

## Under new management



**As the eighth anniversary of *Nature Astronomy's* opening to submissions nears, we say goodbye to our inaugural Chief Editor, May Chiao, and welcome her successor, Paul Woods, to the helm.**

Over the summer of 2016, a diverse group of astronomers-turned-editors gathered together in central London to create a new journal in the Nature family, *Nature Astronomy*. May Chiao, the launch Chief Editor of the journal, already had many years of editorial experience under her belt, with stints at *Nature* and *Nature Materials*, before she joined the launch team at *Nature Physics* in 2005. Now, after nearly eight years at *Nature Astronomy*, the time has come for May to move on and apply her honed editorial skills to another journal, *Nature Reviews Physics*. Fellow *Nature Astronomy* launch editor Paul Woods will step into her vacant shoes.

*Nature* itself has a strong, long-standing connection with astronomy: it was founded by an astronomer (Norman Lockyer) in 1869, and it included articles on astronomy from the get-go. The first subject-specific 'Nature Research Journal' (NRJ), *Nature Genetics*, was launched in 1992 and until *Nature Astronomy* came into being, astronomy and

planetary science content in the NRJs was largely shared between *Nature Physics* and *Nature Geoscience*. But as the number of papers published in astronomy boomed, the decision was taken to create a journal specially for that growing community, and award May – who had been handling astronomy submissions for many years at *Nature Physics* – the position of Chief Editor. Three other editors, new to the job after exiting academia, with complementary scientific expertise covering all areas of astronomy, rounded out the team.

May moulded and mentored that initial, green, editorial troupe into a seasoned team of editors, steered us through the uncertain times of the pandemic and set the ethos for *Nature Astronomy*. May's particular passion has been in reaching out to different groups and individuals and creating a place for them in *Nature Astronomy's* magazine section, which has had a strong focus on diversity, equity and inclusion from the start. More often than not, once the flurry of morning emails had been dealt with, May could be found with a cup of tea by her side and a pencil between her fingers, making notes and suggestions on the pages of the latest Perspective, Comment or World View to be submitted. She has led many of the special projects that *Nature Astronomy* has become widely known for amongst the astronomy community, from a sizeable [Insight on dark matter](#) in just issue

3 to a [Focus on astrobiology](#) earlier this year. Her legacy will live on, although her editorial eye will surely be missed.

Paul, after completing his PhD in astrochemistry, spent more than a decade working on different postdoctoral projects in the USA and around the UK. He [decided to leave the uncertainty of the academic world](#) in 2016, and became the first Associate Editor on the roster of *Nature Astronomy*. His leadership promises to build on the legacy that May leaves behind and he has a similar passion for the journal's magazine section. When it comes to research, Paul has developed a broad knowledge of topics in astronomy, and regularly handles submissions that range in subject matter from Solar System science to distant galaxies. The ethos of the journal under his tenure will not change: at *Nature Astronomy*, not only do we want to champion groundbreaking astronomy research and excellence in science, we care about the people doing that science. Representation and diversity are important to us, and will be in our editors' minds as we commission articles and invite reviewers to scrutinize submitted manuscripts.

We look forward to seeing what Paul's appointment and revitalizing energy brings to *Nature Astronomy*, while wishing our former Chief all the best in her new endeavours.

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