

## Get in touch

Do you have a strong opinion or comment that you think would be valuable to share with the optics community? Then why not make use of our correspondence section.

We have always believed that it is important for *Nature Photonics* to become not only an outlet for publishing research findings of the highest quality, but also a forum for the optics community to discuss issues of general interest through informed and valuable comments.

In line with other Nature Publishing Group research journals, our correspondence section (akin to letters to the editor) is designed to serve this need. Such correspondence is welcomed on a wide variety of topics. Often this may be a comment on material we have recently published, be it a research paper, editorial, commentary or news and views article. Alternatively, we also welcome correspondence on general matters considered to be of widespread relevance to researchers within photonics, such as recent external news, changes in science policies, funding or other topics.

We believe that such dialogue is valuable for the optics community when used in a responsible fashion, as it allows controversial and important topics to be discussed in an informative, balanced and fair manner that educates and benefits all. Indeed, in this issue we have included several pieces of correspondence relating to a commentary article on optical computing that we published in our May issue.

However, we should perhaps explain in more detail about how such correspondence is handled, how it should be submitted, and what we do and don't want to receive. Firstly, given that space in the journal is limited, it is important that such correspondence is kept as concise as possible. In general, we stipulate that it should not occupy more than one page (<1000 words), often with no figures and a minimal number of references, although exceptions can be made when necessary. For more details please read our guide for authors at <http://www.nature.com/nphoton/authors/index.html>.

Correspondence can either be submitted via our online manuscript system (if doing this please make it clear in the cover letter that this is material for our correspondence section) or e-mailed to [naturephoton@nature.com](mailto:naturephoton@nature.com).

If the correspondence is of a technical nature, particularly in the case of questioning a peer-reviewed research paper, we will first make an initial assessment of its



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seriousness. We will then pass it on to the original authors to seek a reply and solicit the help of external experts to assess the validity and importance of the comments prior to making a decision as to the merits for publication. Such correspondence is usually only published if it is deemed to have a significant impact on the core finding or claims made in the original paper. If published, both the comment and authors' reply, if they wish to make one, are presented in the same issue.

We do not use the correspondence section to correct obvious or unambiguous factual errors in material that we have published. Instead, if considered to be sufficiently serious, such errors will be remedied through the use of a formal correction such as an erratum or corrigendum.

We also do not publish correspondence that simply points out related existing literature that was unfortunately not cited in a particular paper. However, if literature brought to our attention directly conflicts with exclusive claims being made in the paper, a corrigendum may be published. Requests for further information and details relating to an experiment or simulation in a published study should be directly submitted to the corresponding author, rather than to the journal.

For opinion-related articles that are not compatible with our correspondence format

(because of length, the inclusion of many figures or a sizeable reference list) and are not a direct comment on a piece of published material, a commentary article is often a more appropriate format. Before writing a piece of correspondence or a commentary, it is often best to consult the journal so that an editor can help provide advice prior to submission.

As with all of the material we publish in *Nature Photonics*, all correspondence is assessed by editors in terms of its appeal and relevance to the optics community, to ensure that only material of the greatest quality and interest is published. Please bear this in mind when writing a correspondence piece, making sure that it is not only concise but also written in a form that is accessible for general readers by clearly explaining the relevance and importance for those working in optics. Needless to say, correspondence that is overly aggressive, offensive or potentially libellous is unacceptable.

*Nature* has now gone one stage further by recently introducing online commenting functionality for all its content, including news features, news and views and primary research papers. Indeed, it appears to be working well, judging from the high level of interaction. Would you like to see such functionality introduced to the *Nature Photonics* website? Please let us know your thoughts. □