Neural Networks 61 (2015) xv–xvi

Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Neural Networks

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/neunet

Exciting Time for Neural Networks

This volume begins the twenty-eighth year of publication of *Neural Networks*, the world's first journal dedicated to the interdisciplinary and vibrant field of neural networks. As the official journal of the International Neural Network Society (INNS), the European Neural Network Society (ENNS), and the Japanese Neural Network Society (JNNS), *Neural Networks* publishes the full range of research in neural networks, including modeling in cognitive and neural science, learning systems, mathematical and computational analysis, and engineering and applications.

This is an exciting time for our field with the recent launch of major brain research programs, including the BRAIN initiative in the US, the Human Brain Project in the EU, and the Brain/MINDS program in Japan, all aiming to understand the principles of biological neural networks through innovative technologies. Such technologies include not only physical measurements but also data analysis, modeling, and neuromorphic engineering. Neural network theory and learning algorithms are critical both as tools for the analysis of massive experimental data and as guiding principles for making sense of them. *Neural Networks* is well positioned to be a central forum for exchange of ideas and dissemination of novel findings out of these efforts.

We understand how critically important prompt review and publication are to our authors (as well as to our readers). That is why we devoted our editorials three years ago and last year to communicate our plans and actions to expedite the review process (Doya, Taylor, & Wang, 2012; Doya & Wang, 2014). As a result, we have seen further reduction of review time to reach the first decision (from 13.9 to 13.2 weeks) during the most recent year of documented metrics (http://www.journals.elsevier.com/neural-networks).

In 2014, we took further steps to shorten the review cycle:

- We have shortened default review time from 6 to 4 weeks for first submissions.
- The default time window for the first revision by authors has been shortened from 3 months to 2 months.

Guided by studies on review speed and review quality, these changes are meant to further expedite the review process, without sacrificing the quality of reviews.

In the last year's editorial, we planned to remove the Letter type of submissions. After further analysis and feedback, we have decided to keep Letter submissions, but introduced new measures to truly realize this type's original purpose: Rapid publication of short, important contributions. To this end, we now disallow the option of "Revise and Reconsider", and instead encourage the authors of such manuscripts to resubmit expanded versions as Articles.

A few other changes were introduced last year:

- Recognizing the value of topical and timely reviews for our readership, we have introduced a new submission type: Reviews. We take this opportunity to encourage you to consider submitting reviews on your research topics.
- Due to their scarce utilization, we have removed 'Current Opinion' and 'Book Review' as submission types.

As a result of these changes, we have four types of submission to *Neural Networks*:

- Articles
- Letters
- Reviews
- Letters to the Editor

After publication of one special issue in 2014 on "Affective Neural Networks and Cognitive Learning Systems for Big Data Analysis", two special issues will be published in the next few volumes:

"Deep Learning of Representations"
Guest editors: Yoshua Bengio and Honglak Lee

"Communication and Brain: Emergent Functions through Inter-Neuron and Inter-Brain Communications"
Guest editors: Ichiro Tsuda, Peter F. Dominey, Takeshi Aihara, and Yutaka Sakaguchi

In addition, the following special issue is planned for this year:

"Neural Network Learning in Big Data"
Guest editors: Asim Roy, Kumar Venayagamoorthy, Nikola Kasabov, and Irwin King

Please visit the journal website:
http://www.journals.elsevier.com/neural-networks
for its Call for Papers, including timelines.

As in the past, we welcome special issue proposals from experts in a given area who think the time is ripe for bringing attention to a special topic. The journal website contains detailed instructions on how to submit a special issue proposal.

The *Neural Networks* website contains a wealth of information, including Open Access articles sponsored by their authors, News, Call for Papers for special issues (as already mentioned), current events, and journal metrics, as well as instructions for authors, action editors, and special issue guest editors. We encourage you to bookmark the website and visit it often for latest update.

As the world's leading academic publisher, Elsevier offers the great benefit of ScienceDirect to millions of researchers and practitioners worldwide, which makes *Neural Networks* articles

http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0893-6080(14)00260-3

easily accessible on the internet anywhere in the world. Another notable benefit is the online recommendation of the articles related to a *Neural Networks* publication. It is worth noting that, unlike many other journals, we publish full-length papers with no overlength charge.

We understand that the author wants and expects prompt and in-depth reviews, and the reader wants and expects quality and timely publications. We strive to provide superior service to our readers and authors alike, and enhance the premier standing of *Neural Networks* for the community. As always, we welcome your comments and suggestions.

References

Doya, K., Taylor, J. G., & Wang, D. L. (2012). Expedited review process. *Neural Networks*, *25*, 1.
Doya, K., & Wang, D. L. (2014). Faster turnaround. *Neural Networks*, *49*, xiv–xv.

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