Message from the Editor-in-Chief

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Published online: 7 February 2022
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Dear Colleagues

Greetings from your Editor-in-Chief. I wish you all happy, healthy and safe 2022!

Decidedly, 2021 was yet another challenging year. In spite of the availability of the preventative measures suggested by health organisations worldwide (vaccines, social distancing, reduced size of gatherings, and lockdown), countries around the globe remained vigilant and at times were forced to implement safety guards of varying degrees to combat the dangers of the virus and to save lives. Universities and research institutions used hybrid systems to function, large and small businesses were partially shut down, and international travel was highly restricted. In spite of these extraordinary challenges, the research community adapted to the new environment with buoyancy and determination and continued their research. Needless-to-say, it is our responsibility as scientists to not only ensure the continuity of our scholarly efforts and assist in any way possible to overcome the challenges posed by this pandemic, but also attend to our societal needs.

Reiterating what I shared with you in my last year's editorial; we must and should do everything in our

capacity to protect and promote the continuity of our innovative scholarly efforts and apply our collective knowledge to facilitate the return to normalcy. Undoubtedly, 2021 has been another challenging year for all of us, but let us look forward to 2022 and continue our research efforts unabated by the challenges of COVID-19. I am optimistic that 2022 will not disappoint. In fact, I have begun planning my participation in international conferences; including, "The International Conference on Mechanics and Materials in Design to be held this year in Funchal, Madeira, Portugal, June 26–30, 2022". Let us do our part to encourage and support the normalcy of our community in support of the training of our research students and staff.

This year, I would like to share with my concern regarding the improper use and significance of impact factors of journals. It is important to recognize that the impact factor of a journal is not a true indicator or reflection of the quality of the publications cited in that journal. Undoubtedly, factors other than the quality of the archived publications do contribute to a journal's impact factor. For example, having 20 authors contributing to a 3-pages article, apart from being very worrisome, is conducive to a 20-fold increase in the number of citations of that particular article in that particular journal. This is because of the presumed expectation that each of those 20 authors will adopt the same agglomerated and highly populated authorship. A number of articles have been written on the flaws of

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Journals' impact factors. In fact, impact factors were originally developed to help libertarians to decide which journals to subscribe to, and for some unknown reasons, their use have been extended and used by university administrators to evaluate the quality of researchers' efforts. In 2018, an article in Nature Index titled, "What's wrong with the journal impact factor in 5 graphs", gave 5 reasons why Journal impact factors are faulty and unreliable. I encourage you to read it.

On a positive note, however, and in spite of the extended 2-years period of the pandemic, our **International Journal of Mechanics and Materials in Design** (MAMD) continues its mission at the forefront of Mechanics of Materials Journals. MAMD is a peer-reviewed journal that publishes high-impact research contributions that are innovative in nature and transformative in focus in the rapidly changing fields of mechanics and materials and their implementation in engineering design. MAMD provides a forum for the dissemination of cutting-edge research in all fields of applied mechanics and engineered multifunctional materials, and strives to report the most recent advances in these important fields. Specifically, MAMD covers the following topics:

- Multiphysics Modeling at varied length scales,
- Multiscale modeling at varied length scales,
- Nano and Micromechanics of Solids,
- Multifunctional nanocomposites,
- Piezoelectricity, flexoelectricity and smart materials
- Semiconducting and conducting polymers,
- Smart materials and adaptive structures,
- Optimisation techniques concerned with mechanics of materials,
- Elastostatic, dynamic and impact response of engineering systems,
- Damage and fracture mechanics,
- Substantial reviews of any of the above topics, and
- Experimental techniques at varied length scales.

You would be pleased to know that in spite of the challenges of COVID-19 and its varied strands and our strict, but fair and highly professional review practices, we continue to receive a substantial number of very high quality articles. We have shortened the screening cycle time to approximately 2 weeks.

MAMD features a distinguished Editorial Board, which brings together a team of highly experienced specialists in all aspects of mechanics of materials. In addition to the advice and support provided by them, I am ably assisted by three Associate Editors in 2021: Professor Dr. Eng. Chuanzeng Zhang of the University of Siegen (Germany), Professor Dr. Xiong Zhang of Tsinghua University (China) and Professor Dr. Mario Guagliano of Politecnico di Milano (Italy). I take this opportunity to thank them most sincerely for their unlimited support, timely processing of the manuscripts and for guiding the journal to greater heights. I take this opportunity to thank Professor Dr. Guagliano for serving the journal for some three years. Concurrently, I am so delighted to share with you that Professor Dr. Eng. Timon Rabczuk, Institute of Structural Mechanics, Bauhaus University Weimar, Germany, will join the journal as an Associate Editor effective January 1, 2022. My Associate Editors and I welcome this eminent scientist to our team. Undoubtedly, the success of MAMD is attributed to our talented authors and their scholarly contributions, our expert reviewers for devoting valuable time to review manuscripts, my Associate Editors for the highly professional and fair processing of articles and the guidance of our distinguished Editorial Board. It is also important to thank Silvia Schilgerius (publishing Editor) and suganya manoharan (Production Editor) for their exceptional support of the journal.

Reiterating what I stated in my last year editorial, it is truly an honor to be the Editor-in-Chief of MAMD, and with my team of highly qualified and dedicated editors, we look forward to serving you and making MAMD your journal of choice.

I wish you all a New Year full of discoveries and exciting innovations. Please remain safe and healthy.

With my very best personal regards.

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Publisher's Note Springer Nature remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.