

## Preface

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This issue of the *Journal of Materials Science* contains fully reviewed papers, based on presentations given at the Twelfth International Conference on Intergranular and Interphase Boundaries (iib2007) held in Barcelona, Spain, from the 10th to the 13th July 2007.

'iib' conferences are held once in every 3 years and provide an international forum bringing together specialists that work in different areas of *Interface Science*. From the first meeting back in 1975, hosted in Saint Etienne, France, the scope of the conference has progressively broadened to incorporate developing areas. Thus, wetting, biomaterial interfaces and the role of free surfaces have joined the more traditional and specific topics such as structural and chemical characterization of interfaces including atomic level modelling, thermodynamic, mechanical, electrical and magnetic properties.

iib2007 conference included sessions on the following topics: structural determination and modelling, microstructure-property relationships, interfaces in motion, segregation, diffusion, corrosion, wetting, biomaterials, multiphase materials, interfaces in oxides, semiconductors and the role of free surfaces.

Nearly 120 researchers contributed to the meeting, presenting 20 invited talks, oral presentations and—in the vast

majority—posters. Poster sessions were planned to promote fruitful discussion in an informal atmosphere with long coffee breaks in the poster hall. Posters were displayed throughout the whole conference with eight scheduled sessions during the 4 days of the meeting. The programme is available on <http://congress.cimne.upc.es/iib07>.

The conference was organized by Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya (UPC) in co-operation with the International Center for Numerical Methods in Engineering (CIMNE). The support of the Spanish Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia (MEC), the Catalan Agència de Gestió d'Ajuts Universitatís i de Recerca (AGAUR) and the School of Civil Engineering at UPC under whose auspices this conference was held is gratefully acknowledged.

The contributions presented in this issue represent a significant fraction of the conference material, and the editors are grateful to the authors for giving further time to publish a valuable record of an extremely lively and enjoyable meeting.

We look forward to gathering at the next venue for iib2010 in Japan, and reviewing further progress in interfacial research.

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