon Cancer Awareness Month. I encourage our members and readers to please notify me should you have a special topic of interest.

In the fall of 2021, we conducted a survey to learn more about the habits of our authors and readers. Results showed that:

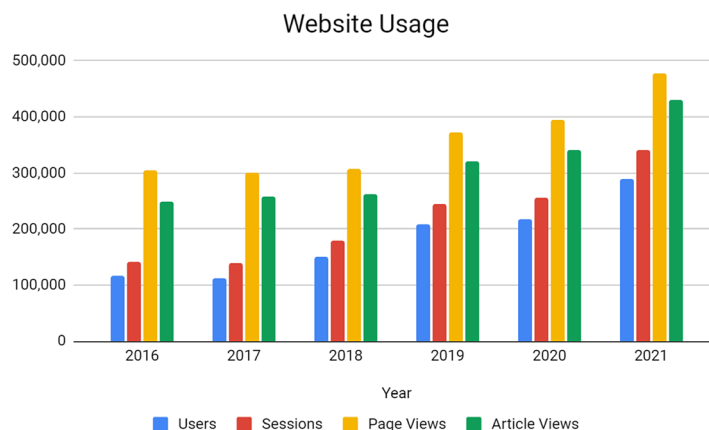


Figure 1 Submissions and Acceptances



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To cite: McCallum R. *J Invest Med* 2022;70:859–860.



**Figure 2** Overall Website Usage

- ▶ 84% of JIM responders find the articles are of interest;
- ▶ 78% of JIM responders engage with the journal more than occasionally;
- ▶ 83% of JIM responders find the subscription valuable;
- ▶ two out of three reference JIM when writing their manuscripts.

In addition, the top five ranked article types were identified as Original Research, Brief Reports, Research Tools and Issues, Reviews, and Faculty Development.

This summary would not be complete without recognizing the key roles of our very hard working and outstanding Associate Editors, ably assisted by the expertise of our Editorial Board Members. I want to recognize Dr John Dickinson, who is now the Social Media Editor for JIM, for prioritizing this effort. Thanks to my former Editorial Assistant at Texas Tech, El Paso, Karina Espino, who oversaw my entry into the Twitter world. Special thanks to Kathleen Lyons of BMJ for her guidance and to Hannah Martin, who so ably handles production of our journal. Thanks also to our Editorial Production Assistants Chloe Tuck and Rachael

Wright who ‘conduct the orchestra’, moving submissions efficiently through the review and revisions process and finalizing acceptance, and to my new assistant at Texas Tech, El Paso, Isabel Aguirre. Special thanks for the stewardship of Aurelie Alger and Taylor Baumgartner at the AFMR office, as well as Leslie Yerman, who is retiring but will be remembered for her many contributions to JIM.

So, colleagues, let me say a sincere THANK YOU for your continued support and commitment to JIM and AFMR. It is a special privilege for me to be the Editor-in-Chief of your journal. I will be counting on your assistance as I continue guiding the ship this year. Please feel free to email your thoughts and suggestions to [richard.mccallum@ttuhsc.edu](mailto:richard.mccallum@ttuhsc.edu).

**Funding** The authors have not declared a specific grant for this research from any funding agency in the public, commercial or not-for-profit sectors.

**Competing interests** None declared.

**Patient consent for publication** Not applicable.

**Ethics approval** Not applicable.

**Provenance and peer review** Commissioned; internally peer reviewed.