New section for The European Physical Journal E: “Tips and Tricks in Soft Matter and Biological Physics”

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Underpinning the scientific enterprise there is often some numerical recipe, sample preparation method, or experimental design. It is typically the case that such details are only briefly described in the literature, passed only from student to student, or simply shared as a ‘personal communication’. Sometimes such enabling techniques are not passed on at all. In all such cases, the scientific community as a whole is not able to use this knowledge to move forward. Moreover, while the research of some team may not be directly relevant to another, a computational method, experimental procedure, or sample cell design has the potential to be transformative. A new section of EPJE is launched with this issue: “Tips and Tricks in Soft Matter and Biological Physics”. In this issue you will find the first three T&T papers which span experimental and theoretical work.

The expectations for an article appropriate for T&T are different from a typical research article. While the expectation for an EPJE publication is the development of new science, for T&T the scope is rather a *newly described method with which one can do science*. The same high standards of publication will apply but with the requirement of presenting new science replaced by a new tip or trick. We hope that T&T articles in EPJE will become a unique resource and provide a place where one can share a methodology.

We have found that over the years various sample cell configurations, experiment designs, or sample preparation techniques were shared amongst our colleagues. In some cases more emails were shared describing a trick than citations on a paper where a brief description was provided. In fact it is the tricks that often form the commonality between researchers working in different fields. Our hope is that a T&T section in EPJE will satisfy this need and that you as reader and contributor will find T&T a valuable resource and venue for your research.

Guidelines for “Tips and Tricks in Soft Matter and Biological Physics”

- The focus is on a novel approach that facilitates new science.
- Papers may describe experimental, computational, or theoretical tips and tricks.
- Though not required, papers should strive for brevity, a few pages may be enough, yet present enough detail such that the reader can readily implement the ideas presented.
- All papers will be peer-reviewed as normal and the standards of scientific quality and rigour will be the same as for regular papers (control experiments, clear descriptions, comparison to previous methods, statistical analysis, quantitative evaluation if appropriate, etc.).
- T&T can be submitted regularly through the online system, but please mention in the cover letter if yours is a T&T paper. Do not hesitate to contact Kari Dalnoki-Veress or James Forrest for more guidance on how to prepare a T&T paper.

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