

# Roles and Responsibilities of EHP Leadership Team

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Editor-in-Chief (EIC), as an active leader in the field of environmental health research, provides the high-level vision, leadership, and expertise required to sustain and enhance EHP's high standards and stature in the environmental health research community at large. In this role, the EIC is expected to:

- Establish high-level goals and strategic directions for the journal going forward;
- Determine the journal aims and scope, and oversee the interdisciplinary balance of EHP content in alignment with the NIEHS Mission and Strategic Plan;
- Interface with and be accountable to NIEHS leadership
- Work closely with and provide functional direction to a PhD-level Senior Science Editor (SSE) and a professional Chief Operating Officer (COO) who, in turn, manage all day-to-day activities including peer review, editorial, and production workflows, and online publication;
- Outreach to authors to attract the most important, novel, and highest-quality research submissions;
- Recruit, motivate, and guide highly qualified and committed Associate Editors and Editorial Review Board members;
- Communicate with key EHP stakeholders to identify emerging environmental health issues in research and policy making;
- Apply his/her broad research and leadership experience to ensure the quality, reliability, and importance of all EHP content while operating with editorial independence as defined in a memorandum of understanding with NIEHS (<https://doi.org/10.1289/ehp.12927>); and
- Set priorities for ongoing projects and new initiatives within budgetary guidelines.

Accordingly, the EHP reporting structure that provides both supervisory controls and professional support for the EIC is provided below. In brief, this model defines roles and responsibilities (with appropriate decision-making authorities) of the EIC as well as the primary EHP federal staff. To this end:

- The EIC will report to the Deputy Director (DD) and thus have regular access to NIEHS leadership and the opportunity to become appropriately involved in NIEHS activities. Implicit in this relationship is that the EHP EIC operates under the principle of editorial independence and makes final decisions regarding the acceptance of articles published in EHP according to journal policies for peer review that are consistent with the highest principles of scholarly publishing;
- The EIC will have two key points of contact with and provide operational supervision of the COO and SSE, who serve as regular consultants for the EIC and, in general, ensure that the EIC's vision and priorities are implemented.
- In turn, the COO and SSE will assume all formal supervisory responsibilities for federal staff and will report up to the DD.
- This dual reporting system will ensure that all operating and editorial needs are met and coordinated, and that the supervisory staff as well as the EIC operate under provisions of appropriate accountability to NIEHS leadership. It also ensures continuity of operations during transition to future EICs.

## OVERVIEW OF EHP LEADERSHIP TEAM

**Deputy Director of NIEHS (DD), reporting to NIEHS Director,** provides high-level supervisory controls for EHP and, together with three direct reports (the Editor-in-Chief, Senior Science Editor, and Chief Operating Officer), represents EHP to NIEHS.

**Editor-in-Chief (EIC), part-time, non-supervisory, reporting to DD (per IPA or detail hiring mechanisms),** provides high-level direction and leadership for EHP and is responsible for achieving major scientific goals in alignment with NIEHS's mission and strategic plan and the Institute Director's vision. The EIC determines the scope of the journal and the types of articles published therein; makes decisions about what specific content to publish within the journal; provides direction to the EHP Senior Science Editor (SSE) in all editorial matters; appoints and evaluates volunteer Associate Editors and Editorial Review Board members; interfaces regularly with the EHP Chief Operating Officer (COO), SSE, and DD; and represents EHP to the global environmental health sciences community.

**Chief Operating Officer (COO), supervisory, reporting to DD with functional accountability to the EIC,** provides managerial and supervisory controls for all EHP operations functions and is responsible for production and marketing of the journal; budget development and accountability; and contract management for publishing services and website development. The COO supervises the Deputy COO and serves as point of contact for onsite production contractors. The COO is a key subject matter expert for the EIC and SSE on all technical aspects of scholarly publishing, and a consultant regarding editorial policy and industry best practices for peer review.

**Senior Science Editor (SSE), supervisory, reporting to DD with functional accountability to the EIC,** provides high-level scientific and managerial support to the EIC on all aspects of peer review, including evaluation of scientific quality, relevance, and integrity; input on peer-review policies and practices; implementation and management of editorial workflows; and coordination of and communication with EHP onsite editorial staff and volunteer Associate Editors and reviewers. The SSE provides leadership and supervisory controls for EHP editorial office staff, including the News Editor (NE) and federal and contract support staff, and contract management for editorial services. As the primary point of contact for the EIC, the SSE consults and works directly with the EIC to support all processes that ensure the highest standards of excellence in scholarly publishing. The SSE works in tandem with and directs the work of a non-supervisory Science Editor (SE) to fulfill all functions associated with EHP peer review. As a key player in overall EHP management, the SSE consults regularly with the COO on publishing practices and website design as they relate to editorial and author/reviewer usability.

