

**Manfred S. Weiss^{a*} and Howard
Einspahr^{b*}**

^aHelmholtz-Zentrum Berlin für Materialien und Energie, Macromolecular Crystallography (HZB-MX), Albert-Einstein-Strasse 15, D-12489 Berlin, Germany, and ^bPO Box 6483, Lawrenceville, NJ 08648-0483, USA

Big changes are ahead – a new format for crystallization communications in *Acta Cryst. F*

The coming year 2014 will be an important year for crystallography as the scientific community throughout the world celebrates the International Year of Crystallography. *Acta Cryst. F* will commemorate this special event with a series of articles defining the current state-of-the-art in macromolecular crystallization, with one article appearing per month throughout 2014 and into 2015. We expect this series to be a useful resource for our readership and the wider structural biology community alike. Stay tuned.

We have also been working diligently over the past two or three years to finalize new requirements and a new format for our regular articles. Maybe some of you have attended the presentations given by us at various meetings or workshops about the publication tool *publBio* (<http://publbio.iucr.org>). *publBio* is designed to make the preparation and submission of an article much more simple and straightforward than ever before, be it a structural or a crystallization communication. The latest version not only guides authors through the requirements for each article type but also provides a means of submitting the article directly to *Acta Cryst. F*, thus simplifying the first stages of the submission process. The IUCr Word template now also has some of the functionality of *publBio* and, just like *publBio*, offers the option of utilizing data from an existing PDB deposition or an mmCIF file when creating the tables in your article.

In July this year, we published a contribution by Janet Newman and colleagues entitled *Crystallization reports are the backbone of Acta F, but do they have any spine?* (Newman *et al.*, 2013; Weiss & Einspahr, 2013). The central message of this paper was that the information content of crystallization communications published in *Acta Cryst. F* varies widely. While this may not seem troubling at first glance, the notion that as many as 60% of these articles lack some essential information sparked some concern. With *publBio*, we have a tool that will allow us to address this issue efficiently and effectively, and that will also make a major contribution to correcting the problem. We feel that the time has come to take advantage of this by making *publBio* (or its counterpart in the IUCr Word template) mandatory for writing and submitting crystallization communications from 1 January 2014. We expect that you will enjoy working with *publBio* and we are looking forward to working with you to refine and improve it. From our perspective, another major advance is that *publBio* will make clear exactly what data are needed for an acceptable crystallization communication. There will of course be situations in which certain data items may not be necessary or may be unavailable, but these 'exceptions to the rules' are exactly those about which authors need to confer with Co-editors. Therefore, we ask our authors to make full use of *publBio* to ease the burden of creating their publications.

Finally, we thank our authors for their continued support of our journal and wish you all Season's Greetings and Happy Holidays. We look forward to 2014 with anticipation of all the new things this New Year will bring.

References

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