

Introduction to the Academic Journal of Suriname

The Anton de Kom Universiteit van Suriname proudly presents the Academic Journal of Suriname (AJS), the first e-journal in its history and in that of our country. There have been some e-newsletters from different organizations in the past, but never a real academic journal with a variety of scientific articles. Indeed, this accomplishment is by itself an innovation of breakthrough proportions.

This e-journal is primarily intended to give the scientists at our university an outlet for their scholarly efforts. By doing this, others will know what kind of research is being done at the Anton de Kom Universiteit and see its results in the form of articles or research notes. Since Suriname has a small academic community the journal is also intended for a wider audience and we hope that scientists and academics elsewhere in Suriname will use this journal to publish their articles as well. And then of course there is the wider community of academics in the world who are interested in Suriname and are welcome to contribute.

Starting a new journal always carries a number of risks, particularly for a small university such as ours, with limited financial means for little extras. This has to do with our small market, which necessarily implies a modest circulation of the journal and higher costs for the publisher. However, as demonstrated time after time, the ultimate risk of launching a journal in Suriname is not merely financial, but often the lack of sufficient high-quality articles to guarantee continuation.

We believe that we have circumvented this problem through several approaches. Firstly, the AJS, although mainly focusing on Suriname, is a general journal with a broad range rather than a very specialized scope, providing something for everyone. Still, the opportunity exists to occasionally focus on a particular academic field, discipline, or theme through special editions.

Furthermore, the AJS accepts manuscripts from a wide variety of sources including students and academics, and encourages them to transform outstanding theses and interesting research reports to scientific articles. Once properly revised, the AJS promptly publishes such papers, presenting them to an international audience. Of note, to help improve publishing standards, the AJS' Editorial Board regularly provides trainings in academic writing. The first workshop on this subject was held for honors students in July 2009, and similar programs are planned for our lecturers and scientists during the course of 2010.

Another way to increase the scientific production is to involve a larger group of active scientists in the editorial work alongside the Editorial Board. These individuals will be given room for special issues or will be asked to edit a special thematic issue of the journal.

Despite all these efforts, much is up to you, the readers of the journal. The AJS will depend on your support and critical feedback to get the journal going. Making use of the Internet, we hope to reach and create a strong scientific community of all of you who carry Suriname and its interests in your hearts. With your help we will succeed in our effort to create a journal with sufficient depth to meet everybody's specific interest, but with sufficient scope to attract a broad range of readers.

I would like to express my gratitude to the first Editorial Board of the AJS (Dr. Renata de Bies, Prof. Dr. Jack Menke, and Prof. Dr. Dennis Mans) for their time and energy spent in this endeavor. I also acknowledge all colleagues who were willing to take place in the journal's Advisory Board. A special thanks goes to Drs. Dew Baboeram, whose input during the initial stages of this project was invaluable. And finally, my deep appreciation to Telesur, whose CEO, Drs. Dirk Currie, provided the much required technical support through the services of Raoul Brahim from Your Solutions web designs.

We trust that the AJS will fulfill the great desire for scientific information on Suriname, and we invite you all to lend your support to this enterprise.

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