



Editorial

The Indian Academy of Sciences, Bengaluru, started publication of the *Journal of Astrophysics and Astronomy* (JAA) in 1980 as an international journal. The objective of the journal is to publish original research papers on all aspects of astrophysics and astronomy, including instrumentation, laboratory astrophysics, and cosmology as well as critical reviews of topical fields so that Indian efforts in these fields can be made available to the global community.

M K Vainu Bappu (1980–1982) was founder Chief Editor of JAA. He laid a solid foundation and contributed significantly to the growth of the journal until his untimely demise in 1982. After him, V Radhakrishnan from 1982 to 1987, J C Bhattacharya from 1988 to 1991, G Srinivasan from 1992 to 2002, Rajaram Nitynanda from 2003 to 2009 and Chanda Jog from 2010 to 2012 nurtured the journal for almost over 3 decades. As the seventh Chief Editor, I took over the responsibility in January 2013 and shall complete a term of six years in December 2018. Annapurni Subramaniam will take charge as the new Chief Editor of JAA from January 2019. With this December 2018 issue, JAA will complete 39 years of continuous publication. During this period, the journal has evolved and progressed remarkably in all aspects. Like any other international journal in the field, both the reviewing system as well as the editorial board membership are global. The worldwide visibility and access of the journal has improved noticeably due to the Academy's collaboration with Springer for publication. The use of Editorial Manager (EM) system enabled global contributors online submission of manuscripts. This has also enabled fast international peer-review management system and quick publication of the accepted manuscripts.

As an outgoing Chief Editor, it may be appropriate to list the developments and improvements carried out by us in the past six years. During 2013 to 2018, in addition to research and review articles, JAA also published nine special thematic issues and/or sections. They covered topics ranging from multi-wavelength mega-observational facilities to frontline areas in the field of astronomy and astrophysics. The seven special issues published were *The Thirty Meter Telescope -*

Observatory GenNext in June 2013; *Dynamical Plasma Processes in the Sun and Sun-like Stars* in March 2015; *Spectral Line Shapes in Astrophysics* in December 2015; *Science with the Square Kilometre Array: An Indian Perspective* in December 2016; *Physics of Neutron Stars and Related Objects* published in September 2017; *Recent Trends in the study of compact Objects—Theory and Observations* in February 2018 and *Multi-messenger Astrophysics* in August 2018. The March 2017 issue contained a special section devoted to the recently upgraded *Ooty wide field array*, while the June 2017 issue included a special section on the India unique multi-wavelength space observatory, *AstroSat*, launched successfully on September 28, 2015.

Some statistics and important events related to publications of JAA are briefly summarized below:

1. The number of manuscripts submitted in 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018 were 135, 118, 152, 195, 214 and ~250 respectively, while number of published pages in the corresponding years were 440, 774, 703, 668, 730 and ~690 respectively. The submitted manuscripts were from over 30 countries, making JAA as a truly international journal. Only about 30% of the submitted manuscripts were accepted after thorough peer review. The impact factor of the journal not only peaked but reached its life time highest during this period. Based on the ADS citations till October 2018, impact factor of the JAA has reached ~1.4 for 2018.
2. In order to make the best use of the expertise of the Editorial Board members, the Chief Editor assigns each incoming manuscript to a Scientific Editorial Board (EB) member who is a specialist in that particular field, who then identifies the referee and oversees correspondence with the referee and the authors until the paper is accepted/rejected. The average time taken from manuscript submission to first report sent to author is about 40 days.
3. Since 2016, the JAA is published in the Continuous Article Publishing (CAP) mode, i.e. an

accepted article is published immediately online with DOI and article citation ID. Articles, thus, become visible in Web of Science as well to the international community without any delay.

4. The JAA moved from single column to the standard two column larger size format publication from March 2017.
5. Astronomical Society of India (ASI) and the Indian Academy of Sciences (IASc), Bengaluru, joined hands in the publication of JAA. The first joint publication appeared in December 2017. This event is an important milestone in the history of the publication of the JAA as joint efforts of both ASI and Academy will strengthen the main objectives of the journal.
6. JAA became a bi-monthly journal in 2018. Articles submitted as Letters will also be considered for publication.

I take this opportunity to thank all the Editorial Board members and the JAA staff for their sustained efforts and co-operation as a team without which the above-mentioned accomplishments would not have been possible. I would like to thank all the referees for providing critical and timely assessment of manuscripts. The advantages of publishing in JAA are no page and colour printing charges, a fairly flexible page limit for the papers, and the publication with Springer that ensures high visibility and prompt, wide dissemination using the latest and modern techniques like CAP. I hope that all this will induce authors to contribute high-quality papers to JAA, and thus make JAA a more vibrant international journal.

Ram Sagar
Chief Editor
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