

Optical Engineering

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A Message to SPIE Conference Presenters

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My first major scientific conference presentation was at an SPIE meeting. Under the guidance of my two research mentors, Tony Tai and Jack Cederquist, I was performing research on the application of computer-generated holography to synthetic aperture radar (SAR) image formation processing. After demonstrating the concept of a multiple-hologram polar format SAR processor in the laboratory, I presented my preliminary experimental results at the SPIE conference on Holographic Optics: Design and Applications in Los Angeles, California. While initially a bit anxious about my presentation, I was ultimately encouraged by the positive feedback I received from several participants. Partly as a result, I further developed the concept and ultimately submitted a manuscript detailing the completed work to a peer-reviewed journal. Although I have several *Optical Engineering* publications over my career, I am sorry to admit that this debut paper was published elsewhere.

Unfortunately, the practice of presenting at an SPIE conference, but not publishing in an SPIE journal, is not uncommon. SPIE is well known for hosting excellent conferences covering a large breadth of scientific disciplines related to optics and photonics technology. They attract numerous leading researchers and developers in these fields, providing an outstanding forum for sharing the latest developments. The technical scope of SPIE conferences encompasses that of a number of peer-reviewed journals, not just *Optical Engineering* and the other nine SPIE journals, but also those of other professional societies and publishers. There are many archival publication options for SPIE presenters when the relevant findings reach an appropriate level of significance, maturity, and scientific merit.

I understand that many factors influence journal selection, but would like to encourage SPIE conference presenters to give serious consideration to publishing in *Optical Engineering*. According to my recent investigation, a connection with SPIE conferences correlates strongly with a higher interest in and impact of *Optical Engineering* papers. Based on data from 2012–2015, journal papers derived from proceedings exhibit over 50% more citations compared to regular journal submissions. Whether this is due to these papers being of higher quality than the average *Optical Engineering* paper or better matched to the journal readership is not clear. It supports the case, however, that our journal provides a great venue for SPIE presenters where significant and well-written publications are widely read and cited.

We are taking specific steps to recruit high-impact journal submissions from SPIE conference presenters and make it easier and more beneficial to publish in *Optical Engineering*. The recent clarification in the SPIE policy concerning the submission of work derived from SPIE conference proceedings addressed this very purpose (see my [December 2014 editorial](#)). We are also actively working to align *Optical Engineering* special sections with SPIE conferences and reaching out to conference chairs and program committee members to serve as guest editors. Special section papers related to conference proceedings exhibit some of the highest download and citation rates among *Optical Engineering* papers, almost double the citation rate of regular papers, making these an excellent component of the journal. Since conference presenters are often concerned with the overlap between conference proceedings and journal papers, in addition to the new policy that permits authors to submit work based on proceedings papers to SPIE journals, we are allowing SPIE presenters to write shorter summaries of their work for the proceedings and leave the more comprehensive description for a subsequent submission to an SPIE journal.

As an author myself, I appreciate that you have several good alternatives for publishing your work, and respect your freedom to choose the journal that best suits your needs and interests. However, as you make this choice, I want you to know that we recognize that a strong coupling with SPIE conferences is critical for the success of our journal, that we welcome your future journal submissions, and that we are giving priority to making it more natural for you to present at SPIE and publish in *Optical Engineering*.

Michael T. Eismann
Editor-in-Chief