

# FOOD FOR THOUGHT

## WHAT CAN A **JOURNAL EDITOR** AND AN **EARLY CAREER RESEARCHER** LEARN FROM EACH OTHER?

To help build networks across research communities, we arranged a meeting over lunch between a **JOURNAL EDITOR** and **EARLY CAREER RESEARCHER (ECR)** working on similar topics.

**NAME**  
**Dr Euan Doidge**

**ROLE**  
Teaching Fellow

**RESEARCH AREA**  
Chemistry

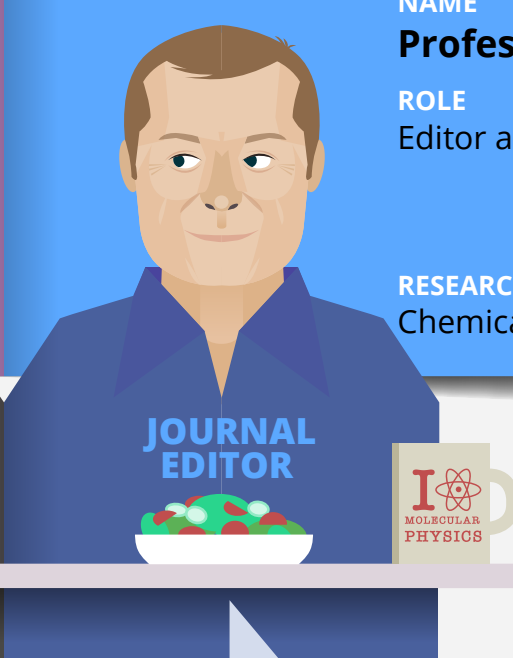


**EARLY CAREER RESEARCHER**

**NAME**  
**Professor George Jackson**

**ROLE**  
Editor and Chairman

**RESEARCH AREA**  
Chemical Engineering



**JOURNAL EDITOR**

### *What did you talk about?*

Over lunch, we discussed **how to balance teaching and research** as a Teaching Fellow, **our roles at Imperial College**, and **life in London**. Euan only moved here six months ago, and his prior knowledge of London geography was the Monopoly board!

I wanted to know more about the **journal publishing process**. I asked George about:

1. How templates affect peer review
2. How editors build and maintain a bank of referees
3. How to seek novelty in research and differentiate myself from the crowd

We talked about the **role of a journal editor**. I see two main elements to an editor's role:

1. Pre-screening submissions and issuing desk rejections as necessary
2. Selecting appropriate, professional peer reviewers to ensure papers are reviewed fairly

### *What do you think each other's biggest challenges are?*

For editors, it's **managing the peer review process**, including ensuring referees respond in a timely and effective manner.

It's also a challenge for editors to know **how to encourage young authors** to publish in relevant journals, even if this means publishing in journals with a lower Impact Factor to start with.

ECRs face several key challenges:

1. **Access to funding:** applying for grants early in your career can be hard, as you haven't built a reputation for yourself yet
2. **Balancing teaching and research:** with so many commitments, it can be difficult for ECRs to find the time to stay up-to-date with the latest research in the field
3. **Working collaboratively:** through interactions with collaborators, ECRs can develop new skills

### *What surprised you about each other?*

George became a journal editor at the age of **31!**

Euan remains **active in research despite his role as a Teaching Fellow**, so he can get his students engaged and interested in what's new in the field. Perhaps this will even influence what his students are interested in working on themselves.

### *What's your top tip for journal editors looking to engage ECRs in their journal?*

Invite ECRs to join the **editorial board**, and set up **prizes for young authors** based on their publications within five years of their PhD.

### *What's your top tip for ECRs looking to get published in the right journal to maximise their research impact?*

Get in touch with the most relevant journals to your area of work. Ask if you can **put together a special issue**, dedicated to and guest edited by ECRs.

