In 2008, I succeeded Dr Masunori Matsuzaki (2000–2008) as the 15th Editor-in-Chief of the Circulation Journal, the official journal of the Japanese Circulation Society (JCS). Since then, I have done my best to improve the academic level of the Journal. On the completion of the 8-year term as the Editor-in-Chief, I express my sincere thanks to all the members of my editorial team, including the associate editors (both domestic and overseas), executive editors, statistical consulting editors, editorial board members, international advisory board members, and the JCS editorial office staff (Table). I also thank all the authors who submitted their manuscript for publication in the Journal and all the reviewers who reviewed the manuscripts for the Journal.

For the 8 years from 2008 to 2015, my team received a total of 10,938 manuscripts from all over the world (Figure 1) and finally published 2,761 of them in the 96 issues of the monthly journal (average acceptance rate of original manuscripts was 25.2%). During this time, I have made every effort to improve the academic level of the Journal as follows.

### Table. Editorial Team of the Circulation Journal (2008–2016)

**Editor-in-Chief:** Hiroaki Shimokawa

**Associate Editors:**

**International Associate Editors:**

**Executive Editors:** Satoshi Yasuda, Yoshihiro Fukumoto, Yasuhiko Sakata

**Statistical Consulting Editors:** Takeshi Morimoto, Satoshi Miyata

**Editorial Board:**

**International Advisory Board:**

**Editorial Office:**
- Yuko Nakamura, Uka Hosomichi, Hiroko Shibuya, Yachiyo Takahashi, Ranka Higuchi, Mayumi Abe, Chiaki Asai, Yoshihiko Hirabaru
1. Improve the Scientific Level of the Journal

With the great help from the associate editors, the reviewers and the printing office (the Kawakita Printing Co), the time from manuscript receipt to first decision was markedly shortened from 39 days in 2007 to 10 days in 2015 (Figure 2A), and the time from acceptance to online publication from 105 days in 2008 to 34 days in 2015 (Figure 2B), and the time from acceptance to publication from 125 days in 2008 to 82 days in 2015 (Figure 2C). All the published
papers were easily downloaded free through J-Stage, which is operated by the Japan Science and Technology Corporation (JST), supported by the Japanese government. I believe that we can be proud of the current fast review system with primary review of 10 days. In addition, in the past 8 years, a total of 363 review articles were published written by 353 renowned and next-generation scientists. I also started the editorial comments section, where a total of 572 editorials were published in the past 8 years. Furthermore, in order to appreciate the authors of high-quality papers and the reviewers with high review performance, I started the Circulation Journal Award and the Best Reviewers Awards, respectively.

2. Improve the Internationalization of the Journal
In addition to collaborations with the international associate editors and the international advisory board members on my editorial team, I started the monthly mail magazine service to approximately 6,000 foreign scientists and an annual international editorial board meeting during the annual scientific meeting of the American Heart Association (AHA). Furthermore, the JCS organizes an exhibition booth during the annual scientific meetings of the AHA and the European...
Society of Cardiology (ESC), where information on the Circulation Journal is provided to attendees. In addition to the Circulation Journal Award, I also started the Asian Award, which recognizes Asian scientists who publish a high-quality paper.

3. Improve the Visibility of the Journal
After I became the Editor-in-Chief of the Journal, I changed the printing system with the help of the Kawakita Printing Co to full and free colorization, which has enhanced the appearance of the Journal. I also started the monthly mail magazine to 26,000 JCS members to inform them of the contents of the issue of the month.

4. Improve the Ranking of the Circulation Journal in the World
As a result of all the efforts by the editorial team, the impact factor of the Journal has been steadily improving and reached to 4.124 in 2015 (Figure 3). The official ranking also places the Circulation Journal 31st among the 124 journals in the Cardiac and Cardiovascular Systems category in 2015 JCR Science Edition. Indeed, the Circulation Journal is one of the top journals in Asia and the top journal among the 1,808 journals registered in J-Stage in Japan. The numbers of download of manuscripts and abstracts from the Journal have also been rapidly increasing (Figure 4).

I sincerely hope that the academic level of the Circulation Journal will continue to improve as the leading cardiovascular journal in the Asian region (Figure 5).

References

Hiroaki Shimokawa, MD, PhD
Editor-in-Chief
Circulation Journal
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