

JCB, JCS, and MBoC will offer manuscript transfer beginning early in 2019

manuscript transfer

Journal of Cell Biology
Journal of Cell Science
Molecular Biology of the Cell

Q&A

What is it?

Rockefeller University Press, The Company of Biologists, and the American Society for Cell Biology, publishers of *JCB*, *JCS*, and *MBoC*, respectively, are harmonizing their manuscript submission systems. Authors of manuscripts declined for publication will be technologically empowered to transfer their manuscript files and associated metadata to one of the other journals in just a few clicks, bypassing the administrative burden of manuscript submission. Reviewer reports will also be transferred for manuscripts that were peer reviewed at *JCB*, *JCS*, or *MBoC*, with the goal of reducing the collective burden on peer reviewers that comes from submission to multiple journals.

How does it work?

If a manuscript is suitable for transfer, this will be explained in the decision letter and the submitting author will be presented with a link to approve transfer of the manuscript to one of the other journals.

JCB, *JCS*, and *MBoC* have collectively deployed the **N**ational **I**nformation **S**tandards **O**rganization (NISO) approved **M**anuscript **E**xchange **C**ommon **A**pproach (MECA) protocol to transfer manuscript files, associated metadata, and reviewer reports between *JCB*, *JCS*, and *MBoC*. Journals differ in the data they require at submission, so there may be a small amount of data to enter or a few boxes to check on the new journal site to complete the submission, but most of the work will be done automatically.

When is it coming?

Quarter 1 of 2019, once the development work has been completed.

Are all declined manuscripts eligible for transfer?

No. The Editors of the journal where the manuscript is under consideration will make the decision on whether to offer transfer, referring to the stated aims and scope of *JCB*, *JCS*, and *MBoC*, as appropriate.

You are welcome to submit directly in the absence of an offer to transfer.

Will the Editors of *JCB*, *JCS*, and *MBoC* confer on manuscripts?

No, they will not. Manuscript transfer to *JCB*, *JCS*, or *MBoC* does not obligate that journal to peer review or publish the transferred manuscript.

When can I transfer my manuscript?

You can transfer your manuscript at any time after it has been declined as long as it is not under consideration by another journal.

What if I want to revise my manuscript before transfer?

Not a problem. You can upload a revised manuscript. If you do, consider highlighting the changes in the revised manuscript. You also have the option to upload a new cover letter prior to transfer to identify revisions to the manuscript.

Do I have to reformat my manuscript?

No. *JCB*, *JCS*, and *MBoC* all accept format-neutral submissions. However, if your paper is accepted for publication, you will need to reformat to the journal's specifications to ready your manuscript for production.

Are reviewer identities shared between journals?

Yes, but only with the reviewers' approval. Reviewers remain anonymous to the authors and to the other reviewers unless they have provided consent.

What if I don't want to have reviewer reports transferred?

Submit directly to *JCB*, *JCS*, or *MBoC* and start the peer review process afresh. It's estimated that around 15 million hours of researcher time is consumed each year in submitting manuscripts, so we encourage you to transfer instead. However, we support your right to submit anew.

What other options do I have?

All the transfer options already offered by *JCB*, *JCS*, and *MBoC* continue to be available to you. This new transfer option does not replace any of those options.