

EDITORIAL

OPEN

And we reached one

Communications Physics celebrates its first year anniversary of publishing research advances across the physical sciences. We take this opportunity to look back at what we achieved so far and our ambitions for the future.

February 22 marks the publication of our first papers. Over 100 papers have followed the initial five that went live 1 year ago thanks to the confidence of our authors, the support of our reviewers and the dedication of our editorial board. As we celebrate our first anniversary, we want to reflect on our accomplishments so far and take a look at what the future holds for us.

It is generally accepted that providing reviews for fellow researchers is just part of the job, but precious time and knowledge does not seem to be recognised, not even by peers. We do not have a magic recipe to recognise the contribution of our reviewers, but we wish to thank them all.

We have published papers across a wide spectrum of the physical sciences: about 25% of our content is a combination of materials sciences and condensed matter physics, 14% atomic and molecular physics, 12% of optics and photonics, 9% quantum physics with the remainder representing a multiplicity of other physical sciences including astrophysics, chemical and mathematical physics. Our first review

article, *Topological Sound*¹, went live just before the end of the year and we have many more lined up for 2019. We also recognise that our publications so far have a good representation of the theoretical, experimental and applied view point of physics. We are truly happy to see such diversity in a relatively short time frame. To celebrate our anniversary, we have selected a few articles that our in-house editors found particularly interesting, which we have highlighted in a collection accessible from the journal's webpage.

The journal received more than 600 submissions through the end of 2018. Each individual paper has been preliminary assessed by one of the journal's professional editors or one of the academic editors of [our editorial board](#). Our choice to adopt this combined editorial model has proven to be right for us, and we are really grateful for the enthusiasm and energy that our board members have shared.

We have asked the competent advice of 700 referees during this time, all delivering the invaluable expert technical feedback without which we could not have validated the manuscripts submitted and ultimately published in the journal.

A reviewer contribution to scholarly publishing is often taken for granted. In the past few years, a lot of discussion and controversy has been brought forward to provide a way of recognition, including during [peer review week](#). It is generally accepted that providing reviews for fellow researchers is just part of the job, but precious time and knowledge does not seem to be recognised, not even by peers. We do not have a magic recipe to recognise the contribution of our reviewers, but we wish to thank them all. At the same time, we want to particularly highlight the exceptional reviewer contribution of the individuals listed at the end of this editorial. The people below have not only provided insightful academic referee reports as all our reviewers do, but have gone out of their way to convey extended details on how to improve the manuscripts they reviewed, tried to fully reproduce results, rewrite mathematical formulations, mentor younger colleagues, as well as advising editors, often over long phone calls, in order to reach the fairest decision. We are indebted to your invaluable input.

Building on this exceptional body of reviewers' work, we are pleased to let our readership know that this year we will start to acknowledge an "outstanding reviewer of the month" with a featured announcement. This initiative will allow us to recognise the outstanding work of our referees throughout the year. We hope that this will inspire others about the exceptional value of this important element in the process of evaluating new research.

We also felt that the specific reviewer contribution to scholarly publishing should not be reserved to the authors only. As a result, from January 2019 we are offering Transparent Peer Review to all authors who wish the reports on their manuscript to be published alongside their paper. Transparent peer review has been already adopted with success by our sister journal, Nature Communications, after a trial that lasted 10 months^{2,3}. Other journals from the Nature Research portfolio have since adopted this form of open peer review, and other forms of transparent peer review have been in place at other journals and other publishers (see e.g. refs. ^{4,5}). We believe that the publication of referee reports provides more transparency to the review process, but most of all we feel that this is a good way to open to the world the invaluable additional details on the work that is published and that would have otherwise been lost to the scientific community by staying in the publisher's editorial system. We hope that the physics community will embrace this initiative and that the referee reports that our authors receive will be of even higher quality.

Last but not least, dear reader, we have not forgotten you! Our very existence would have no meaning without the certainty that our papers are read, shared and are useful to the community. We thank you for your trust and we hope that you will keep reading and discussing the journal's content with your colleagues.

One year does not seem a long time but we feel it has been quite full on. In 2019, we are looking forward to expanding both our professional editorial team and our editorial board, to be on the road and meet

our authors and referees at conferences and events and more generally engaging with the community. Our birthday wish is to be able to continuously evolve together with the physics community so that we can strive to serve its needs.

Outstanding reviewers 2018

Here list our outstanding reviewers of 2018 who have consented to being named in this editorial. Since we opened the journal for submission hundreds more have delivered the highest quality of assessment to the manuscripts which they reviewed. We are truly grateful to them all.

Dr Monika Aidelsburger

Dr Aidelsburger specialises in ultra-cold atoms and quantum optics and in particular uses optical lattices to simulate quantum many-body phenomena that are otherwise inaccessible to experimental exploration.

Professor Geoffrey Beach

Professor Beach's research focuses on spin dynamics and "spin-electronics" in nanoscale magnetic materials and devices.

Professor Tetsuo Hatakeyama

Professor Hatakeyama specialises in semiconductors physics and devices, particularly wide-bandgap semiconductors and Si MOS interfaces.

Dr Michael Kues

Dr Kues' current research deals with the investigation and control of nonlinear electric field dynamics and the realization and control of non-classical states of light in integrated optical devices as well as its application in telecommunications, metrology and quantum information science.

Mr Daniel Litinski

Daniel Litinski is currently pursuing his PhD on topological quantum computing.

Professor Irina Novikova

Professor Novikova specialises in experimental atomic, molecular and optical physics and in particular the coherent interaction of light with atoms to control and manipulate optical properties of atomic ensembles.

Professor Robert Scholten

Professor Scholten specialises in laser-atom interactions to investigate

fundamental questions in quantum physics as well as their potential use for technological applications.

Professor Michael Zaiser

Professor Zaiser's research focuses on modelling and simulations of the properties of materials. His group uses concepts from statistical physics and complex systems theory to study properties such as disorder defects and randomness in order to predict such phenomena and improve material design and performance.

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5. Bravo, G. et al. The effect of publishing peer review reports on referee behavior in five scholarly journals. *Nat. Commun.* **10**, 322 (2019).

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