# **EHP PROFESSIONAL STAFF WITH DETAILED ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

## **Editor-in-Chief (EIC), Senior Staff – Reports to DD**

**Reporting provisions:** Under provisions of an IPA or federal detail assignment, the EIC reports to the DD and is accountable in all matters and authorities for ensuring the scientific quality of EHP while acting in the best interests of NIEHS and not of his/her home organization. For specific scientific content decisions, the EIC operates with editorial independence per MOU with NIEHS.

### **Overall editorial leadership, responsibility, and authority:**

- The EIC is responsible for setting high-level strategic goals, priorities, and directions for EHP and determining the nature of EHP content with editorial independence characteristic of scholarly publishing. He/she thus has authority over and is accountable to EHP leadership and the scientific community for ensuring that all content published in EHP is of high integrity, advances the state of environmental health knowledge, and promotes translation of knowledge into environment health action. The EIC sets strategic scientific direction (journal aims and scope) consistent with goals of NIEHS and the vision of the NIEHS Director;
- Leads and evaluates the effectiveness of EHP peer review with support from federal EHP staff and collaboration with Associate Editors and Editorial Review Board members whom he/she appoints. The EIC has the final authority to decide if specific articles are published in the journal.
- Represents EHP to NIEHS leadership and is accountable for journal performance, impact, and alignment with NIEHS's mission and goals.
- Sets priorities for new programs and activities within the constraints of the EHP budget and in consultation with the DD and COO, who oversee and manage the EHP budget.
- As the "face of EHP," provides input on EHP's website and marketing strategy to the COO.
- Sets high-level priorities for long-term projects that impact journal development, including the journal's scientific content and reputation as well as its functionality (author satisfaction, reader access, and content discoverability).

### **Scientific content, quality, and diversity:**

- Ensures the relevance, scientific quality and veracity, and balance of all EHP content across the broad field of environmental health sciences.
- Establishes journal policies and editorial practices to ensure that peer review is objective, fair, rigorous, and timely in accordance with established guidelines for reporting and ethics set by the scholarly publishing community. With scientific and logistical support from the SSE and SE, the EIC provides oversight of the peer-review process, including the initial screening process (triage), assignments to Associate Editors for initial feedback and peer review, evaluation of peer reviews and Associate Editor recommendations, and decisions to revise, reject, or accept manuscripts.

- Sets standards of excellence for all types of articles, including submissions from the environmental health research community, commissioned articles, and podcasts.
- Provides scientific oversight of topics for commissioned articles.
- Determines the types of peer-reviewed and commissioned article that are published in EHP.

#### **Outreach and communication:**

- Represents EHP to the environmental health community at large through strategic outreach activities, speaking engagements, and writing editorials for the journal.
- Interfaces with leaders in the field, including both researchers and knowledge users.
- Consults with editors of related journals and maintains knowledge of state-of-the-art scholarly publishing practices.

#### **Oversight of EHP performance:**

- In collaboration with NIEHS DD and EHP leadership team, sets priorities for ongoing and new activities while ensuring the overall financial and managerial integrity of EHP.
- Provides high-level oversight of EHP operations and consults with the COO to support and ensure efficiency of all operations associated with production and publication of the journal production, in alignment with established guidelines for scholarly publishing.
- Has authority for and oversight of EHP peer-review policies and practices, and consults on a regular basis with the SSE to ensure:
  - rigor and quality of scientific peer review;
  - consistency of editorial practices with EHP Mission and Goals statement and established guidelines for scholarly scientific journals;
  - timely and appropriate performance and level of input from Associate Editors and peer reviewers;
  - adherence to timelines for all aspects of the peer-review process, including accept/reject decisions on manuscripts;
  - scientific quality and relevance of commissioned EHP articles; and
  - high-level performance and visibility of EHP.
- Provides input to DD regarding performance management and supervisory controls of the COO and SSE as part of the annual performance review process.