



Editorial

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As the new Editors-in-Chief of the European Physical Journal H, we would like to thank the publishers at Springer, EDP Sciences and Società Italiana di Fisica (SIF) for the trust they have placed in us. With this editorial, we take the baton from the previous Editor-in-Chief, James D. Wells, and hope to continue on the path of excellence set by him and his predecessors Wolf Beiglböck, who founded EPJH and managed the journal for more than 10 years, Francesco Guerra and Michael Eckert.

In 2024, EPJH will undergo a major editorial reorganization, which also represents an opportunity for the journal's growth and development. Thanks to the EPJ publishers' efforts, EPJH is merging with one of the very few other journals exclusively devoted to the history of physics, the *Quaderni di Storia della Fisica*—effective July 1, 2024. The *Quaderni* were previously published by the SIF once or twice a year as a supplement to the quarterly *Giornale di Fisica*, established in 1956 by Giovanni Polvani and aimed primarily at physics teachers in secondary school.

What does it mean for two journals to merge? Of course, for the publishers it means major restructuring behind the scenes. But for the authors, readers and, in particular, the editors it is primarily an opportunity to reflect on the scope of the new journal and how the distinct, yet related, visions of EPJH and the *Quaderni* can be joined in a way that respects their traditions, while also ensuring a long and fertile future.

EPJH was established as a journal focusing on historical studies of contemporary physics, as well as on oral history (through interviews with the protagonists of modern physics). Its “Aims and Scope” proudly highlight it as the only journal that deals with the history of physics primarily from the perspective of physics and physicists. This is how it fits into the portfolio of the *European Physical Journals*, by publishing articles that help physicists “reflect on, understand, and improve their own discipline”. At the same time, EPJH has also served as a meeting place of disciplines, aiming to generate “fruitful interaction between working physicists and historians”.

These interactions are more important than ever. In an era where notions of science and progress are often no longer taken for granted, there is a growing desire for such dialogue with historians especially among younger physicists. And at the same time, paradoxically, history of physics is struggling within the academic discipline “history of science”, which in recent years has focused more strongly on forms of knowledge outside the tradition of Western science.

It is thus crucial to put the interactions between physicists and historians on as broad and solid a foundation as possible, and the *new* EPJH is intended to do just that. Building on the *Quaderni* tradition, it will extend its scope to earlier historical periods. We look forward to contributions that cover the entire history of physics (even before it acquired disciplinary character), while also keeping in mind readability and relevance to modern-day physicists. These physicists reading the journal, we hope, will include not just research physicists, interested in the immediate prehistory of their work, but also physics teachers and students from across the spectrum of schools and universities.

At the same time, we aim to establish EPJH as a central platform for a new generation of researchers in the field of the history of physics—with the journal *Studies in the History and Philosophy of Modern Physics* now defunct, this should also include those who understand themselves as historians and philosophers of physics.

Together with our wonderful expanded editorial board, we seek to uphold high standards of historiography. But at the same time, we wish to invite a disciplinarily diverse spectrum of authors to contribute to EPJH. To this end, we want to allow for a greater variety of contribution formats.

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Readers of EPJH will already be familiar with oral history interviews and translations of historic papers. AI-based transcription tools will, in the future, allow for faster publication of interviews, and due to advances in machine translation we will only be accepting (and hopefully receiving) high-quality translations, possibly annotated.

We also encourage submissions in new formats. The journal will be open to the publication of short communications presenting short or preliminary results—such as, say, the clarification of a famous anecdote or the discovery of a surprising, unexplained coincidence.

We also want very much to invite contributions from physicists who are not (yet) professional historians. Here, the journal's editors and referees want to act not as gatekeepers, but as facilitators, ensuring that these contributions are (or become) as good and as useful as they can be. Physicists will have the opportunity to submit recollections, which will be reviewed to improve their quality not as historical *research* but rather as historical *sources*.

And for those physicists who want to use their scientific expertise and experience to contribute more directly to historical research, we will introduce the category of tandem papers, co-written by a physicist and a historian. This approach was successfully tested in a recently completed EPJH special issue, *History for Physics*. Physicists and historians looking for co-authors can already get in touch with us and with Bernadette Lessel, who will be in charge of this new category as a member of the editorial board. We aim to establish a more sophisticated matchmaking process in the future.

As you can see, we are trying out a lot of things with the new journal. Some will hopefully work, some may require rethinking. Whatever does work, will undoubtedly do so thanks to the editorial team, in particular Monica Bonetti, who will head the EPJH editorial team at the SIF, Barbara Ancarani, Editorial Director at the SIF, and Sabine Lehr, Associate Editor at Springer. We look forward to embarking on this journey with them and with you, the readers.