

PAPER OF THE MONTH

Summary

The monthly "Paper of the Month" award, which is part of the Faculty of Medicine's internal bonus program and funded by the responsible Ministry of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia, serves to congratulate outstanding publications from the Faculty. The aim is to take into account the diversity of research achievements and in particular to recognize those publications whose exceptional quality cannot be adequately reflected by quantitative evaluation criteria - in particular the Journal Impact Factor (JIF). (A high JIF is of course not an exclusion criterion, but also not a selection criterion).

The award is presented as part of a monthly open competition. The decision on the publication to be awarded is made by a committee of experienced representatives of the professorial staff on the basis of qualitative evaluation criteria.

The selection committee consists of: Prof. Jürgen Floege, Prof. Beate Herpertz-Dahlmann, Prof. Bernhard Lüscher, Prof. Martin Zenke.

Publications can be submitted for the competition [via an online form](#).

General conditions

Eligible for participation are publications that

- have a (possibly shared) first or last authorship with a clear affiliation to the Medical Faculty of RWTH Aachen University. In addition, a substantial proportion of the first author's research work should have already been carried out in Aachen.
- are written in German or English.

The submitted publications must have an online or print publication date that is no more than 12 months before the submission deadline of the respective month. Publications may only be submitted once across months as "Paper of the Month". However, the Commission is free to consider a submission again in a later month if it has a publication date that is no more than 12 months in the past.

The selection committee reserves the right to exclude publications published by publishers that have been criticized due to deficiencies in editorial practice (e.g. MDPI) from the review process.

The Research Deanery and the selection committee reserve the right to issue special calls in individual rounds – for example, clinical studies have been awarded funding in the October round since 2024.

Application procedure

Participation in the "Paper of the Month" competition is [only possible by submitting an application via the online form provided on the Faculty of Medicine's website](#). In particular, **the application must include a version of the publication in PDF format and should include a brief explanation of what qualifies the publication for the award from the authors' point of view**. The application deadline is the 10th of the respective month. Late submissions will automatically be considered for the following month if they meet the eligibility criteria. Incomplete submissions will not be considered, but may be resubmitted if eligible in principle.

Award procedure

The monthly selection of the award-winning "Paper of the Month" is made by a committee of experienced representatives of the faculty of medicine. **The committee is free to choose the evaluation criteria. However, it is encouraged to pay particular attention to qualitative factors** such as originality and innovation potential, scientific significance, translational potential, special significance for the location (with regard to research priorities, interdisciplinarity, cross-location cooperation, etc.), special achievements of early career scientists, etc., **as well as the information provided by the authors in the application. Quantitative measures (JIF, citation figures, etc.) should be avoided in the selection process** - although a high JIF, for example, is of course not an exclusion criterion. In the event of a high number of applications, a pre-selection can be carried out in the respective month in the Research Deanery.

The selection committee will provide a brief justification for the selection of the award-winning article. The pre-selection by the Research Deanery and the decision of the selection committee cannot be contested.

Prize money and use of funds

The winning paper will be prominently displayed by the faculty as "Paper of the Month". The award is also endowed with prize money of € 5,000 from the budget of the faculty bonus program. The winner receives €1,000 of the prize money personally, while the other €4,000 is made available as free funds on the TG94 internal order of the respective institution. The owners of the respective internal orders are requested to allow the prizewinners to dispose of the prize money.

The cooperation of the prizewinners in the announcement (in particular the prompt provision of a summary and, if applicable, a photo/symbol image) is required. The personal prize money can only be awarded to persons who are working at the faculty at the time of the award. Otherwise this portion of the prize will be forfeited.