Journal of Optics: our strategy for the future

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It is significant that 2015 has been declared by the United Nations as the International Year of Light. Indeed, the 21st century is reliant on photonics and harnessing light will be the key to life changing technologies, from energy to security, from biotechnologies to low-cost precision manufacturing, and from the internet to quantum-level information processing. Leading economies globally, including those in Europe, USA, Australia and Japan, have identified photonics as a key enabling technology underpinning many important industries.

The optics and photonics research community is growing with new centres being created around the world. With the emergence of China and South East Asia as major locomotives of research, intense and mutually beneficial international collaboration between the West and the East is the new paradigm for creating a world class impact in research activities. Among recent examples is the $100 million Photonics Institute at Nanyang Technological University in Singapore created in cooperation with the Optoelectronics Research Centre at University of Southampton, UK.

The amount of publishable research output in optics and photonics is growing while scientists are witnessing an increasing choice of possible destinations for their manuscripts. Multiple incentives to publish in reputable journals is a significant factor that currently shapes the research landscape worldwide.

Journal of Optics (JOPT), established as early as 1912 but using its modern day name for the first time in 1977, is published by IOP Publishing, a branch of the Institute of Physics that is a leading international scientific society. The journal has a long record of being a quality vehicle for peer reviewed dissemination of important research results in optics and photonics. Indeed, the impact factor of the journal has now exceeded 2.0 and the number of papers submitted to the journal since 2011 has grown by more than a third, in spite of the ferocious international competition. You are invited to visit the JOPT article collection that we have assembled especially for the 2015 International Year of Light.

We consider the 2015 International Year of Light to be a unique opportunity to declare that we are determined to build on our successes in recent years, and we will continue providing a fair and highly desirable platform for quality publications in optics and photonics. Responding to the Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge in the Sciences and Humanities of 22 October 2003, one of the milestones of the Open Access movement, JOPT now implements a flexible author-choice open access policy (see more details). Moreover, from 2015 we introduce new topical sections of the journal on:

Quantum photonics, and
Photovoltaics and energy harvesting

to reflect the growing interest in these subjects. These complement our well-established focus areas that we now categorise as:

Nanophotonics and plasmonics
Metamaterials and structured photonic materials
Biophotonics

Light–matter interactions
Nonlinear and ultrafast optics
Propagation, diffraction and scattering
Information and communication optics
Integrated photonics.

I would like to use this opportunity to gladly welcome the outstanding new Topical Editors and Editorial Board members of the journal and to thank those who have loyally served and those who continue to do so.

JOPT is proudly an official media partner of the 2015 International Year of Light and we will soon launch, with the help of key researchers in their disciplines, a series of optics and photonics ‘Roadmaps’. These will give high-level perspectives on how key research areas will develop with an outlook for forthcoming years.

On behalf of the Editorial Board of JOPT, I would like to very much welcome regular submissions of high quality research to the journal from all over the world. We also actively encourage potential authors to contact Topical Editors suggesting Topical Review articles on their subject of choice.

We wish all researchers in optics in photonics success in achieving exciting and impactful research results celebrating the 2015 International Year of Light!