

Editorial

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In this, my first editorial of the Journal, I must first acknowledge the contribution made by Professor Jak Kelly the previous editor. Unfortunately, Jak became seriously ill recently and was unable to continue as editor. Jak made a strong contribution to the Journal since he became editor in 2009 and is one of the inaugural Fellows of the Society. We wish you well in your recovery.

One of the challenges facing peer-reviewed publishing that has developed over the last couple of decades is a degree of specialisation among journals with ever-more focused readerships. Performance of academics is tied to their 'citation impact' which further reinforces specialisation of publications. This severely disadvantages multidisciplinary publications such as the *Journal and Proceedings of the Royal Society of NSW*. The Journal has a proud history of publishing important work, particularly in the field of science and technology and it is important that it recovers its prestige in academic publishing. The Council of the Society is committed to re-establishing the Journal's position in learned publishing in Australia and is taking these steps to encourage large numbers of high quality submissions from respected authors. The publications committee has been working on a programme to achieve this and over the next few months you will see a number of initiatives aimed at improving the Journal's formal and informal ranking. Some of those that we are currently working on are:

Scholarship Programme – implementation of a scholarship prize in science and technology that will be based on papers submitted for publication to the Journal. This will be focused particularly on researchers in the first decade of professional practice. This would be expected to be attractive to researchers in universities, government research establishments (CSIRO, ANSTO), engineering firms and industrial com-

panies with substantial research and development capabilities. Funding for first two years of this programme has already been secured. The Society will be making a formal announcement regarding the awards shortly.

Invited papers – inviting knowledgeable experts on topics of current interest to submit papers reviewing their work or the state of the science in the area. Depending on interest, this could lead to special editions of the Journal.

Opinion pieces – encouraging members to submit well researched, well considered opinion pieces on subjects of interest to the Society. The expectation is that these would be to high standards and properly referenced but may not undergo peer-reviewed.

Schools publication – we have begun a project to explore interest in a schools publication that would have papers from top students in their final year at school. If this is feasible, a new publication separate to the Journal and Proceedings will be established.

Broadening the content – the Society's Act of Incorporation states that it is 'for the encouragement of studies and investigations in Science Art Literature and Philosophy'. Historically, the Society has focused heavily on science. A major point of differentiation for the Journal would be to have it as a publication that welcomes papers where science, art, literature and philosophy intersect. We hope to attract and include papers that cover the full range of the society's interests.

Advertising – the Society is making a media kit available to organisations that might wish to advertise in the Journal. Advertising will be low-key, typical of advertising found in high quality academic journals.

These are just a few of the things we are intending to launch over the next few months with the aim of improving appeal and circulation of the Journal.

On a sad note, I have to report that Patricia Callaghan, a long-serving member of Council and Hon. Librarian of the Society died on 1 November aged 88. Her love of science was strong from the start and through her various roles, especially as a tutor and researcher at Macquarie University, Patricia kindled a thirst for learning in many young people. She joined the Society in 1984.

