

The British Society of Soil Science (BSSS) is an established international membership organisation and charity committed to the study of soil in its widest aspects. The society brings together those working within academia, practitioners implementing soil science in industry and all those working with or with an interest in soils. Research on soils and enhanced understanding and engagement with soils is essential for agricultural, landscaping, construction, remediation, conservation and archaeological projects as well as driving future policy direction. Our members are employed by both private and public sector institutions including academic universities, conservation charities, construction companies and agri-environmental consultancies.

## *The Journals*

We are inviting publishers to tender to publish our two academic journals, *the European Journal of Soil Science (EJSS)* and *Soil Use and Management (SUM)*. Both journals are currently published by Wiley.

### *European Journal of Soil Science (EJSS)*

The European Journal of Soil Science (EJSS) is an international journal that publishes outstanding papers in soil science that advance the theoretical and mechanistic understanding of physical, chemical and biological processes and their interactions in soils acting from molecular to continental scales in natural and managed environments.

EJSS is published six times each year, with approximately 130 papers published. In 2019, the impact factor was 2.781 and an increase is expected in 2020.

Its Editor in Chief is Professor Jenni Dungait, who is supported by four Deputy Editors.

The journal was first published as the Journal of Soil Science in 1950 and this became EJSS in 1994. From 2022, EJSS will move to an online-only journal.

### *Key statistics:*

- In 2020, 7,503 institutions had a licence to access the journal, an increase from 6,678 in 2018
- The top countries downloading EJSS content were: China, United States, Germany, UK and France
- The top author contributing countries were: China (33), UK (22), Germany (11), United States (11) and Australia (10)
- The top author submitting countries were: China (189), India (37), UK (30), Brazil (25) and Iran (25)
- In 2020, SUM published 45 'OnlineOpen' access articles, an increase from 11 in 2019
- In 2020, 487 submissions were received (525 in 2019) with the vast majority of these research papers (414), special issue papers (28), short communications (19), invited reviews (18), six invited opinion articles and two letters to the Editor
- 1,198 pages were published in 2020 compared to 1,291 in 2019 and 1,129 in 2018
- The median time to a first decision on a paper is 71 days.

### *Soil Use and Management (SUM)*

Soil Use and Management (SUM) publishes in soil science, earth and environmental science, agricultural science, and engineering fields. The submitted papers should consider the underlying mechanisms governing the natural and anthropogenic processes which affect soil systems, and should inform policy makers and/or practitioners on

the sustainable use and management of soil resources. Interdisciplinary studies, e.g. linking soil with climate change, biodiversity, global health, and the UN's sustainable development goals, with strong novelty, wide implications, and unexpected outcomes are welcomed.

SUM is published four times each year, with approximately 80 papers published. In 2019, the impact factor was 1.690 and an increase is expected in 2020.

Its Editor in Chief is Dr Deyi Hou, who is supported by two Deputy Editors.

The journal was first published in 1985 and from 2022, SUM will move to an online-only journal.

#### *Key statistics:*

- In 2020, 7,508 institutions had a licence to access the journal, an increase from 6,886 in 2018
- The top countries downloading SUM content were: China, UK, United States, Australia and India
- The top author contributing countries were: China (30), UK (13), Brazil (10), India (9) and Germany (5)
- The top author submitting countries were: China (138), India (72), Brazil (57), Iran (24) and UK (17)
- In 2020, SUM published 16 'OnlineOpen' access articles, an increase from 3 in 2019
- Over the last three years the number of quality articles has received with 507 submissions received in 2020 (330 in 2019) with the vast majority of these research papers (461), followed by review papers (19), short communications (14), invited reviews (4) and three commentaries, letters to the Editor and Special Issue Papers
- The increase in quality has resulted in an increase of the number of pages published from 598 in 2018 to 780 in 2020
- The median time to a first decision on a paper is 58 days.

#### *Financial Position*

Both journals generate circa £550,000 revenue each year with expenses totalling circa £150,000. In 2020, a total £443,261 surplus was shared between Wiley and the Society.

The Society is currently solely responsible for pre-submission service costs and for a licence to allow members online access to both journals.

#### *The Brief*

We are looking for an organisation to provide comprehensive publishing services to our journals. This will include all aspects of the service currently provided by Wiley:

- Pre-submission services – administrative support to editors and authors
- Full layout support – support from a dedicated team to layout each edition ahead of publication
- Online only journal – an online only journal which can be accessed easily via desktop, phone and tablet for subscribers including BSSS members
- Marketing support – a dedicated team of marketers to increase the reach of the journals and encourage new and existing authors to publish
- Printing – an option for members and institutions to purchase print copies of the journal if required
- Finance – full financial management of the journals with annual forecasting and payments to the Society.

In future, the following aspects will be important to the Society and our journals and should be considered when responding to this tender:

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- Additional marketing support – developing a close working relationship to provide tailored support to the journals promoting our outcomes
- Flexibility – as the quality of papers received to the journals increases, a process which allows us to publish additional articles quickly, efficiently and without a major impact on the budget
- Plan S and Open Access – developing a way to meet the requirements of the Open Access agenda whilst maintaining the Society’s existing income levels
- A three-year agreement, with the opportunity to extend by an additional two years without the need to re-tender where agreed by both organisations, on either a profit-share or royalties basis.

## *Timeline*

Our current agreement with Wiley expires in December 2022 with a one-year notice period (December 2021).

We are seeking responses to this tender by **Friday 27 August 2021**.

Responses will be reviewed by our Publications Committee in early September after which time, responding organisations may be invited for a formal discussion. The Publications Committee will propose one organisation to the Society Board to agree at their meeting on 11 November 2021.

We would expect the organisation to work closely with Wiley and the Society during 2022 to ensure a timely and efficient handover of services on 1 January 2023.

## *Tender*

An introductory meeting with the Society Executive Officer Sarah Garry can be facilitated to support the submission of the tender.

The tender response should outline:

- Your organisation and its:
  - experience in the publishing sector, including any journals published in the earth sector
  - strategy for dealing with Plan S and hybrid agreements
- Details of how your organisation will meet the requirements set out in this tender including a proposed 2023 forecast (where proposing a profit-share agreement) and/or expected royalties
- A basic timeline setting out the process for handover of services from Wiley to your organisation
- A primary contact who can be approached for further information or clarification.

Please submit any queries and your response to this tender to [exec@soils.org.uk](mailto:exec@soils.org.uk) by **Friday 27 August 2021**.

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