

## Proposals for the longer-term funding of the ICTV Online Report through journal partnership

**Aims and Summary.** We are applying for longer term funding for staff and resources needed to support the continued production and expansion of the ICTV online Report and associated bioinformatic and metadata resources. To date, publication and maintenance of the ICTV Online Report and summary Profiles has been possible initially from a Wellcome Biomedical Resource grant and latterly by direct funding from the Microbiology Society for the employment of a Managing Editor (Donald Smith). To further these aims, we propose the development of a comprehensive publication package that places a partner journal as the official Journal of Record for the ICTV. In addition to the Profiles, the package would incorporate general taxonomy-related commentaries and reviews that currently make up the Virus Division News (VDN) section of Archives of Virology (AoV) and comprehensive annual summaries of all approved taxonomy proposals (TPs) ratified by the ICTV. The latter would create for the first time, a searchable published record of new and replaced taxon names, records of taxonomy changes and additions that cross-link to the ICTV Master Species List and associated bioresources. We believe that the enhanced attention and extensive citation of Profiles and TPs provided to the current ICTV partner journal will justify the funding required to support the Report Managing Editor post essential for these outputs.

### Planned package outputs

**a) ICTV Report and Profiles.** The Journal of General Virology (JGV) currently publishes ICTV Virus Taxonomy Profiles that provide taxonomic and descriptive summaries of currently classified virus families. These Open Access Profiles act as citations for family chapters in the ICTV Report (<https://ictv.global/report/about>) that are written by the same authors and are the authoritative source of continuously updated information about viruses and their taxonomy for the virology and wider community.

**b) Virus Division News (VDN).** Archives of Virology (AoV; Springer Nature) publishes the VDN, with an ICTV Executive Committee (EC) member as section editor. This is a free to read (although not Open Access) collection of reviews, opinions, descriptions of proposed new taxa (prior to ICTV approval and ratification and/or their official “announcements” once they were ratified), and an annual summary of taxonomy updates and changes. These ICTV-related articles are traditionally well-sought by the readership and highly cited.

**c) Taxonomy proposal (TP) summaries.** We propose the development of a new publication format, comprising eight or more annually published multi-authored summaries (title, text, authorship and tables) of taxonomy changes and additions of each ratified TP published by the current sub-committees of the ICTV. Their publication and indexing would become the primary citation source for advances in virus taxonomy and transform the visibility, transparency, attribution and citation of changes and additions to their classification.

**Requested resources.** We anticipate that management of the ICTV Report (soliciting chapters, editing and review, uploading on the ICTV website and publication of Profiles), technical management of the VDN section and the taxonomy proposal summaries requires part- or full-time staff resources in addition to extensive involvement and oversight from EC members of the ICTV. Several EC members act as sub-editors (mostly at the subcommittee level) and coordinate published outputs with ICTV databases and bioinformatic resources provided on the ICTV website. We request part-time (60% FTE) Band 8 salary costs for an initial three to five year period that will enable Donald Smith to continue in his current role as Managing editor of the ICTV Report while also taking on the expanded range of responsibilities described in the package. This has been costed at £49,596 + £15,070 employer costs per annum. Commercial organisations funding this post will incur a further University overhead charge to be negotiated.

**Terms of agreement.** The ICTV would require that a journal partner publishes all outputs as full Open Access, without fees or page charges, and providing a commitment to fund the current ICTV Report Managing Editor post for a minimum initial period of 3-5 years, followed by review against objective and potential extension. The ICTV Report would remain the property of its authors, and copyright would not be transferred to the partner publisher. Pre-specified metrics of success (citation numbers, impact factor) and the provision of agreed exit clauses for both parties could be built into the partnership agreement to ensure that the journal achieves its publication aims and the ICTV obtains greater dissemination and attribution of virus taxonomy information.

**Benefits.** We believe that the publication of a wide range and comprehensive taxonomy information by a designated partner journal of the ICTV will have a transformational effect on the accessibility, completeness and integration of authoritative taxonomy and bioinformatic information for the scientific community. Analysis of profile citations published in JGV (MS) and VDN articles published in AoV (Springer Nature) have shown that they are rapidly becoming the standard reference for statements of classification information in published virology papers. Taxonomy proposal summaries may become similarly authoritative citations for specific classification additions and changes.