

Editorial

Buildings: An Open Access Journal for the Built Environment

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Received: 18 April 2011 / Accepted: 20 April 2011 / Published: 20 April 2011

People are estimated to spend 80–90% of their time in buildings—residences, offices, factories, schools, places of worship, public amenities, recreational facilities, *etc.* Thus buildings play a very important role in the lives of individuals and societies. However, they are often taken for granted, except for private residences which are dear to people for a variety of reasons. One of the consequences of this is that research into the development of buildings (science, design, materials, *etc.*) has not advanced at the same pace as other industry sectors. While the automobile and aerospace industries have considerably improved the efficiency of vehicles and aircraft, buildings have only recorded incremental improvements. However, the situation is beginning to change with several initiatives at industry, national and multi-national levels aimed at improving the efficiency of the construction industry and the quality of the buildings that it produces. In many cases, these initiatives and associated research efforts require interdisciplinary collaboration to tackle what is essentially a multi-faceted problem. There is scope to better disseminate the outcomes of these efforts in a coherent, inter-disciplinary journal.

Buildings is intended to fulfill this role. It is intended to be an international, peer-reviewed, open access journal (free for readers) that publishes original articles, critical reviews, research notes, and short communications on architecture, building science, building engineering, building design and building construction. The scope of the journal is broad and papers dealing with all aspects of ‘Buildings’ are welcome.

The need for a new journal is underscored by the fact that the various disciplines involved in buildings often publish in specialized journals that are often not read by building professionals from other disciplines. This limits the potential for cross-disciplinary learning and inhibits efforts to advance the design and construction of buildings. With the growing trend towards more collaborative and integrated approaches to building project delivery, it is important to have an inter-disciplinary journal that acts as a

central repository for papers on all aspects of buildings and as a knowledge exchange for all building professionals. The online and open access formats are also vital elements of the journal's appeal. With the increasing volume of digital content in papers, which conventional journals are often reluctant and/or unable to publish, much useful content is not shared with article readers. *Buildings* will address this encouraging the submission of digital content that can 'bring papers to life' by allowing readers to run simulations, visualize designs, play with demonstration/prototype software, or otherwise manipulate electronic material. Another unique feature of *Buildings* is the provision of a forum for 'live-discussions' such that readers and authors can engage in a free-flowing exchange of ideas on current papers, within a stipulated time scale. The journal will also be 'practitioner-friendly', and will encourage contributions from industry practitioners on practical aspects of the design, construction and operation of buildings. These will be included as feature articles or case studies. This novel approach will facilitate a cross-fertilization of ideas between research and practice.

The open access nature of *Buildings* means that no reader or institution will ever be charged a cent for access to articles published in this journal. The costs will be covered through modest Article Processing Charges (APCs), which will only be paid by authors if the article is accepted. The publisher, MDPI, will waive the APCs for the first two years. Open access publishing is increasingly being accepted as the future of scientific publishing as it provides more value to researchers as authors and readers of scientific journals.

Buildings will publish both original research papers as well as practical papers on all aspects of buildings. Papers on theoretical, industrial, economic, and other developments, which have a bearing on the design, construction and operation of buildings, will also be published. The scope of the journal is wide and covers the following and related topics:

- architecture
- architectural/building engineering
- design
- building construction
- building materials
- energy and buildings
- building operations
- building physics
- building structures
- building mechanical systems
- building lighting systems
- green buildings
- building/facility management
- the philosophy, art and science of architecture designing
- the linkages and interactions between the built environment and ecology, natural resources, climate, local communities, public policy, and economic development.

Buildings will seek to publish articles as quickly as possible by adopting a rigorous but rapid review process, following which accepted papers are immediately published online, with issues closed on a quarterly basis (it may be changed to a monthly journal when it is fully developed). There is no restriction on the length of the papers as we encourage researchers to publish their innovative ideas and results in as much detail as possible. Additionally, we encourage authors to publish related electronic files or software along with their publication as “Supplementary Material”. To guarantee a rapid refereeing and editorial process, *Buildings* follows standard publication practices in the natural sciences.

Review papers on any aspect of buildings are welcome, as are Special Issues on specific topical issues. We encourage authors of review papers and prospective Guest Editors to contact the journal’s editorial staff in the first instance. Feature articles and case studies from practitioners highlighting innovative features in building design, construction or operation are actively encouraged.

On behalf of the Editorial Board, I welcome you to *Buildings* and invite you to submit your articles with full spectrum of building disciplines, practitioners and researchers. This journal provides us with a unique opportunity to communicate across discipline silos in exchanging knowledge on buildings.

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