

Who are Journal Editors?: An Interview With Stephanie Kinnan (Part 1)

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In this interview, Enago's [Kuntan Dhanoya](#) (Vice President, Business Development) discusses the challenges and developments that have taken place at [Gastrointestinal Endoscopy](#) in the last few years with [Stephanie Kinnan](#), Editorial Assistant, [Gastrointestinal Endoscopy](#). Based on her experience, Stephanie provides some key insights into the editorial processes followed at GIE and the challenges that they have to overcome while analyzing the manuscripts that have been submitted to GIE for publication.

She also shares some key insights about [VideoGIE](#), an online-only, open access journal that publishes original, peer-reviewed video case reports and case series of endoscopic procedures used in the study, diagnosis, and treatment of digestive diseases.

In the first part of this series, we focus on Stephanie's experience in the publishing industry, the peer review policies followed at GIE, and the primary reasons for papers being rejected by journals.

Kuntan: Could you describe for us the lifecycle of a manuscript from the point when it gets submitted to the point when it is ready for publication?

Stephanie: At GIE, we first go through the manuscript to ensure that it has all the correct components. We try to [keep the submission process as easy](#) as possible. In the case of our journal, as an author, as long as you have everything that your submission requires, you can submit it however you want to and in any format. We then do a crosscheck report on all submissions to identify duplicate text, or text taken from a previously published work that is not properly cited. After that, once we have ensured that the submission has all the correct components, we send the manuscript for review. It is usually read by two peer reviewers and by our associate editor and editor-in-chief. Then we arrive at a decision and contact the author.

Kuntan: What are the major editorial and ethical challenges that you and your team face while maintaining such high standards of publishing?

Stephanie: I think that one of the biggest challenges that many journals face is trying to attract the highest-quality submissions and the highest-impact papers. We have a terrific team of associate editors who work in the field of gastrointestinal endoscopy, and they are really great at recognizing innovative research and new trends in the field. They are also fantastic at seeking out work that they think might be of high quality and high impact for the journal and asking researchers to submit such studies to us. One of the [biggest ethical challenges](#), as I previously mentioned, is duplicate text and we see that happening very frequently. Moreover, a lot of authors aren't aware that this is an ethical concern and hence we do ensure that crosscheck reports are obtained for all incoming submissions. Also, we have an annual ethics presentation for potential authors to educate them about issues related to publication ethics.

Kuntan: Peer review is a very critical process in publication; it is almost gatekeeping for good science. What is your editorial policy at GIE?

Stephanie: We always want to ensure that we have the best quality of reviewers, so we encourage all our new reviewers to work through the GIE Reviewer Course, and we track their progress giving them scores on each review. We have recently started a mentorship program for our new reviewers, which helps them know what we are looking for and what makes a good review. We also have an [annual award ceremony for our reviewers](#), in order to show them our appreciation and to recognize their great work. We understand that, for an author, receiving negative reviews or even rejections can be really difficult, but we encourage them not to take it personally and to understand that journals such as *GIE* have really low acceptance rates, and that the best thing they can do is to carefully look at the reviewer's comments. Therefore, we always want our reviewers to give positive, constructive critiques so that authors can use them to improve their manuscript and resubmit it elsewhere.

Kuntan: How do you go about preparing the training material or the resources for reviewers?

Stephanie: We have a fantastic doctor in charge of our reviewer programs. It was his concept to start this new reviewer program and match good reviewers, who have excellent track records, with new reviewers, who are just starting out and want to become involved in the review process. We run a lot of statistics and have reports that track how well our reviewers are doing and identify who is giving the highest quality of reviews.

Kuntan: In a case where there are conflicting reviews of a paper and you need another opinion, would you seek advice from another person who serves in a peer review capacity, or do you have any in-house source or subject matter expert available who can help you make that decision?

Stephanie: In this case, we mostly send it out for additional reviews, to ensure that we are being thorough. If an associate editor is not happy with the reviews we have received, that editor can invite as many reviews as he or she wants. Traditionally, we have two reviewers per paper, but our associate editor and editor-in-chief also look at the paper. Before we accept a submission, our whole editorial team will have the opportunity to look at it, to ensure that nothing has been overlooked. It is a really thorough process and we certainly are not taking the job lightly when we are reviewing these studies.

Kuntan: So what are your primary quality expectations from a manuscript?

Stephanie: The author needs to ensure that the research is sound and check that the statistics and facts are correct. It also has to be ensured that the work is original and not something that has already been published. A literature search needs to be done to see what else is out there. Also, make sure that the study is written clearly and concisely as the content is the most important thing. When submitting a paper to any journal, it is important to look at their guidelines, read the instructions for authors, and make sure that all correct components are being submitted with the correct formatting. However, it is really all about the content when it comes to acceptance or rejection.

Kuntan: Is quality of the language a common reason for rejection?

Stephanie: No. As I said previously, [manuscripts can be accepted or rejected for many reasons](#), but we do give leeway when an author is not particularly comfortable writing in English. It is more about content when it comes to that. However, we do encourage authors who are uncomfortable writing in English to use translation services or have somebody who is a native English speaker look over the manuscript and help to improve it a little bit. It is certainly easier for the reviewers and editors to understand and

appreciate the research if the writing is clear. Obviously, we do not directly reject papers over grammatical issues, but it is always great to make sure that you are submitting the best-quality manuscript that you can, and if that means that you need to have it checked by somebody who is more familiar with the language, then that might be a good option.

[\(To be Continued\)](#)

(This interview is a part of our interview series of connecting scholarly publishing experts and researchers.)

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