

# Optics Letters

## Editorial: Celebration of *Optics Letters*' 40th Anniversary

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**Editor-in-Chief Xi-Cheng Zhang recognizes the 40th anniversary of *Optics Letters*, reflects on the standing of the journal in the optics and photonics community, and announces the special features that will mark the occasion throughout 2017.** © 2016 Optical Society of America

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After a year filled with events recognizing OSA's centennial, we now look forward to a celebration of one of OSA's many achievements, *Optics Letters*. In 2017, *Optics Letters* will be celebrating 40 years of bringing the optics and photonics community rapid delivery of some of the best work in the field. This kind of longevity represents a true milestone for any endeavor. For *Optics Letters*, it proves that we have established a significant base with broad impact and service for researchers and engineers in our community. In February, we will launch an anniversary website, with additional content added over the course of several months. The special features will include the most cited papers in the history of the journal, Editor's Pick collections, highlights of the journal's history, and recognition of the scientists who have contributed to the journal's success. Readers will be notified when the site is ready!

*Optics Letters* was introduced to reflect the need to "get the word out on optics—fast." Researchers in lasers and fiber optics who wanted rapid publication for disseminating their results could publish a letter of up to three pages, a limit that increased to four pages in 2014. The letter format was well-suited for rapid publication. This structure was different from the "Rapid Communications" introduced by *Applied Optics*, which required a sponsor, such as an OSA Fellow.

The new journal would provide researchers in optics and photonics a place to publish their newest results quickly and in a short format while still receiving a full peer review. That's what the journal has done since July 1977, publishing nearly 30,000 papers on almost 100,000 pages. The journal was cited more than 55,000 times in 2015, third most of any journal in the Optics category of Clarivate Analytics' Journal Citation Reports. By Impact Factor, the journal has been ranked as high as #1 in its category and has maintained an Impact Factor above 3.0 for 15 years! *Optics Letters* also maintains a healthy Cited Half-Life of 6.8 years, another Journal Citation Reports metric. The journal has lived up to its promise of rapid publication. Last year, authors received a first decision on average in a little more than 30 days.

Articles went from submission to publication in a median of only 70 days.

*Optics Letters* has had the good fortune to be led by extraordinarily distinguished Editors-in-Chief, beginning with Robert W. Terhune, who was instrumental in the creation of the journal (see Table 1). It is my humble honor and pleasure to join them in continuing the *Optics Letters* tradition of excellence. In 2008, the journal introduced the position of Deputy Editor. Three Deputy Editors serve on the Editorial Board at any given time (see Table 2), assisting the Editor-in-Chief with assigning submitted articles to the appropriate Topical Editor and setting journal policy and direction. All of the Topical Editors who have worked so hard to make difficult decisions about which papers to publish and who have worked with authors to improve the articles will be acknowledged on the anniversary website.

*Optics Letters* is truly an international journal, with at least 80% of submissions and published papers coming from outside the United States over the last five years. Submissions from Asia, in particular, accounted for 54% of submissions in 2015. This increase in international representation in the journal has been dramatic—only 65% of submissions came from outside the United States in 1997.

*Optics Letters* has published groundbreaking work during its first 40 years, including the paper that led to the manufacture

**Table 1. Editors-in-Chief of *Optics Letters***

Editor-in-Chief	Tenure
Robert W. Terhune	1977–1983
Paul L. Kelley	1984–1989
Peter W.E. Smith	1990–1995
Anthony M. Johnson	1996–2001
Anthony J. Campillo	2002–2007
Alan E. Willner	2008–2013
Xi-Cheng Zhang	2014–present

**Table 2. Deputy Editors of Optics Letters**

Deputy Editor	Tenure
Jinendra Ranka	2008–2009
Brian Pogue	2008–2011
Antonio Mecozzi	2008–2014
Brian L. Justus	2010–2016
Peter Andersen	2012–2017
Andrea Galtarossa	2014–present
Edward Whittaker	2016–present

of Bragg gratings (“Formation of Bragg gratings in optical fibers by a transverse holographic method” [1]); pioneering papers in photonic crystal fibers (“All-silica single-mode fiber with photonic crystal cladding” [2] and “Endlessly single-mode photonic crystal fiber” [3]); milestone papers in optical coherence tomography, including some of the first research (“Optical coherence-domain reflectometry: a new optical evaluation technique” [4] and “*In vivo* retinal imaging by optical coherence tomography” [5]); and the first research on optical trapping with applications in biomedical optics (“Observation of a single-beam gradient force optical trap for dielectric particles” [6]).

We look forward to being a home for cutting-edge optics and photonics research for the next 40 years. There are many challenges ahead, including competition with other journals for the best submissions and reviewers, but with its rapid publication time, short format, and record of publishing pioneering research, I hope that *Optics Letters* will continue to be your first choice for submitting your best work. I always welcome your comments about the journal and suggestions for how it can best serve your needs. Please feel free to contact me.

Finally, I would like to thank our outstanding *Optics Letters* team at OSA headquarters: Kelly Cohen, Dan McDonold, John Long, Keith Jackson, Bob Sumner, Stephanie Scuiletti, and Dan Franzen. I am grateful for all the hard work they do to ensure that the journal continues its success.

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*University of Rochester*

Professor Xi-Cheng Zhang joined the University of Rochester from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. After 20 years as a Physics Professor in the School of Science, he became the Director of The Institute of Optics at the Hajim School of Engineering and Applied Sciences. He was elected to the Board of Directors of OSA in 2014 and, at the same time, became the Editor-in-Chief of *Optics Letters*.

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