

Change

Frank Gannon, the Senior Editor of *EMBO reports*, is stepping down from his position this month after being the journal's guiding spirit for nearly ten years; however, he will always remain the founding father of this quality journal. As Director of the European Molecular Biology Organization (EMBO), I want to thank Frank for his enthusiasm, foresight and dedication, and to welcome Howy Jacobs, Professor of Molecular Biology at Tampere University in Finland, as the journal's new Senior Editor.

When Frank—then Executive Director of EMBO—founded *EMBO reports* in 2000, it was a refreshing addition to the existing landscape of scientific journals. Since its inception, *EMBO reports* has striven to be bold and different in the way that it blends high-quality scientific papers and reviews with science journalism, and gives equal space and value both to cutting-edge scientific research and the ethical, social and legal considerations that such research engenders. But, it has not stopped there: since the first issue, *EMBO reports* has kept pace with the changes in research and the publishing world. It introduced 'Concept' reviews, which give authors more space and opportunity to speculate about the implications of their research, while retaining the rigours of peer review and scientific integrity. Similarly, the journal also launched Talking Point articles to further explore and analyse two sides of a debate—scientific or social—in the Reviews and Science & Society sections. Innovation is also evident in the scientific papers, as the results from new research fields such as genomics, proteomics and bioinformatics have found a welcome place in the journal's scientific content. From the beginning, Frank and the editors of *EMBO reports* have constantly ensured that the journal communicates both the latest research and thought-provoking, informative articles to broaden the horizons of its readers.

Frank has provided insight, energy and significant imagination throughout his tenure as Senior Editor. He has read and commented on nearly all manuscripts published, provided advice—both scientific and otherwise—and has helped to shape the content and direction of the journal. More visible, however, have been his monthly editorials, which have attracted considerable attention, as measured by comments from readers and our online usage statistics. Indeed, the sizeable interest in Frank's editorials is what has prompted the editors to expand the journal with contributions from regular columnists.

This issue of *EMBO reports* introduces the new 'Opinion' section, featuring columns from Gregory Petsko, at Brandeis University in the USA, and Steven Rose, from the Open University in the UK. I hope that their essays, and the ones to follow, will stimulate further discussion and debate among our readers—and beyond—much as Frank's editorials have done and as Howy's will continue to do.

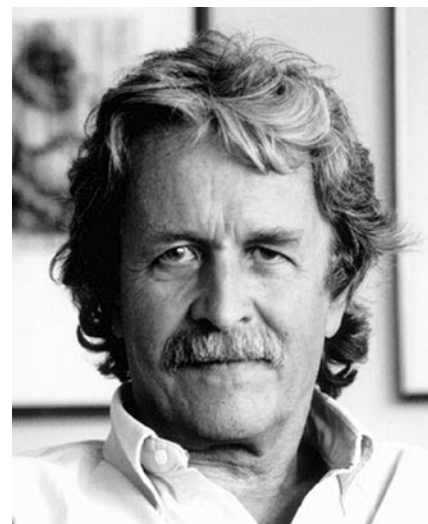
Looking back, Frank showed great foresight when he started *EMBO reports* to complement the well-established *The EMBO Journal*. Reviews have become an increasingly important resource for the scientific community as the number of journals and research papers published increases year on year, and the need for the discussion of issues and opinions has become ever more important, particularly with regard to the social role and responsibilities of scientists and scientific research.

Indeed, *EMBO reports* was just the first journal to join *The EMBO Journal*; the creation of EMBO's online, open-access journal *Molecular Systems Biology* in 2005, in partnership with Nature Publishing Group, showed similar foresight. MSB has since become a well-respected player in its field with an impressive impact factor of 9.954 in 2007 (Journal Citation Reports, Thomson 2008). I am also confident that *EMBO Molecular Medicine*, the latest addition to the EMBO family of journals, will be equally successful as it focuses on linking basic research in the biosciences

with tangible clinical applications; an area that has not yet received the attention that it deserves.

I am very pleased that Howy Jacobs has agreed to join *EMBO reports* as the new Senior Editor. Howy is well known as a highly creative scientist in the field of mitochondrial genetics with a particular interest in the role of mitochondria in ageing and disease. Most importantly for a journal with a scope as broad as that of *EMBO reports*, however, he has a committed interest in science that extends far beyond his own research. Howy has also been very active in science communication, which will surely benefit *EMBO reports'* mission to communicate science, opinion and analysis, and to provide a forum for discussion. EMBO is convinced that, as the baton passes from Frank to Howy, *EMBO reports* will remain a highly respected, innovative journal that will continue to serve the scientific community as a forum for communicating the latest, high-quality research, coupled with insightful scientific reviews and thoughtful essays on the ways in which modern biology shapes and is shaped by the world.

Thank you and goodbye Frank, and welcome Howy.



Hermann Bujard

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