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Growing together through networking

Networking is an essential skill that offers several perks, from improving the visibility of research by effective communication with peers and scientific editors to advancing careers and building a lasting reputation.

Teamwork is the key ingredient for a successful research career. After all, no one can, or should, navigate the complexity of the modern scientific landscape alone. For researchers, building and maintaining a solid professional network is vital for establishing collaborations, sharing ideas, identifying a next career move or, occasionally, pitching research to an editor. Scientific publishers also place great importance on opportunities to connect with their communities. Through outreach events such as conferences, workshops and lab visits, we engage with our readers and authors, get commissioning ideas, and stay up to date with the latest advances in specific fields. Editors might not be interested in getting back to a lab for a Friday afternoon experiment, but they are always on the outlook for potential authors, exciting unpublished work or thought-provoking ideas for Comments.

To this end, networking events that bring together top experts from academia, industry and scientific publishing are increasingly popular. Nature Conferences, for example, organized by Nature Portfolio editors together with partners from academia, have long been recognized for their ability to foster and facilitate communication and collaboration between scientists. These events present editors with invaluable opportunities to promote their journals, demystify scientific publishing and, most importantly, talk directly to researchers about their most recent work. In addition, the events provide an opportunity for junior researchers to obtain editorial advice on writing and submitting papers.

As a newly launched journal, *Nature Reviews Electrical Engineering* is yet to prove its worth to the diverse communities of electrical engineering. In our aspiration to become the leading title in the field, much effort has been dedicated to outreach. Our world-trotting editorial team has attended dozens of conferences and lab visits, and had an active role in organizing Nature conferences such as last year's Functional 2D Materials conference hosted by Yonsei University. In 2024, we show no signs of slowing down. This year, conferences such as Materials Research Society, 2D Transition Metal Dichalcogenides 2024, the IEEE International Electron Devices Meeting (IEDM), and the 2024 IEEE Symposium on VLSI Technology & Circuits — the major meetings in electronics — are our 'go-to' events, but we will also be attending conferences on 'less traditional' areas.

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To broaden our engagement in robotics, communications and signal processing, we plan to attend IROS 2024, IEEE CIC 2024, IEEE Globecom 2024 and European Signal Processing Conference (EUSIPCO) 2024. However, as we increase the number of publications that cover traditional IEEE topics and continue to engage with authors from industrial research, it is essential that we maintain close ties with more traditional material science disciplines such as perovskites and 2D materials. Another important meeting on our radar is the annual Workshop on Advanced Epitaxy for Freestanding Membranes and 2D Materials (AEFM) that *Nature Reviews Electrical Engineering* is proud to support this year. The history of the meeting dates to 2021, when, in response to the success of his publication on remote epitaxy[1], Jeehwan Kim from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) successfully organized a workshop to cater to this small but growing community. Today, the number of researchers from academia and industry working on freestanding membranes has increased substantially. To include new research directions, the scope of the event has been broadened to other advanced epitaxy techniques — for example, advances in freestanding membranes such as III-V, III-N, oxides and 2D materials for applications in power electronics, optoelectronics and biosensing, to name a few.

In 2024, AEFM will be hosted by The University of Tokyo and will cover three main themes: (1) remote epitaxy and van der Waals epitaxy; (2) the synthesis of 2D materials and applications; (3) and applications of freestanding membranes and other lift-off techniques. Going forward, the ambition is to offer the perspective on monolithic 3D integration in applications such as advanced node transistors, advanced memory, artificial intelligence (AI), micro-LEDs, bioelectronics and camera systems. Moreover, in line with our journal's strategy, the organizers plan to host more industry partners in the future, as 3D integration becomes the mainstream research direction.

In the meantime, in addition to looking forward to meeting with our regular authors and meeting new ones, we'd like to remind prospective authors that reaching out to our team has never been easier. Sending an email or talking to us in person at a conference could be the gateway to publishing your first *Nature Reviews Electrical Engineering* article. And don't be surprised when approached by an editor because we never shy away from networking opportunities.

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References

1. *Nature* **544**, 340–343 (2017).