

A new journal—in more than one way

As you start turning the pages of this first issue of *EMBO Reports*, part of your mind must be asking: why a new journal? If your thought process is like mine, a series of other questions will clamour for attention: is this going to be just another journal? What is its scope? What is the relationship between *EMBO Reports* and *The EMBO Journal*? ...Before allowing confusion to win out, some answers are needed.

So what is the response to the 'Not another journal!' reaction? Simply that *EMBO Reports* will provide monthly coverage of topics that we feel is needed and will be enjoyed by scientists—our target audience. It will contain material on the impact that politics, society and the financial world have on the environment in which sciences, particularly the life sciences, are performed. Equally, it will show the consequences of the scientific results we obtain for society. I use the word 'we' because a subtle but important aspect of *EMBO Reports* is that it is a journal run by scientists and headquartered in proximity to EMBL in Heidelberg in the middle of the daily bustle of high-level research. I think this will provide a perspective that may be missing in the commercial journals.

In addition to getting experiments to be reproducible, scientists today have to face numerous concerns about their work. These include the strategic directions that dominate funding policies particularly in Europe, the challenge of anti-scientific 'pro-environment' groups (as if the two were incompatible terms), the changes in publication pathways as a consequence of the electronic medium, benefits and challenges of the increased integration of industrial and 'academic' research, career uncertainties or injustices for younger scientists, particularly women. These and other topics will be reported in and com-

mented on in *EMBO Reports* by our writers and, hopefully, by your correspondence.

In the Science & Society section we plan to provide the factual information required for a fruitful discussion between those who perform research and those who feel threatened by its consequences. We think that *EMBO Reports* will become a useful forum for discussions, with input from all sides, on the topics at the interface between research and the end users. Inevitably, we will bring a European perspective that is sometimes lacking in other analyses, while being informed by our world-wide contacts to avoid being parochial.

In addition, we will present the latest scientific developments in review form and by highlighting important papers that are published elsewhere. Other journals have such content but the selection of papers they wish to bring to the readers often comes from a very limited number of journals. *EMBO Reports* will identify the papers of general interest and impact that appear in specialist journals, and will cast its net wide to ensure that a broad range of topics is covered.

Together with reports on topics that created excitement at workshops held worldwide, we hope that the review section will become a significant aid to finding important papers both in your speciality and cognate areas. Given the mass of primary material that is published, this repackaging is an essential component of our information supply. It contrasts sharply with scanning electronic databases and releases us from the constraints of keyword searches. Nevertheless, the electronic medium is going to be of tremendous if not overwhelming importance, and this is reflected by *EMBO Reports'* presence online prior to

the print version and frequent updating as papers are accepted.

The final section of *EMBO Reports* will contain shorter scientific reports. These studies from all areas of molecular life sciences will be characterized by their quality as well as their interest to readers who are not specialists in that topic. The refereeing process will be rapid and expert. The papers will be sharply focused and hence shorter and different from the material that is published in *The EMBO Journal*. The overlap between the editorial boards of *The EMBO Journal* and *EMBO Reports* is another guarantee that this will be a location for high quality papers. In this and other ways, we believe that *EMBO Reports* and *The EMBO Journal* will complement each other; one will not be the dumping ground for the rejects of the other.

We are confident that *EMBO Reports* will become an important component of your reading habit. We hope in particular that younger scientists who are closer to the bench than the committee rooms will find *EMBO Reports* a welcoming place for their material. Together we can make *EMBO Reports* a 'must read' journal.

And now... read on; we are launched!



Frank Gannon

DOI: 10.1093/embo-reports/kvd007