

What does it take to make JpGU journals prominent?

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I have been serving as an Editor of Earth Planet and Space since 2015 and an Associate Editor of Journal of Geophysical Research Solid Earth since 2015 (and a Guest Editor between 2013 and 2015). Also I am starting a tenure as an Editor of Earth and Space Science Open Archive (ESSOAr), a preprint server American Geophysical Union is going to launch shortly. This presentation offers an idea on what it takes to make journals related to JpGU (EPS and PEPS, EPS in particular) more prominent in the Earth Science community from my own experience.

JGR, founded in 1986, is now has seven independent sections including Space Physics and Solid Earth. JGR has been a leading journal for decades with a current Impact Factor of about 3.4. AGU also has Geophysical Research Letters which publishes timely and concise articles with an impact factor of about 4.3. It would thus be a realistic goal for JpGU journals to catch up with AGU journals such as JGR or GRL in terms of visibility and prominence in the community.

The current impact factor, a measure of the prominence of a journal, of EPS is about 2.2, not as high as those of JGR or GRL. However, The impact factor of EPS was above 3 and above JGR a few years ago when EPS published a special volume on the 2011 Tohoku-oki earthquake. This indicates that a publication of an appropriate special issue on significant geological phenomena such as notable earthquakes or volcanic eruptions or that related to a significant scientific achievements will lead to an increasing visibility of a journal. Then what should we do to enhance the visibility of JpGU journals? Here I explore a possibility through a comparison of statistics between EPS and JGR-SE.

First, the acceptance ratio of papers submitted to EPS is about 54 percent, not much different from that of JGR-SE, which is about 48 percent. EPS takes, on average, about 140 days from submission to acceptance, comparable to that of JGR-SE which is also about 140 days. A big difference is, however, that the nationality of submitted papers. While JGR-SE is published by an American organization, papers with the corresponding author in an American institute are not dominant at all; they consist of only 25 percent of total submission. This number actually lag behind submissions from Chinese institutions consisting of 29 percent of total submissions. On the other hand, approximately 46 percent of total submissions to EPS consists from Japanese institutions. The second largest body of submission is from Chinese institutions which consist only 12 percent of total submissions.

Editorial board of JGR-SE is also more diverse. Four out of seven Editors (equivalent to Editor-in-Chief and Vice Editor-in-Chiefs of EPS) of JGR-SE are from outside the United States while all three (Vice) Editor-in-Chiefs are from Japan. Also, in spite of an effort of increasing EPS editors from foreign countries, 26 out of 45 (58 percent) EPS editors are from Japan while only 27 out of 70 Associate Editors (equivalent to Editors for EPS) are from the United States.

With this, enhancing the visibility of JpGU requires an internationalization of submission statistics and board members. To do this, emphasizing the originality of the journals is also required. A clue would include, but not limited to, 1) organize a good special volume on recent geological phenomena or significant scientific progress, and 2) accept submissions emphasizing data, methods, or technological

developments. The latter would be particularly promising given that Japanese have a tradition of good methodological or technical developments.

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