

Editor's Letter

Proud of the past, driven for the future.

Dear esteemed readers,

It is my greatest pleasure in this editorial letter to announce the first ever issue of Eye South East Asia to be published this June 2017. Firstly please allow me to express my most heartfelt thanks to everyone involved for making the dream of EyeSEA possible. It is also worth saying that this issue is the most voluminous ever produced by Thammasat Eye Center (TEC) ever since our original journal was released 10 years back, then known as the Thammasat Thai Journal of Ophthalmology (TTJO).



I would like to tell you the story of the origins of EyeSEA. One decade ago, my department of ophthalmologists our colleagues from all over Thailand connected via the Royal College of Ophthalmologists Thailand to form TTJO. The journal was released biannually, exclusively in Thai language with English abstracts and peer reviewed which published twenty issues over the span of a decade containing a variety of articles from submissions all around Thailand. In that time TTJO grew in reputation and accreditation, reaching the first tier of the Thai Citation index (TCI), a subsidiary organization of the ASEAN Citation Index (ACI) – a partnership database with Scopus (Elsevier). This proved our editorial and production team's abilities and dedication that we were consistently able to publish a bi-annual peer reviewed journal and maintain an updated website for 10 years.

TTJO had its ups and downs. Thammasat University Hospital suffered a massive flooding in 2011, and with the chaos that ensued, our team's clinical duties were greatly affected and the necessarily reduced attention to TTJO resulted in a degradation to the second tier of TCI. However, rain or shine, the relentlessly hardworking staff of TEC pushed TTJO's standing back into tier 1 of TCI in 2016. But we could never stop there. Growing in parallel with TTJO was another of TEC's brainchild initiative – the ASEAN Economic Community Ophthalmology Meeting (AECOM) - an ophthalmology academic society supported by TEC and the Faculty of Medicine at Thammasat University aimed at bringing together ophthalmology health professionals to improve healthcare in the region. AECOM hosted four annual scientific conferences in Thailand, Cambodia and Lao PDR, garnering a growing network of international ophthalmologists who attend not only for scientific reasons, but also for a chance in international collaboration for research, training and clinical service. More information can be found at aecomeye.org

With AECOM's success, my junior colleague and managing editor Dr. Tayakorn Kupakanjana spearheaded the idea of merging our existing journal TTJO with the concept of AECOM, using our international annual conferences as a platform for recruiting and forming a community of authors, editors and reviewers to produce clinical research and academic publishing that represents the needs and interest the South East Asian population and ophthalmology society. I strongly believe that EyeSEA marks an important keystone in the new era of strengthened collaboration between ophthalmologists in south east Asia and higher quality research with more robust methodology, and widened perspectives in all areas and controversial topics of ophthalmology – not only for us readers in the region but also the international community. We hope to see articles published in EyeSEA bring clinical innovations and new knowledge to fruition for the greater good of eye healthcare for all. In parting, I would like to take this chance to cordially invite all readers to our fifth annual AECOM scientific meeting set for 24th-26th November 2017 in Hanoi, in conjunction with the Vietnam National Ophthalmology Conference. And last but not least, my final message to you is to encourage you all to contribute your opinion in EyeSEA through the editorial letters section – it is your chance to interact with the authors and help create a lively community of thoughtful ophthalmologists. Did you not agree with a point made in a previous article? Or you have a different perspective to share about the same topic from the last issue? No problem – just write us an email to aecomeye@gmail.com with the subject line 'Editorial letter' and we will publish your letter in the next issue and encourage the relevant author or editor to respond in the following issue. Thank you for your attention, see you at the 5th AECOM 2017 at Hanoi, and be in touch again on December 2017 for the next issue of EyeSEA.

Associate Professor Sakchai Vongkittirux, MD
Head of Thammasat Eye Center,
Faculty of Medicine Thammasat University
and Former President of The Royal College of Ophthalmologists Thailand