

Editorial

Sci Reloaded: Introducing the New Aims and Scope

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We are excited to share with you a crucial moment in the journey of *Sci* (ISSN 2413-4155) as we are announcing its new Aims and Scope. We are also taking this opportunity to briefly recount the unique (hi)story of *Sci* together with major milestones and provide a future perspective.

Since its inception in March 2018, *Sci* has always been on a dynamic pursuit to stimulate, adapt and improve, seeking excellence in an ever-changing and challenging publishing landscape [1]. While always being an open access, multidisciplinary journal aiming to contribute to science, society and the environment, *Sci* initially also sought to bring transparency to the inner workings of the peer review process. As the literature pointing out the shortcomings of conventional peer review systems, i.e., single- and double-blind, is plentiful and growing, a public peer review approach was adopted. In this system, review reports and related authors' responses are published alongside manuscripts once accepted. A year later, in March 2019, *Sci* went a step further in the direction of transparency and operated under the post-publication public peer review model (P4R) [2]. With the P4R, transparency has been expanded through the publication of manuscripts submitted on the journal website after a brief editorial check, yet prior to peer review. Subsequently, competent members from the scientific community may volunteer to review such manuscripts. Additionally, the number of reviewers has been left open to ensure less bias and more involvement. Authors then carry out corrections and provide answers to the reviewers' concerns, and ultimately the decision to accept or reject manuscripts is left to the assigned Editor. The scientific significance and impact of manuscripts have been superseded by scientific soundness and proper reporting. Certain technical drawbacks and many lessons learnt, however, ushered in a new epoch for *Sci* with a more flexible and inclusive publishing model (see [3] for a more elaborate overview).

The new P4R hybrid model has been in place since November 2020 [4]. Submissions are now made readily available on MDPI's *Preprints* service instead. *Preprints* is an online repository with a specific archiving structure designed to accommodate manuscripts before peer review and is compatible with the publishing policies of several international publishers, including MDPI. Moreover, the availability of review reports is optional and interested members of the scientific community may still volunteer and review for *Sci* as a journal, yet the allocation of manuscripts is in the hands of the assigned Editor. The versatility of the P4R hybrid model has proved to be more accommodating than its predecessor; authors who are accustomed to the traditional peer review systems can still submit to *Sci*, and those who wish to exploit the full potential of the P4R hybrid model may also offer [5].

As of January 2023, *Sci* has been indexed in Scopus and received a CiteScore of 3.1—Q2 (Multidisciplinary) [6]. Scopus is an Elsevier abstract and citation database regarded by many in the scientific community as a stamp of quality, and most journals listed there satisfy the publication criteria of funding bodies and higher degree completion and accreditation. Meanwhile, with the support of our Editorial Office, we are in the process of applying to include *Sci* in the Web of Science (WOS). WOS is also an indexing service, yet it is, arguably, regarded as the natural evolution of successful scientific journals. Gaining a Journal Impact



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Factor (JIF) is seen by many as the ultimate accolade. To this end, we decided to update both the Aims and Scope of *Sci*, and after much deliberation and revision they shall be displayed on the journal's website as follows:

Aim:

Sci (ISSN 2413-4155) is a multidisciplinary, open access journal that aims to provide an advanced forum for researchers from the vast fields within the **life sciences, physical sciences, clinical medicine, sports sciences, materials sciences, computer sciences, environmental sciences and engineering** to tackle the main challenges facing humankind today, such as those relating to energy, food, water, climate and health. *Sci* also welcomes contributions from **social sciences and psychology** with implications related to its scope, as well as interdisciplinary works that involve aspects of both **natural and social sciences**. It publishes reviews, research papers, communications, case reports and short notes, as well as Special Issues.

The aim of *Sci* is to encourage scientists to publish their experimental and theoretical results in as much detail as possible. Therefore, the journal has no restriction on the maximum length of the papers. Full experimental details should be provided so that the results can be reproduced.

Submissions selected for peer review will be posted on *Preprints* and will be available here in *Sci* for peer review. This will facilitate the rapid sharing of qualified and sound research results and encourage scholars to interact with each other efficiently, stimulating the development of research based on feedback.

Scope:

- **Life and Physical Sciences**
- **Clinical Medicine**
- **Sports Sciences**
- **Material Sciences**
- **Computer Sciences and Mathematics**
- **Environmental and Earth Sciences**
- **Engineering**
- **Social Sciences and Psychology**

The refined Aims and Scope of *Sci* renew its mission as a truly multidisciplinary scientific journal, broadly covering the main areas of research, while at the same time maintaining a unique publishing experience. This evolution sets the stage for *Sci* to achieve new milestones and render meaningful contributions to science, society and the environment. Several other improvements await us in 2024. Soon, we plan to send out invitations to fill the roles for Section Editors-in-Chief to solidify the multidisciplinary standing of *Sci*. Once appointed, we will work together with the new Section Editors-in-Chief to provide more details and subcategorizations within the new scope. Furthermore, we would like to build on an inclusive initiative we announced in February 2022, the "what's it about?" initiative, in which authors provide a concise summary of their contributions rendered towards non-specialists and the more general public audience [6].

We invite you, our esteemed colleagues, to take part in this journey. *Sci* is not just another online open access journal; it is a collaborative community. Your insights, research and active engagement represent cornerstones that will enable *Sci* to thrive and create a lasting impact. We look forward to your valuable feedback, innovative ideas and quality submissions, as together we navigate *Sci* towards a promising and significant future.

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