The 2012 Impact Factor (IF) of *Circulation Research* surged to 11.861, a 25% increase compared with the 2011 value of 9.489. This is, to date, the highest IF ever for the journal (the previous high value was 10.117 in 2003). It is also the biggest annual increase in IF in the history of *Circulation Research*. A similar increase occurred in the Immediacy Index (number of citations in a given year to articles published in the same year), which rose 22% (from 2.023 in 2011 to 2.465 in 2012).

The Figure illustrates the IF of *Circulation Research* since 1991 (which is as far back as we can go) and the corresponding editors. Because the IF measures the number of citations in a given year to articles published in the previous 2 years, changing the IF of a journal requires at least 3 years. In other words, the changes implemented by the editors do not affect the IF until at least 3 years later.

The editors are gratified by this increase in IF, which we think reflects the numerous changes that we have made to *Circulation Research* since July 2009. I am well aware of the many limitations and misuses of the IF as a measure of journal quality. It is not the purpose of this brief note to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the IF—this has already been done many times elsewhere. The important point here is pragmatic: regardless of its value as a measure of quality, the IF remains the single most influential consideration that many authors use in deciding where to submit their best work. Consequently, increases in the IF are likely to bring about a further improvement in journal content, potentially initiating a “virtuous cycle” whereby a higher IF promotes submission (and publication) of better articles, which, in turn, results in a higher IF.

The editors thank the authors for submitting their work to *Circulation Research*, the reviewers for their selfless dedication in improving the content of the journal, and the readers for their support of our mission to be the leading repository of basic and translational cardiovascular science. I think that the surge in IF is but a sign of a sustained, fundamental transformation of *Circulation Research*.

Disclosures

None.

The opinions expressed in this article are not necessarily those of the editors or of the American Heart Association.

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The Impact Factor of Circulation Research Rises 25%
Roberto Bolli

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