

THE SPONSORSHIP OF A SCIENTIFIC JOURNAL

The publication of a scientific journal corresponds, in the large majority of cases, to an activity, be it a central or a peripheral one, of a scientific association or an institution, being the latter a university or a research center, which is the most common case in Latin America.

In the case of *Interciencia* its home entity, the Interciencia Association, is a confederation of national associations for the advancement of science, which have their own dissemination mechanisms. Hence, this journal was born with the object of pursuing the integration of these associations and of the communities of scientists that belong to them, so as to become an instrument for information and interaction between them. Unfortunately, such functions have been disappearing in time, mainly due to the lack of resources to appropriately accomplish them. *Interciencia* has progressively transformed into an additional vehicle for the dissemination of scientific information in the form of articles and reports of research results.

In its beginnings, *Interciencia* had the sponsorship from Mexico through Conicet and from the government of Venezuela, to be sponsored later only by the latter, as well as by minor and sporadic contributions from institutions such as Conicet from Argentina, the Brazilian Society for the Promotion of Science and the Canadian Foundation for Innovation. The generous sponsorship received for over 30 years from the Venezuelan government allowed for a difficult but effective survival.

In view of the termination of the scientific publications program from the entity for the promotion of science in Venezuela, things changed. Ever since, and facing the lack of a stable sponsorship, *Interciencia* has had to request in a rather vehement manner that the authors of the publications, from whom no payment whatsoever is demanded, procure contributions from their research funds or from the budgets of their institutions, having to relegate for a later date papers from those authors from institutions that do not contribute at all.

Due to a combination of pride and stubbornness, together with the firm intention to count on a total and absolute editorial autonomy, *Interciencia* never considered as a valid op-

tion to establish itself within a sponsoring institution, whose guidelines it would be obliged to satisfy. However, times have changed and the journal does not count with the needed means to carry on its task.

Why should we continue publishing it? *Interciencia* is barely one of the more than 5000 scientific journals originated in Latin America that are registered in *Latindex*, and one of the roughly 700 journals from the region that are indexed in the main international indexes, such as the *Science Citation Index Expanded*, *Scopus* and *Redalyc*, although excluded from *Scielo* due to lack of payment. It is almost unique, for sure, among those indexed that are truly multidisciplinary.

About 500 papers are submitted annually to *Interciencia*. Close to 2000 researchers participate as co-authors, many of them still in training. Of the papers received, one fourth is published, which is close to 0.2% of the publications that, resulting from the research of Latin American scientists, appear in the principal international indexes. The numbers appear to be negligible, but their significance is not. That mass of researchers, which in a few years amount to tens of thousands, count with a medium of quality for the dissemination of their results and ideas, together with the fact that the editorial work, always supported by the effort of the referees, turns out to be a pedagogical endeavor that we consider of the highest relevance and from which we have been and are proud.

In view of the present economic situation being experienced by the journal, in case of surviving it will have to be with the support of a sponsor interested in using the accumulated experience in order to give impetus to their research and editorial activities, accepting at the same time to preserve the absolute autonomy and independence of editorial criteria that have characterized *Interciencia*. Several initiatives followed in recent years point to it and, so we hope, shall have a happy ending in the near future.

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Editor