

ASBMB and JBC: A truly synergistic relationship

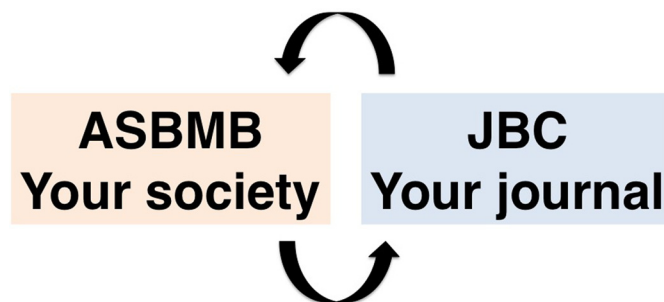
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I recently returned from the annual meeting of the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (ASBMB); it was superb and I greatly enjoyed the top-notch science and the stimulating interactions with colleagues. Yet there was much more: For the first time at an ASBMB annual meeting, I wore the hat of editor-in-chief of the *Journal of Biological Chemistry* (JBC), the flagship journal of the society. In addition, at the ASBMB meeting we kicked off a campaign to put JBC in the minds and eyes of the biological chemistry community. Moreover, I represented JBC at many meetings of the ASBMB leadership—where the future course of the society was discussed and the best ways to serve the membership and the field were deliberated at length. In these meetings and then in many, many conversations with colleagues between the scientific sessions, I found myself having one conversation over and over. The more I had this conversation, the more it crystallized a message that I've been wishing to articulate for some time, which is, simply stated: ASBMB and JBC have a shared goal of advancing science, and ASBMB and JBC tackle this goal synergistically.

JBC and ASBMB epitomize the mutual benefits that can be realized between a society and its journal. From the beginning, JBC has served the community of biological chemists by providing a trusted forum for scientific communication. The ASBMB, in turn, has served the community through educational programs and tools to foster the next generation of biological chemists, meetings that provide a venue for presentation of the latest science, career services and news updates for scientists young and old, and advocates who speak to government leaders about the importance of scientific discovery. Underlying these roles is a mechanism of financial give-and-take that is at the heart of the society journal and will enable both ASBMB and JBC to thrive in the future. Of great importance right now is the symbiotic relationship between JBC and ASBMB that will help JBC fulfill its newly articulated mission ((1); jbc.org/mission).

I would be remiss not to point out that an alternative to the society publication model remains in wide use: commercial publishing houses that profit from the scientists' need to disseminate their findings. Clearly, society journals represent a different model for publishing. Researchers still pay the costs for the society publishers to disseminate their work, but any revenue is used to help the society serve its constituency. Scientists oversee the reviewing and make policy decisions.



The society members decide how any journal income will be used through their election of representatives to lead the society and their input to the society leadership, and, concomitantly, the society leadership plays a stewardship role for the journal.

Moving forward, JBC is setting off on an exciting journey and is happily benefiting from its status as a society journal. It is a super-exciting yet tumultuous time in scientific publishing. Not only is science itself exploding with new discoveries and wonderful interrelationships among different fields and methodologies, but also the way we communicate with one another is changing dramatically and irreversibly!! Woe be it to the publication that sticks its head in the sand and ignores the potential for new opportunities to share scientific findings and new avenues to communicate with other scientists. JBC can work to facilitate advances in biological chemistry research—to explore, experiment, respond, and innovate—all because it has the backing of ASBMB, its symbiotic partner of 112 years in the advancement of scientific knowledge.

When you publish in JBC, you are a linchpin of this partnership. The charges you incur to disseminate your work are used to offset true costs of publication, and a give-and-take with ASBMB enables JBC to work on behalf of your scientific needs and those of your community: helping authors and readers to share results more effectively, maintaining a rigorous review system, and adopting new strategies so as to enhance the effectiveness of publishing for the sake of the scientist. This is your society and your journal. We continue to welcome your thoughts on the future of scientific publishing generally and JBC specifically at feedback@asbmb.org.

References

1. Gierasch, L. M. (2017) JBC is on a mission to facilitate scientific discovery. *J. Biol. Chem.* **292**, 6853–6854 <http://www.jbc.org/content/292/16/6853.full>

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