Editorial

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The Journal has had another very successful year with over and 800 submissions and around a third of a million downloads. Our average time to first decision is reducing year on year (and we are now able to feed back our first decision after an average of 35 days). The acceptance rate is now steady at just over 20%—an indication of our commitment to maintaining the high quality of papers that we publish. With the status and statistics in very good shape and after more than 17 years with the Journal of Materials Science: Materials in Medicine (JMSM), I have decided to step down as Editor in Chief (EiC). This is due to increasing levels of work-related responsibilities and diminishing time available to commit to the Journal. I realise how important the Journal is to the field and I believe that the role of EiC should be taken by someone with appropriate amount of time, vigour and energy to reflect this.

The Journal has undergone significant growth and change over the years. JMSM was originally set up by Professor Bill Bonfield, with publishers Chapman and Hall, as the official journal of the European Society for Biomaterials. When I joined the team, we still received submissions in hard-copy form and communication was largely by post! Kluwer took over from Chapman and Hall and then Springer became the publisher. Operationally, the move to electronic communication and manuscript processing was associated with a huge increase in submissions from all over the world. This necessarily led to important decisions on methods for handling papers, but also a need to be increasingly selective of the manuscripts to be accepted. We needed to identify key themes and consider carefully our

breadth and scope. Throughout my time with the Journal, we have been keen to maintain a broad approach, offering authors the opportunity to inform the community of their work over a wide range of topics at very different translational readiness levels (TRLs). The Journal will now move forward with our authors across the globe, covering topics from basic research right through to clinical application. While these historical decisions have offered interesting new possibilities for the journal, the most exciting development going forward, is the ability to work with Springer-Nature.

We have been very fortunate indeed to have attracted Professor Luigi (Gino) Ambrosio to take the role of Editor in Chief. Gino has been a strong supporter of the Journal for many years and has served on the Editorial Board for as long as I can remember. Gino's stature and experience makes him one of the most respected members of our field and he will provide new vision and opportunities for the Journal—I am truly delighted that he has accepted the position. I know that he will enjoy working with the outstanding team of current JMSM Editors as much as I have done. Their drive, energy and enthusiasm will continue to provide impressive new initiatives and I shall watch the new developments with interest—now continuing my association with JMSM, mainly, as an author!

I offer my sincere thanks to all of the authors and reviewers who have supported the Journal over the years. I now pass on my role to Professor Ambrosio with warmest wishes, both to him and the whole team.

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