

## More than the Sum of Its Parts

Welcome to the first issue of *Cell Reports*, a new open-access journal that covers all of biology with a focus on high-quality short papers. There are, of course, other open-access journals—in fact, quite a number have launched just in recent years (and there will almost certainly be more to follow)—though few have the high standards and prestige of the Cell Press brand. There are also other journals that publish short papers, and still others that have a broad remit. But it is the unique combination of these features that will distinguish *Cell Reports* within Cell Press and beyond—think of the old adage of the sum being greater than its parts.

*Cell Reports* will place particular emphasis on shorter, single-point stories, called Reports. This focus comes from an awareness that science moves very fast and that there is a need for a high-profile, open-access place to publish intriguing, cutting-edge material that describes one or two key findings. These Reports are not meant for preliminary findings that are not well supported by the data. Instead, they should represent a significant advance in the field that will drive further research and perhaps even raise more questions than they answer. We will also publish the more typical comprehensive, longer-format papers that Cell Press journals are so famous for. The primary criterion for both these types of papers, as for all Cell Press journals, will be new biological insight. *Cell Reports* will also have a section for Resources, which describe significant technical advances and/or major informational data sets.

Open access means that readers will have immediate and unrestricted access to all papers published in *Cell Reports*. Authors will retain full copyright for their articles and can choose to publish their work in *Cell Reports* under one of two Creative Commons licenses. One option allows others to distribute, modify, and build upon the paper, both commercially and non-commercially, and is the most accommodating license that Creative Commons offers. The other option allows the article to be copied and distributed, but it cannot be changed in any way or used commercially.

The aim of *Cell Reports* will be to publish high-quality papers encompassing all scales of biology, from the organism to the atom. The broad scope of *Cell Reports* demands an actively engaged editorial board. To that end, we turned to our [advisors](#), well-established senior scientists working across different areas of biology, to help us identify editorial board members who are up-and-coming new leaders in their respective scientific fields. This unique [editorial board](#) of dedicated and enthusiastic scientists will help shape the journal from the bottom up, with their expertise well grounded in the present but with their eyes on where science is headed in the future. In addition to the expertise of our editorial board, we work closely with and rely on the advice and experience of the in-house editors across all of the Cell Press journals. This allows *Cell Reports* to make fast initial review decisions, choose fair and knowledgeable reviewers, and make well-informed, decisive editorial judgments across a broad range of disciplines. As part of the Cell Press family, *Cell Reports*

benefits from the manuscript-transfer system between journals, so one review process can serve for consideration at more than one journal. *Cell Reports* will publish accepted papers quickly, and new papers will go online every week. Finally, we will also be able to offer all the advantages of the Article of the Future format, including the graphical abstract and highlights as well as all the online Cell Press extras such as podcasts and videos.

The in-house editorial team of *Cell Reports* consists of me and Sabbi Lall. I've been a professional editor for over 13 years. Most recently, I was Chief Editor of *Nature Structural & Molecular Biology*. Before becoming an editor I did two postdocs—one at Columbia University with Anna Pyle, and the other at The Rockefeller University with Magda Konarska, studying RNA splicing. My PhD work was on DNA recombination at Stanford University with Ron Davis. I have also just completed a textbook with John Kuriyan and David Wemmer (both at UC Berkeley), called *The Molecules of Life: Physical and Chemical Principles* (Garland Science: New York), that will be published later this year. Sabbi comes to *Cell Reports* with both research and editorial experience under her belt. Her PhD work was done in the Ish-Horowicz lab (Oxford University), where she worked on genes involved in *Drosophila* segmentation. Her postdoctoral work with Fabio Piano and Nikolaus Rajewsky, both at New York University, examined and identified microRNA targets during *C. elegans* development. She has spent the last five years honing her editorial skills with me at *Nature Structural & Molecular Biology*. But as I said before, Sabbi and I do not work alone—we work closely with our editorial board, the other Cell Press editors, and of course our reviewers. *Cell Reports* not only depends on this collaboration, it thrives because of it.

In the first issue we have five Reports: one paper shows that mutations are not random, another gives us a glimpse of how protein translocation across membranes works, another describes an essential component of cholesterol accumulation, another argues that the Hippo signaling pathway predates the origin of metazoans, and another identifies the genetic basis of a movement disorder. One Research Article describes how alternative splicing produces distinct heat-sensing channels in flies, and the other shows how activation of one kind of inflammasome leads to aging of the thymus. Finally, there is a Resource paper that describes a global analysis of RNA secondary structure in two metazoans.

Does the first issue cover all of biology? In a word, no—it couldn't possibly. Nor will the second issue. But we hope that, in time, *Cell Reports* will publish the best in fields as far apart as ecology and synthetic biology or paleontology and biophysics. I want to thank the reviewers and especially the authors who have made *Cell Reports* possible. It takes an adventurous spirit to be part of a new journal (even one at Cell Press), and I thank the reviewers for holding the bar high and the authors for believing in our long-term success. And now we turn to the rest of you as readers, reviewers, and authors to fulfill our potential.

**Boyana Konforti**

Editor, *Cell Reports*

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