Editorial
Reflections and Directions for the Year Ahead

AS WE begin a new publication year for IEEE TRANSACTIONS ON ANTENNAS AND PROPAGATION (TAP), it is a pleasure to look back on the accomplishments of the past year and to share the developments shaping the journal's direction moving forward [1]. IEEE TAP has continued to serve as a central forum for advances in electromagnetics, antennas, propagation, wireless systems, and emerging interdisciplinary technologies, supported by a vibrant global community of authors, readers, editors, and reviewers.

Recognized with a 2025 Journal Impact Factor of 5.8, accompanied by a record-high value of 4.6 when excluding self-citations, and a CiteScore of 11.4, IEEE TAP has further strengthened its position across antennas, propagation, and electromagnetics. The journal has significantly improved its Q1 placement by Impact Factor within the electrical and electronic engineering and telecommunications categories and continues to rank among the top ten journals in telecommunications by Eigenfactor Score. Although such metrics capture selected dimensions of the journal's influence, they are inherently dynamic and benefit from being considered together with additional evidence of long-term scientific impact. When viewed as a whole, these indicators reaffirm IEEE TAP's commitment to advancing the antennas and propagation (AP) community and supporting impactful, forward-looking scientific contributions.

IEEE TAP's global reach has also continued to expand. In 2025, the journal recorded more than 4.48 million article views and downloads on IEEE Xplore, placing TAP third among all IEEE periodicals—and second when excluding open-access titles—in terms of article usage. This high level of engagement reflects the strong interest in and broad visibility of the journal's published content.

The upward momentum in submissions underscores IEEE TAP's continued relevance within and beyond the AP community. Over the past five years, original submissions have increased from 2509 in 2020 to 3896 in 2025, reflecting the field's vitality and the journal's strong reputation as a rigorous and trusted venue. The high influx of submissions has been accompanied by a substantial volume of published content (see Fig. 1). In 2025, IEEE TAP published 1034 articles spanning the breadth of the AP field, including core AP topics as well as emerging areas at the interfaces with other engineering and scientific disciplines. A highlight of the year was the publication of the Special Issue on "Measurement Technologies for Emerging 5G and Beyond Channel Characterization and Antenna Systems," which assembled state-of-the-art contributions on channel sounding, measurement campaigns at millimeter-wave and

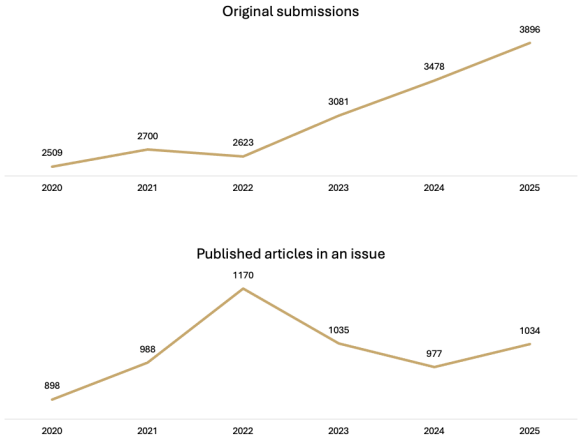

Fig. 1. Number of original submissions/published papers per year during the period 2020–2025.

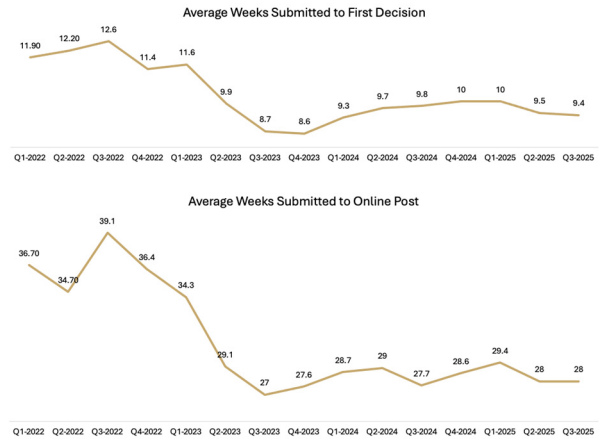

Fig. 2. Quarter analysis on timeliness by IEEE. Average weeks from original submission to first decision (top) and average weeks from original submission to online post (bottom) for accepted manuscripts during the period 2022–2025.

subterahertz frequencies, and advanced antenna char- acterization techniques supporting next-generation wireless systems [2]. In celebration of the 75th Anniversary of the IEEE AP Society, the journal also curated a special section of invited review articles that highlight innovation and future directions in AP. This section brings together comprehensive and forward-looking reviews that span a wide range of topics—from fundamental electromagnetic theory to cutting-edge developments in metamaterials, metasurfaces, array design, optimization, additive manufacturing, and emerging wireless technologies. Several of these articles are already available in early access, and the full special section is expected to be published in the early months of 2026.

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As the journal's growth continues, maintaining an efficient and rigorous editorial process remains a priority. According to data from the quarterly analysis conducted by IEEE, the average time from submission to first decision stayed stable at around 9.5 weeks throughout 2025, while the time from submission to online posting was maintained in the range of 28–29 weeks (see Fig. 2). These steady outcomes underscore the dedication of our reviewers and editorial board, who have worked diligently to maintain fairness and timeliness despite rising manuscript volumes.

I. Editorial Process and Evaluation Standards

IEEE TAP's evaluation process is grounded in a commitment to both innovation and impact. We expect submissions to introduce new concepts or theories and/or offer genuine methodological advances that meaningfully extend the state of the art. Manuscripts should also demonstrate impact with compelling evidence, such as substantial performance improvements, broader applicability, or deeper physical insight relative to existing approaches. Incremental improvements are generally insufficient unless coupled with conceptual contributions that advance the AP discipline in a significant and lasting way.

Sustaining IEEE TAP's high standards requires ongoing attention to the integrity and quality of the editorial process. Over the past year, we have further refined the journal's quality-assurance procedures, ensuring that submissions are evaluated through a thorough and consistent editorial workflow. These updates include a strengthened prescreening stage, closer harmonization of decision criteria across topical areas, and systematic monitoring of review timelines to ensure that authors receive timely, transparent, and well-substantiated feedback. These efforts support a rigorous and efficient publication process, even as manuscript volumes continue to rise.

II. AI/ML-Based Contributions and Responsible Use of GenAI in the Publication Process

To support its continued commitment to consistency and fairness in editorial evaluation, the journal has also updated its expectations regarding the use of artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) in submissions. As AI-/ML-based approaches become more prevalent across engineering research, it is essential that such methods contribute substantively to AP rather than solely demonstrating algorithmic novelty. Submissions are expected to show meaningful improvements in AP-related performance or to provide new physical insight, but the primary criterion for evaluation remains the quality and significance of the antennas or propagation outcome. Improvements in computational speed or optimization time may be reported but should not serve as the main justification for the methods' performance contributions. Manuscripts employing empirical or data-driven approaches should include quantitative comparisons with established analytical, numerical, or optimization techniques. When empirical or data-driven methods replace traditional theoretical derivations, authors are strongly encouraged to make the underlying data and source code publicly available to facilitate transparency and reproducibility.

As AI tools become increasingly integrated across the publication lifecycle, from manuscript preparation to peer-review, it is essential to clarify how such technologies may be used responsibly within TAP. Ensuring the integrity of the peer-review and publication process requires particular attention to transparency, confidentiality, and the preservation of scholarly judgment. Authors must disclose any use of AI tools to generate text, figures, images, or code in the Acknowledgment section, identifying the tool(s) used and the extent of their contribution. The use of AI solely for language or grammar refinement is acceptable, however, disclosure is still recommended. Reviewers, in turn, must refrain from submitting manuscript content or confidential materials to public AI platforms for the purpose of generating text or summaries for their reports. The journal depends on each reviewer's personal expertise and professional judgment—attributes that cannot be replicated or substituted by any AI system. Adhering to these principles helps preserve confidentiality, rigor, and trust that underpin IEEE TAP's peer-review process.

