
Editorial: January 2002

The January Editorial is an opportune moment to take stock of the service we are rendering, as well as looking forward to what is coming over the horizon. First of all, looking back over 11 years, there is no doubt that the materials chemistry community worldwide has expanded dramatically both in scope and numbers. As far as our Journal is concerned, that expansion has been accompanied by a more than three-fold increase in the number of manuscripts submitted, so that in 2001 it topped 1000 for the first time. In fact the increase over the whole decade has been quite continuous, and the Journal is universally regarded as among the leaders in its field. That this is so comes from a recognition by the community we serve of the very high standards we are seeking to maintain. Along with the inexorably increasing submissions, our rejection rate has been maintained; currently it stands at 46% for full papers.

In addition to rigorous refereeing, another feature of the Journal that is respected and appreciated by authors is the quick and efficient handling of manuscripts by the Editorial Office. For that I would like to take the opportunity of thanking Graham McCann and all Publishing and Production staff; the Publishing Department has recently welcomed four new arrivals, Ian Farrell and Romano Giorgi as Assistant Editors, Kirsty Anderson as Crystallographic Data Editor and Danielle Kinsella as Editorial Secretary. It is also worth noting that nearly half of the manuscripts received nowadays are submitted through the Web, thus avoiding postal delays (www.rsc.org/submissions).

The high scientific standards which underpin our standing in the international community are under the scrutiny of the Editorial Board, one of whom, Martin Bryce, as previous Scientific Advisory Editor and most recently Associate Editor for Organic Materials, has reached the end of his term of appointment. Martin has played a very active role in building and promoting the Journal; everyone associated with it (and indeed the materials chemistry community as a whole) owes him a considerable debt. In his place, it is a pleasure to welcome Phil Hodge. The Editorial Board has also been anxious to strengthen its representation in the increasingly important field of biomaterials, so we are pleased to welcome Steve Mann, who is widely regarded as one of its progenitors, as a new member. There are plans to devote a special issue to the field of biomaterials. In this connection, it is also pertinent to observe that the second quarter of 2002 will see the launch of an RSC chemical biology website. This is a joint venture between RSC Publishing and the Chemical Biology Forum. The intention is to provide a valuable resource for the chemical biology community, a major component of which will be a virtual journal, bringing together all the RSC's published material in chemical biology. This will of course include the biomaterials papers found in the *Journal of Materials Chemistry*. So by publishing biomaterials work in this journal it will be easily accessible by both the materials chemistry and chemical biology communities.

Most immediately forthcoming as topics for special issues in 2002 are Functionalised Fullerenes, convened by Prof. M. Prato, and the Fifth Materials Discussion to be held in Madrid in September on 'Porous Materials and Molecular Intercalation' and organised by Prof. Eduardo Ruiz-Hitzky. Finally, with such a broad discipline as materials chemistry, it is important to maintain a dialogue with other Royal Society of Chemistry journals covering more traditionally defined subject areas. Recently, Editors and Board Members of the *Journal of Materials Chemistry* met with their counterparts from *Dalton Transactions*. As a result, the statements defining the areas of coverage have been slightly amended: please see the Information for Authors for the latest versions (www.rsc.org/authors) or refer to the list of changes following this Editorial.

I would like to conclude this brief account of recent developments with some remarks that are quite general, and indeed philosophical. In a field as broad and diverse as materials chemistry, there is space for a correspondingly diverse range of primary literature. Within that diversity, two important defining characteristics of this Journal deserve emphasis. First, it aims to furnish a platform for all aspects of the subject, which is of its very essence multidisciplinary. Second, it carries the imprint and the standing of one of the world's leading professional institutions of chemistry. As such, first and foremost it serves the science of chemistry. I believe our contributors and readers admire and respect that: it is our task to fulfil their expectations through the second decade of the journal's development.

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Scientific Advisory Editor