

## EDITORIAL

# New developments for *Journal of Physics D: Applied Physics*

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In this first issue of *Journal of Physics D: Applied Physics* in 2008, I want to relate to our readers some of the exciting developments and changes that are forthcoming. The journal management, publishing staff and the Editorial Board consistently strive to respond to the needs of our authors and readers and to enhance the quality of the contents. Our overall aim is to further increase the quality and impact of *J. Phys. D* after an excellent year in 2007.

Perhaps the most significant change is the introduction of **Fast Track Communications** (FTCs) starting with this first issue in January 2008. These short reports will give authors the opportunity to disseminate exciting and ground-breaking developments and results with a very short turn-around time. We intend to require and maintain very high standards for acceptance of FTCs. I am very pleased to see six such articles in this launch issue and look forward to publishing many more.

Secondly, the journal sees a change of personnel as Professor Mark Kushner, Section Editor for the Plasma section, steps down after several years of excellent leadership in this area. I and the journal are very grateful for his hard work and commitment and we wish him the best for the future. Professor Uwe Czarnetzki of Ruhr-Universität-Bochum has been appointed as the **new Section Editor** and we all look forward to working with him as the Plasma section continues to move forward.

The subject of applied physics has a broad scope and the importance and relevance of existing and emerging areas change with time. The Publisher and Editorial Board always strive to include such areas within the scope of the journal. In that context it is our intention to encourage more papers covering the areas of **biological and biomedical applications**. Of course, we are also continuing our programme of topical reviews and cluster issues on many important and emerging areas which will remain a highlight of *J. Phys. D*.

As growth and changes take place, it is always vital to ensure that the most important features of the journal remain unaltered. One of *J. Phys. D*'s particular strengths has always been our **rapid publication time**, which is extremely competitive. We are often able to offer a much shorter publishing experience than many other applied physics journals. Currently, our average time from receipt to publication is 127 days or around four months. This has been made possible with all the modern web-based tools at our disposal and a very dedicated publishing staff. Of course, none of this would be possible without the support of our reviewers. On behalf of all at *J. Phys. D*, I would like to take this opportunity to thank each one of them. This is all happening at a time when the number of submissions continues to grow each year, with the total doubling over the past five years. At the same time, we are continuing to tighten our acceptance criteria in order to enhance quality. Also, a move to article numbering has just been made and this issue introduces a new cover design.

Finally, I want to thank all those who have contributed to maintaining *J. Phys. D* as a premier archival journal.