Reviewer’s report

**Title:** Soluble receptor for advanced glycation end-products and progression of airway disease

**Version:** 3  **Date:** 20 December 2013

**Reviewer:** Gaetano Caramori

**Reviewer’s report:**

Major Compulsory Revisions
There is a huge discrepancy within the number of control smokers with normal lung function compared with control non-smoking subjects and COPD patients. The number of these 2 groups should be significantly increased.

The clinical details of the subjects presented in table 1 are largely incomplete. Please provide pre and post-BD FEV1, FVC and their ratio.

Please provide your definition of current smoker and the number of current vs former smokers.

The recent literature in the field of the role of RAGE and HMGB1 in the pathogenesis and COPD should be carefully reviewed and appropriately quoted.

Please provide chest CT score for pulmonary emphysema of your smoker subjects to investigate if there is any correlation between these blood biomarkers and the presence and/or severity of emphysema.

Presence and absence of chronic bronchitis should be described as well as its correlation with the biomarkers

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests