



Cite this: *Chem. Sci.*, 2020, **11**, 14

DOI: 10.1039/c9sc90267h

rsc.li/chemical-science

Welcome to this first issue of 2020 and we'd like to take this opportunity to wish you a very Happy New Year!

We have many reasons to celebrate in 2020, including our 10th birthday later this year, having published our very first issue in May 2010. We have some special birthday issues planned, which will feature articles from authors who have been publishing with us for the past ten years. So look out for these coming later in 2020 to see how their respective fields have developed over this time.

But we have a fantastic way to kick-off our celebrations this year, by publishing our 5000th open access article!

Back in January 2015, we became the first high-quality open access chemistry journal, and we have continued to lead the way since, with five years of "free to read, free to publish" articles, which is longer than any other leading multidisciplinary chemistry journal.

Over these past five years we have published more than 5000 open access articles (5065 when we went to press with this editorial). Notably, we have also done this at no cost to our authors.

A key element of the mission of the Royal Society of Chemistry is to disseminate high-quality scientific knowledge, and so this was the driving force behind making the journal open access. However, we recognised back in 2015 (which still holds true today) that not all authors would have access to funds to pay for article-processing charges in a gold open access journal. Therefore, we also took the decision to waive any charges by

paying for these article-processing charges on behalf of our authors.

We are proud that our very best content is freely available for all to read and our flagship journal is accessible for all authors to publish in. We have also been doing this on a scale which is unparalleled in the chemical sciences, publishing more than five times as many articles as other "free to read and free to publish" journals in the field.

Starting with a vision

While writing this editorial it seemed appropriate to take a look back and remind ourselves of what the journal stated as its aim when publishing its very first issue. It started with a vision from our founding Editor-in-Chief David Macmillan and Managing Editor Rob Eagling, "to deliver a new and progressive format in which to publish leading edge research in chemistry and to become a top tier, high impact journal. It is widely accepted that there are currently two leading chemistry journals; *Chemical Science* aims to become a dynamic alternative to these titles".¹

We think this vision is still relevant today. The progressive format of the Edge article is something that our authors tell us they still really value about *Chemical Science*. We were the first journal to do away with traditional article types and formats, and to allow authors to determine the length of their articles.

The Edge article was introduced to ensure that it is the science that shapes

the nature of the publication and recognise that traditional forms of publication for research findings are not always suitable across all sub-fields of chemistry – there is no "one-size fits all format". So, we continue to have no page restrictions for Edge articles and believe that this allows the research to be more widely accessible to the larger chemical science audience. Most importantly, the Edge article format allows the science and the authors to dictate the article's length.

It feels more appropriate for the community to judge whether *Chemical Science* has joined the two leading chemistry journals mentioned in the first Editorial (the publishing landscape has also certainly become more crowded since then), but, judging from rising submissions and the growth of *Chemical Science* in terms of articles and impact, we can be happy that ten years on, our core vision has been realised.

Looking ahead

After ten years, we feel this is also the right time to reaffirm the kind of research that we are looking to publish in the future.

We welcome research that is both fundamental and applied, and we want the focus to be on scientific *understanding*. We appreciate the value of fundamental research in supporting the development of discoveries that then go on to have wider impact, both on society and economically. We want *Chemical Science* to be that journal.

We would particularly like to encourage speculative, high-risk research. We're interested in papers that raise questions as well as answers. We're open to work that is in developing areas and that opens up interesting questions. We would also like to receive papers that have the potential to develop entirely new areas.

As a broad-scope journal, we allow for more multidisciplinary studies. We're not locked into a single sub-discipline, so we have a lot of flexibility – we can have studies that involve multiple areas of chemistry and indeed areas outside of chemistry.

There are challenges here too, of course; however, we've got a really strong editorial team across a range of areas, and a large and strong advisory board that covers the breadth of research published in the journal, so we will endeavour to give all submissions a fair and rigorous assessment.

Read more details in this interview (<https://www.rsc.org/news-events/profiles/2019/oct/andrew-cooper/>) with Editor-in-Chief, Andy Cooper, about his views on the journal, as well as his three top tips for publishing in *Chemical Science*.

A focus on our authors

During 2019, we have been looking to improve our author's experience of publishing in the journal. Following feedback from the community that the submission process was too lengthy, we

have revamped our submission system to make it much quicker for our authors to submit. We are delighted with the result and encourage you to give this a try next time you submit to the journal.

We also heard from authors that they want to understand more about what is happening to their article during the peer-review process. So on submission, we now provide authors with a link to a live tracker, which provides them with a higher level of detail than ever before on what is happening to their article during the peer-review process.

And finally, we'd like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank all of our editorial and advisory board members, authors, reviewers, and also our readers, for supporting the journal in its first ten years. We couldn't have reached this point if it hadn't been for the vision, hard work and support from everyone involved.

But we don't want to stop here, so tell us what you think, and particularly what you would like to see *Chemical Science* doing in the next ten years – we can't promise we can do everything, but we are listening and will do our best to shape the journal to serve the community best.

You can stay in touch by email (chemicalscience@rsc.org), Twitter (@ChemicalScience), Facebook (@chemical.science.journal) and WeChat (RSCChina).

We have come a long way in a short period of time, but we look forward to

innovating and making a further impact in the years to come.



Professor Andrew Cooper, Editor-in-Chief
(@aicooper)



Dr May Copsey, Executive Editor

References

- 1 D. MacMillan and R. Eagling, *Chem. Sci.*, 2010, **1**, 11–12.