

nature structural & molecular biology

A milestone and a new focus

Welcome to *Nature Structural & Molecular Biology*, a new title for the journal on its tenth anniversary. *Nature Structural Biology* was launched in recognition of the rapidly expanding importance of structural biology to the scientific community. It quickly established itself as a premier forum for the analysis of macromolecular structures. During these ten years, however, it has become increasingly clear that structural analysis is only one of a multitude of methods that can contribute to our understanding of biological mechanisms. For example, biochemical, genetic and molecular techniques are also important tools that can and should be used to dissect biological processes. Thus, the evolution from *Nature Structural Biology* to *Nature Structural & Molecular Biology* parallels that of the structural and molecular biology communities themselves, which have at their disposal an arsenal of powerful approaches that can provide such mechanistic insights.

During the past several months, the editors of the journal have worked hard to get the word out about our expanded focus (for topics of interest to the journal, see <http://www.nature.com/nsmb/about>). We hope this first issue of *Nature Structural & Molecular Biology* will give our readers a taste of things to come.

Of the research papers in this issue, six report high-resolution structural studies with additional functional data that verify the structure-based predictions. Such data support the biological significance of the structural observations and exemplify the integration of 'form' with 'function'.

While these six 'structural' papers would have readily fit within the traditional purview of *Nature Structural Biology*, the other five papers illustrate the increased breadth of content that we envisage for *Nature Structural & Molecular Biology*. The subjects of these papers range from the dynamic changes of transcription factor complexes during differentiation, to post-transcriptional regulation of gene expression, to the role of specific lipids during membrane fusion. These studies have taken an integrative approach to understanding mechanism using biochemical, biophysical, molecular and quantitative

proteomic approaches. None of them contain new structural information, which is not a requirement for consideration in the journal. Rather, the common thread that ties all these papers together is the new mechanistic insight they provide into a particular area of biology.

In addition to the new title and expanded focus, the journal itself is changing. Beginning with this issue, we have added a new section called 'Research Notes'. This page contains brief summaries of noteworthy papers—published elsewhere—that are selected by the editors. We also include two commentaries, one about the future of structural biology and one on how to improve interdisciplinary education. We hope that this section will serve as a forum for discussions of issues relevant to the broader biological community. In forthcoming issues, we will publish more review articles covering recent progress in various areas of interest to our readers. It is our hope that all of these sections will be timely, informative and, above all, helpful as we attempt to follow the rapid and exciting changes in the field.

Accompanying all of these changes is a redesigned web site (<http://www.nature.com/natstructmolbiol>) with a new look that offers easy access to information for both authors and referees. For example, we describe the editorial process in detail to make it as transparent as possible to our authors. To improve navigation, we have grouped useful tools and placed them at easily accessible locations. To assist in browsing, there will be links to information about the most popular articles on the site or about those that have been cited in the news.

With all the changes we have introduced, you, as our readers and authors, are bound to have some opinions—and we want to hear from you. We know that the success of the journal depends on your support and enthusiasm for our mission, so please send your comments to nsmb@natureny.com.

We are excited about the challenge ahead of us. But we also understand that this is an ongoing process and that we must continue to evolve with the community we serve. What will remain unchanged however is our mission to further our understanding of the molecular mechanisms underlying biological processes.