EDITORIAL

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Recognising our Reviewers for *Chemical Science*

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all of *Chemical Science*'s reviewers. In particular, we would like to highlight the outstanding reviewers for the journal from 2018, for their significant contribution to *Chemical Science*.

We announce a selection of our highest-contributing reviewers annually and each receives a certificate to give recognition for their contribution. These reviewers have been chosen based on the number, timeliness and quality of the reports completed during 2018.

Outstanding *Chemical Science* Reviewers in 2018

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In past years, we have highlighted ten of our outstanding reviewers, however this year we would like to do something a little extra for *Chemical Science*. Not only have we extended this list to include more of our exceptional reviewers, as above, but we would also like to offer them the option of accepting a digital badge from us.

What are Digital Badges?

A growing list of employers, funders and associations are starting to use digital badges to help individuals show evidence of their experience and expertise online, in a simple, easy-to-digest way.

Through recognising a small section of our most dedicated reviewers for the journal from 2018, we will be exploring whether the use of digital badges is a valuable way of acknowledging the considerable efforts of our reviewers, over the course of a six-month trial.

For the purposes of the trial, we will be awarding an Exceptional Peer Reviewer badge to a selection of reviewers who have completed three or more reviews in the last 12 months. We'll be aiming to offer additional badges to those reviewers who pass this milestone on a regular basis throughout the trial.

● A badge acts as a verifiable, online certificate of achievement.

● It describes the nature of a credential, and in this case will provide evidence that someone has completed a high level of reviewing for *Chemical Science*.

● This information sits locked behind and securely linked to the badge image, making the badge unique to the reviewer.

● Badges use the Open Badge Standard, which means that while anyone clicking on your badge can read the information to find out more about your credential, they cannot access or change it.

A digital badge can be displayed and shared as part of a reviewer's professional record, and can identify them as someone who has contributed a high level of reviewing for our flagship journal, *Chemical Science*. The badge can be shared on social media (including Facebook and LinkedIn), on blogs and personal websites, and in email signatures.

As the badge is awarded for the level of reviewing over a period of 12 months and there is no information given on individual manuscripts or when reviews were completed, the anonymity of the reviewer is maintained at all times.

We will shortly be contacting a selection of our reviewers from last year, with how they can claim their digital badge, and details of how this can be shared online. The digital badges will be provided by our partner company, DigitalMe, who have experience and expertise in enabling organisations to offer digital credentials.

At the end of this pilot, we will be gathering reviewers' experience of using these digital badges to consider whether to use this more widely, to create a consistent system of recognition for our reviewer community.

What else do we offer our reviewers?

There is also an alternative way of recording the reviewing work that you do for *Chemical Science*, and other RSC journals. Following positive feedback from community, we are continuing our partnership with Publons by making this service available across all of our journals.

Publons is a service that reviewers can sign up for and record their peer review history, as a way of "getting credit for peer review". Their mission is to speed up research by harnessing the power of great peer review, working with publishers, institutions and researchers to turn peer review into a measurable output that can be used to demonstrate a researcher's standing, impact and influence in their field.

How does Publons work?

When submitting a review for an RSC journal, reviewers are asked if they want to opt in to Publons; they can then instantly start building a verified peer review and editorial record to showcase the full extent of their contributions. Publons tracks reviews without compromising reviewer anonymity, by default, only the year of the review and the journal title will be shown on reviewer profiles for our journals.

Publons gives access to a range of tools and data to benchmark reviewing and editorial activity, and provides up-to-date verified evidence of peer review contributions, which can be included on CVs and in funding applications. There is also the option to link your Publons record to your ORCID account to show your publication and peer review activity together.

Interested in becoming a peer-reviewer?

With a pool of over 5000 reviewers for *Chemical Science* in 2018 alone, they are drawn from across the chemical sciences community. However we are always looking for new reviewers for our journals, so if you are interested in reviewing for us, please do contact the relevant journal office and provide up-to-date CV or résumé. Reviewers are selected for their expertise and experience and as a minimum, we are looking for people who:

- are qualified to PhD level (or equivalent) or above in a relevant subject.
- are current active researchers.

- have one or more recent publications in peer-reviewed journals of comparable impact and reputation to our journals.

General guidance for reviewers on the procedure and requirements to assess manuscripts submitted to journals published by the Royal Society of Chemistry, can be found on our website, where you can read and download our guide providing our top tips for peer reviewers.

Further benefits for being a reviewer for our journals include a 25% discount on all books published by the Royal Society of Chemistry.

To find out more about how we are using digital badges or any other ways we are recognising our reviewers, please do not hesitate to get in touch at chemicalscience-rsc@rsc.org.

May Copsey
Executive Editor, *Chemical Science*