Editorial: A New Vision for PRApplied

As the new lead editor for *Physical Review Applied* (PRApplied), I would like to introduce myself to our readers and authors. PRApplied has been an exciting addition to the *Physical Review* family of journals, and after little more than three and a half years it is off to a terrific start. Published with the same values of quality, excellence, and timeliness of the long-established *Physical Review* brand of publications, PRApplied is already emerging as the most prestigious applied physics journal. Its first full impact factor, released in June 2017, is a very respectable 4.808. In addition to high quality, the journal continues to grow in size, with the number of submissions more than doubling in the last 12 months, further attesting to the early acceptance of the journal by the community.

But these are only statistics. We in the applied physics community are well aware of the difference between impact factor and impact! While the former is a necessary metric for relative performance of journals, we know that truly impactful work leads to important innovations, or in changes in our understanding of physical and technological phenomena. In short, impact is determined by how our work changes people's lives for the better. It is my goal, and the goal of our outstanding professional staff and editorial board, that PRApplied focuses its attention on impact, while being mindful that impact factor has a strong influence in attracting the papers with the most important results produced by the community.

Applied physics is an exceptionally broad field that defies one simple definition. In its most general formulation, applied physics is the hinge between fundamental research and realization of a tangible, technological “thing” or, more generally, an application. It sits squarely between basic research and engineering. Granted, there are a few very fine journals that have long served our community. But as the field has continued to grow and broaden, the scientific literature has not kept pace. Solutions to challenges faced by human needs become ever more important and urgent, such as access to clean energy, rapid and secure communications, and high-power computational solutions to complex problems. The availability of trusted technical resources has fallen short of the need, and in this regard I believe that PRApplied is positioned to fill this gap. The combination of the highest quality standards used to address the most important problems in applied physics today is the formula for success that we, at this journal, are pursuing with relentless focus and commitment.

But of course, the journal is only as good and successful as its authors and readers. So, I encourage you to send us your very best work in any of the several fields that loosely define what we call applied physics. It is our promise that we, in turn, will serve the community with this very much-needed publication that will hopefully drive the concept of “impact” to its highest possible level. This is a most exciting project. All of us together will make PRApplied the “go-to” journal for the entire applied physics community, distinguished among all journals in this field for both its high quality and relevance.

Steve Forrest
Editor

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