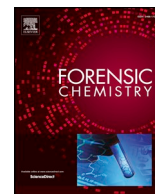




Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

## Forensic Chemistry

journal homepage: [www.elsevier.com/locate/forc](http://www.elsevier.com/locate/forc)

## Editorial



We are very excited to cap 2018 with Volume 11 of *Forensic Chemistry*, the only journal specifically devoted to the publication of research and practice in the field of forensic chemistry. We are very thankful to the authors, reviewers, editorial board members, the publishing staff at Elsevier and, of course, our readers for making *Forensic Chemistry* a success. Continuing our commitment to foster the bridge between the forensic chemistry practitioner community and the researchers in the field, we continue to employ the unique designation of “technology readiness levels” (TRLs) for each manuscript we publish. The TRL levels are designed to help readers quickly identify where, on the scale of fundamental to applied research, a particular manuscript is most closely aligned. At one end of the spectrum, TRL 1 represents the first observations or theoretical foundations of a new phenomenon in forensic chemistry. At the other end of the spectrum, TRL 4 represents the reporting of mature science and techniques that have undergone rigorous validation by the community, such as through inter-laboratory testing. The TRL levels are suggested by the authors and vetted through the peer-review process by reviewers and editors before publication.

Since the inaugural volume in August 2016, we have published a total of 118 articles, comprising 108 original research articles, three case reports, 16 short communications and one review article. Included in this total are nine research articles that were featured in a special virtual issue devoted to the use of nuclear analytical techniques in forensic science. We extend our gratitude to our guest editors of the special issue, Francesco Romolo and Melanie Baley.

Regarding our journal performance, our average acceptance rate for all articles is just under 50%, which makes us a selective venue. About half of the rejected articles are rejected without peer review because they are either out of scope or because the English needs improvement. We have averaged less than 11 weeks to final decision and less than 12 weeks to the final on-line publication of the article with a DOI and citable volume and page numbers. The 12-week period from submission to fully-formatted and citable publication makes us very competitive amongst our peers.

Our publications are abstracted with all the major abstracting databases, and our publications have already received more than 50K views in 2018 alone. In 2017, our articles received almost 80,000 downloads. Our most highly downloaded article since August 2016 is “Rapid detection of fentanyl, fentanyl analogues, and opioids for on-site

or laboratory-based drug seizure screening using thermal desorption DART-MS and ion mobility spectrometry” by Edward Sisco and co-workers. The article has been downloaded more than 10,000 times! Our most highly cited article to date is “Forensic body fluid identification and differentiation by Raman spectroscopy” by Igor Lednev’s group. Prof. Lednev serves as one of our Editorial Board members, and his article has already received 22 citations since appearing in the first volume in August 2016.

Although we will not have a journal impact factor until at least June 2019, our publisher (Elsevier) is currently tracking a similar metric called the Scopus CiteScore. We are pleased to report that our CiteScore for 2018 already exceeds 1.5 (as of October 24), and this score can only increase before the end of the year. The trajectory of our CiteScore points to a promising impact factor next year.

To help promote the articles in *Forensic Chemistry*, we are undertaking some new marketing campaigns. We plan to send out a tweet with each new published volume to promote a select number of articles with the article featured on the volume’s cover. We are also planning to coordinate with different conferences to help identify and reward the most outstanding forensic chemistry presentations at the conferences, and, starting in 2019, we will select one article each year to be recognized as the most outstanding publication in *Forensic Chemistry*.

We are very sad to report that one of our editorial board members, Dr. Tony Cantu passed away this year. Tony was an active contributor to the journal, both as an author and as thoughtful and fair reviewer. Tony’s most recent publication in *Forensic Chemistry* was a short communication entitled “Analysis of a questioned document printed by a silver-based process”, which appeared in the August 2018 volume. Tony was an excellent scientist and a good friend to a great many of us in the forensic chemistry community, and he will be sorely missed.

We are very grateful for the opportunity to continue to serve the community, and we encourage you to submit to us your high-quality research findings within the broader field of forensic chemistry. Please feel free to contact us with any suggestions that would make *Forensic Chemistry*; the best possible venue for communicating new developments in our discipline.

*Editor-in Chief*

Jose R. Almirall, Glen P. Jackson