

## Publisher's Note

Dear Contributors and Readers of *Polymer*,

As you have most likely noticed, several important changes related to *Polymer* occurred in the year 2001.

Since May 2001 we invested in accelerated production of the journal. Papers are now published in print within 8 weeks of acceptance by the Editor while the electronic publication occurs 1–3 weeks earlier. This, together with the prompt refereeing process, makes *Polymer* one of the very few polymer journals offering extremely fast publication.

We now offer free reproduction of colour figures at the discretion of the accepting Editor, providing that essential information would be lost if the figure were to be reproduced in black and white.

The size of the journal has grown from 7,460 pages in 1999 to 9,346 pages in 2000 and 10,226 pages in 2001 in order to accommodate the increasing number of accepted papers and to publish them without any delay. The impact factor of the journal has grown from 1.344 in 1999 to 1.529 in 2000.

The rejection rate has also been increased considerably since the spring of 2001. Our ambition is to publish the highest quality original research from all areas of polymer science and technology.

I would like to announce a number of further changes with effect from 1 January 2002:

We have re-examined the nature of the communications published in *Polymer*. We have decided that communications should contain novel, unexpected experimental results or interpretation presented within 4 printed pages. In addition, both communications and regular papers should be submitted to (and handled by) the same editors. As a result, the positions of Associate Editors for Communications cease to exist. Dr John Pochan retires as Associate Editor after 14 years with *Polymer*. Professor Randal Richards, Dr Barry Farmer and Dr John Pochan join the Editorial Advisory Board of the journal.

Professor Yukio Imanishi retires as Asian Editor for Chemistry and is succeeded by Professor Toshio Masuda (until now Asian Editor for Polymer Communications). Professor Imanishi has been an Editor of *Polymer* for more than 20 years and a sole Editor in Asia for most of that time. In view of his considerable contributions to *Polymer* Professor Imanishi becomes the first ever Honorary Editor of the journal.

We would like to express our deep gratitude to all outgoing Editors for their dedication to the journal and its authors over a long period of time.

To facilitate the decision-making regarding strategic developments of the journal, it is our pleasure to announce that Professors Stephen Cheng, Jim Feast and Takeji Hashimoto assume the additional roles of Senior Editors.

Professor Frank Harris, until now Associate American Editor, becomes American Editor.

We are also pleased to welcome two new Editors.

Professor Stephan Förster, from the University of Hamburg, joins the journal as European Editor for Physical Chemistry. He will be succeeding Professor Ian Cowie, who will retire from this post later in 2002. Professor Förster was born in 1963 and did his Diploma work with Professor Gerhard Wegner and PhD with Professor Manfred Schmidt at the Max-Planck Institute for Polymer Science in Mainz. In 1992–93 he was a Post Doctoral Fellow with Professor Frank Bates at the University of Minnesota and in 1993–1999 he worked with Professor Marcus Antonietti at the Max-Planck Institute for Colloid and Interface Science in Potsdam. Since 2000 he has been a Professor at the Institute of Physical Chemistry, University of Hamburg, Germany. His research interests include self-organisation of polymers, X-ray, neutron and light scattering, synthesis of inorganic and bio-hybrid materials.

Another important change is the incorporation (as of this issue) of the journal *Computational and Theoretical Polymer Science* into *Polymer*. This change will offer the computational and theoretical communities a wider forum due to the much broader scope and larger circulation of *Polymer* as well as extremely fast publication. As a result, Professor James Mark (Editor of *Computational and Theoretical Polymer Science*) joins *Polymer* as one of its Editors responsible for receiving and handling papers on computational and theoretical polymer science from all over the world. Professors Akihiro Abe, Joel Fried and Robert Stepto (Associate Editors of *Computational and Theoretical Polymer Science*) join *Polymer* as members of the Editorial Advisory Board.

Professor James E. Mark was born in 1934 and received his PhD from the University of Pennsylvania. After serving as a Postdoctoral Fellow at Stanford University under Professor Paul J. Flory, he was Assistant Professor of Chemistry at the Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn before moving

to the University of Michigan, where he became a Full Professor in 1972. In 1977, he assumed the position of Professor of Chemistry at the University of Cincinnati, and served as Chairman of the Physical Chemistry Division and Director of the Polymer Research Center. In 1987, he was named the first Distinguished Research Professor, a position he holds at the present time. Dr Mark's research interests pertain to the physical chemistry of polymers, including the elasticity of polymer networks, hybrid organic–inorganic composites, liquid-crystalline polymers, and a variety of computer simulations. He has published 575 research papers and co-authored or co-edited 18 books. He is the founding editor of the journal *Computational and Theoretical Polymer Science*, which was started in 1990. He is a Fellow of the New York Academy of Sciences, the American Physical Society and the American Association for the Advancement of Science. His awards include the Whitby Award and the Charles Goodyear Medal, the ACS Applied Polymer Science Award, the Paul J. Flory Polymer Education Award.

Every paper on computational and theoretical polymer science published in *Polymer* or other Elsevier journals (e.g. *Computational Materials Science*) will be made available electronically through the newly created *Computational and Theoretical Polymer Science: Virtual Journal*. This web-based publication will continue to offer subscribers with interest in computational and theoretical

polymer science papers of this nature, although each paper will physically belong to *Polymer* or other journal.

In addition to newly published papers, the subscribers to *Computational and Theoretical Polymer Science: Virtual Journal* will also have access to the complete electronic archive of *Computational and Theoretical Polymer Science* (1995–2001) with author and keyword index, all in searchable form.

We hope that you will find these changes positive.

I would also like to draw your attention to the several ways in which you can help us publish your paper faster. Please remember that:

- the final manuscript should be complete and accompanied by disk
- figures should be submitted in the exact size in which they are intended to appear in print (maximum width 8.3 cm)
- the corresponding author's e-mail address, telephone and fax numbers should be provided
- the proofs should be checked thoroughly and returned to us within 48 hours.

Please accept our sincere gratitude for your continuing support of *Polymer* as editors, referees, authors and readers.

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