

Editorial



Sit back and relax: We are getting much better and much faster!

These are exciting times: Everything in our world of chemistry appears to be accelerating; new trends in chemical synthesis and the corresponding new journals seem to be arising on a daily basis. The various social media platforms and our hyperactive smart phones further speed up the hype. Today, we are even publishing our articles on preprint servers without any peer review or editorial intervention, and then tweet about them on the same day. Indeed, these are exciting and occasionally even overwhelming times. We at SYNLETT are open to these changes and embrace many of them, but **our mission essentially remains the same: We want to publish excellent and original Communications and Accounts in chemical synthesis, and we want to deliver high quality, speedily.**

Looking back over 2019, an important highlight was our 30th anniversary, which was celebrated appropriately with a SYNLETT *Pearl Anniversary Issue* (*Synlett* **2019**, *30*, 361–518, <https://www.thieme-connect.de/products/ejournals/>

issue/10.1055/s-009-42287), including 30 papers describing excellent chemistry by top researchers. Let me thank all who contributed to our anniversary issue and also our older sister journal, SYNTHESIS, which celebrated its 50th anniversary, and to everybody who took part in our celebrations at conferences, in videos, and within social media activities.

We are also happy that our impact factor rose once again to 2.418 (from 2.369). While we are well aware that the impact factor is certainly not the only quality measure in science, we are determined to significantly improve that of SYNLETT further. We want to double its current figure within the coming few years. We aim to do so by establishing our journal as the fastest high-quality journal in chemical synthesis.

Among the many things that have led to the increase of our impact, **Select Crowd Review** has most certainly made a major contribution. After two years, one can clearly see that it works exceedingly well. Crowd review delivers what appears to be a paradox: it provides substantive peer review, rapidly. In fact, in the vast majority of cases, reviewing is complete within 72 hours and yet, there is usually more than enough feedback to improve our manuscripts. Still, **our select crowd referees are fair and our editors reasonable**. Our aim is no less than to make the journal better by publishing better science, faster. Therefore, starting in 2020, crowd review will be the default for SYNLETT. One of the consequences will be our seven days promise: **We aim to deliver feedback within seven days of submission.**

This is an excellent opportunity to thank our crowd editor Manuel van Gemmeren and our lively crowd members for making this dream become a reality! Crowd reviewing – combined with an additional feature that we are implementing in 2020 – will create a unique possibility for our authors. Planned to start in spring, we will be publishing the unedited versions of our accepted manuscripts, giving our authors the opportunity to submit a manuscript, receive feedback, make rapid modifications, and see their thoroughly reviewed work published online within a week!

Another successful contributor to our impact has been the clusters. In 2019, we published the following six clusters on topics of high current interest:

- *Electrochemical Synthesis and Catalysis* (Benjamin List, guest editor: Phil Baran)
- *Organosulfur and Organoselenium Compounds in Catalysis* (Hak-Fun Chow, guest editor: Ying-Yeung Yeung)
- *Metathesis beyond Olefins* (Benjamin List, guest editor: Bill Morandi)
- *Iterative Synthesis* (Rubén Martín, guest editor: Varinder K. Aggarwal)
- *Biocatalysis* (Tomislav Rovis, guest editor: Todd Hyster)
- *Conference Special Issue (9th Pacific Symposium on Radical Chemistry): Radical-Based Methods for C–H Functionalization* (David Nicewicz, guest editor: Corey Stephenson, published in this issue)

Because of the great popularity of our cluster section, we plan to publish ever more of them in the years to come. For example, we plan the following **Clusters and Special Issues in 2020**:

- *Conference Special Issue (International Symposium on Synthesis and Catalysis 2019 – ISySyCat2019)* (guest editor: Anthony Burke)
- *Special Section 11th EuCheMS Organic Division Young Investigator Workshop*
- *Nickel in Catalysis* (Rubén Martín, guest editor: Gary Molander)
- *Radicals – by Young Chinese Organic Chemists* (Ang Li, guest editor: Chen Zhu)

- *Modern Heterocycle Synthesis and Functionalization* (Tomislav Rovis, guest editor: Louis-Charles Campeau, Merck)
- *The Power of Transition Metals* (guest editor: Gary Molander)
- *Organophotoredox Catalysis* (Dave Nicewicz)
- *Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence in Chemical Synthesis and Catalysis* (Benjamin List)
- and more to come

On behalf of all editors and the editorial office in Stuttgart, I would like to thank our authors, readers, and referees for their excellent contributions to our journal, their commitment and ongoing support, and their devotion to substantive and rapid peer review. We look forward to another exciting year of fruitful and intense collaborations with all of you!

So relax! While we are working hard to becoming ever better and faster, you, our authors, readers, and referees can unwind and watch the show and us delivering according to our mission.

With best wishes for a successful, peaceful and happy New Year!



Benjamin List
Editor-in-Chief
Mülheim/Ruhr
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