



## Thank you, Editors and Reviewers of *The Plant Cell*

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Editorial

We wish to express our deep appreciation to members of the editorial board and all of our reviewers, whose time spent on thoughtful and fair assessment of the work of their colleagues is vital to the quality of the scientific literature and the advancement of science.

At *The Plant Cell*, we engage in pre-review consultations with multiple editors to determine the suitability of submissions for external review, and we host post-review consultations between editors and reviewers to help guide decisions. We aim to provide authors with clear decisions as quickly as possible, yet based on careful consideration through true peer review.

We know it is deeply disappointing to have a manuscript declined without external review—yet we do this to save time and effort for authors as well as reviewers, and potentially speed the path to publication in another journal. When a manuscript is declined without external review, it is because multiple editors unanimously judge that the work is not among the top tier of manuscripts in the field and is unlikely to fare well with reviewers. We aim to return such manuscript to the authors as quickly as possible and to provide constructive comments reflecting our internal discussions, to give the authors the opportunity to submit to another journal for more rapid publication or, if warranted, to revise and resubmit to *The Plant Cell*. Many authors have reported that they appreciate the extra effort that has gone into the decision-making process, even when a manuscript has been declined, because the decision was made quickly and/or the decision letter reflected a fair assessment of the work.

In addition, this process saves our reviewers considerable time and effort, as we do not request reviews for manuscripts that are unlikely to meet with a positive outcome. On the contrary, enthusiasm from a single editor is sufficient to move the manuscript to external review. And for

manuscripts that do get reviewed, we hope that reviewers will use the time saved to put a little extra effort into the post-review consultation, reading through the other reviews and engaging in discussion with other reviewers and the reviewing editor to help shape the decision and provide concise, constructive comments to the authors. This process requires commitment and considerable investment of time from editors and reviewers alike, and we are deeply appreciative of all those who have volunteered their time in the service of *The Plant Cell*.

The senior editors of *The Plant Cell* have a special responsibility for guiding the pre-review consultations, assigning reviewing editors, mentoring newer members of the editorial board, and helping to set standards for publication in the journal. At present, we have 13 senior editors, 33 reviewing editors, 46 guest editors, 2 consulting editors, and 29 assistant features editors representing more than 70 institutions from around the world. We continue to seek out additional editors to ensure adequate expertise in all areas of submissions and to expand the diversity of the editorial board. Please view the profiles of our editors at <https://plantcelleditorialboard.weebly.com/> (or look for the link on the journal website, as this url may change in the future). When you submit your next manuscript to *The Plant Cell*, we ask that you recommend several editors who can appreciate your work.

We extend special thanks to the following editors who are leaving the board this year: Barbara Kunkel (Reviewing Editor 2015–2021), Caroline Gutjahr (Reviewing Editor 2019–2021), and Naomi Ori (Reviewing Editor 2015–2021). We offer a sincere thank you to our many external reviewers, on behalf of all our authors, editors, and readers, for your willingness to provide thoughtful and constructive reviews. Reviewers who served the journal between October 1, 2020 and September 1, 2021 are listed below.

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