III. Policy on Resubmissions

I also take the opportunity to remind authors of the journal's policy on resubmissions. Although authors are entitled to resubmit a previously rejected manuscript once, they are strongly recommended to seek prior permission from the editorial board before doing so. Obtaining approval in advance helps avoid unproductive efforts as the acceptance rate for resubmitted works has historically been very low. This practice also prevents unnecessary delays and ensures that editorial and reviewer resources are used with care, supporting a fair and sustainable evaluation process for all contributors and reflecting our shared responsibility to maintain the journal's quality and integrity.

IV. Dissemination and Community Engagement

IEEE TAP's dissemination strategy evolved further this year, building on ongoing efforts to broaden the reach and visibility of high-quality research within and beyond the AP community. Enhancements to the journal's website, newsletters, curated highlights, and social media presence were implemented to support the growing volume of content and help readers navigate it more effectively. Regularly updated features, including highlighted articles, improved "For Readers" navigation tools, and expanded archives of special issues and thematic collections, have contributed to a more accessible and engaging online experience. These initiatives aim to ensure that impactful research reaches a broad audience and remains visible to researchers working across disciplines. In addition, we launched a new interview series, IEEE TAP Voices, to share insights from leading researchers and innovators in AP, beginning with a special set of episodes for International Women's Day 2025.

As part of the ongoing development of these dissemination activities, IEEE TAP continued to curate and expand its portfolio of Special Article Collections. This year's Special Article Collection on AP for Space Applications, curated by Nelson Fonseca, Oscar Quevedo-Teruel, and Goutam Chattopadhyay

and released in celebration of the IEEE AP Society's 75th Anniversary, features 17 selected articles providing readers with a focused view of emerging trends in spaceborne communications, sensing, and exploration. Alongside this new collection, the living collections on Data and Code Sharing and Climate Change continued to grow, reflecting IEEE TAP's commitment to reproducibility, transparency, and research that addresses pressing global challenges. These curated collections play an increasingly important role in organizing the journal's extensive content into coherent thematic areas, helping readers identify influential work and follow scientific developments across interconnected areas of AP.

V. Contributors

Maintaining the scientific rigor of IEEE TAP is a collective effort, strengthened by the commitment of our reviewers and editorial board. Our Track Editors and Associate Editors play a central role in sustaining the journal's momentum. Their careful oversight of the review process, thoughtful judgment, and dedication to fairness and timeliness have been essential in managing the growing volume of submissions while maintaining consistent editorial standards. I am grateful for the professionalism and insight they bring to their roles and for the collaborative spirit with which they support the journal and its authors. This year marked important transitions within the editorial board. I would like to extend my gratitude to our retiring Track Editors, Ashwin Iyer, Guido Lombardi, and Tzyh-Ghuang Ma, whose leadership has been invaluable. I also acknowledge with appreciation the Associate Editors who concluded their service: Jacob Adams, Eva Antonino-Daviu, Alexandros Feresidis, Cynthia Furse, Nima Ghalichechian, Maokun Li, Nghia Nguyen-Trong, James West, Steve Hang Wong, Alexander Yakovlev, Nan Yang, Shiwen Yang, and Xiuyin Zhang. At the same time, I am pleased to welcome new Track Editors, Pai-Yen Chen, Hsi-Tseng Chou, David Gonzalez-Ovejero, and Marco Salucci—as well as our new Associate Editors Paolo Burghignoli, Sawyer Campbell, Can Ding, Wei Fan, Wen-Jiao Liao, Neng-Wu Liu, Mario Lucido, Zhen Peng, Francisco Pizarro, Shanpu Shen, Okan Yurduseven, and Constantinos Zekios. Their expertise and perspectives will contribute significantly to steering IEEE TAP's future directions.

Also, this year marked the launch of the College of Reviewers, established for the first time to formally recognize exceptional contributions to the peer-review process. The College consists of reviewers who ranked among the top 200 reviewers for three consecutive years, reflecting a sustained record of expertise, reliability, and willingness to support the journal. Together with the more than 3000 reviewers who contributed assessments this year, the members of the College exemplify the high standards of evaluation that underpin IEEE TAP's reputation and ensure that published work meets the highest level of technical quality.

Equally important are the colleagues who work behind the scenes to keep IEEE TAP operating efficiently. I would like to acknowledge our Administrative Editor, Dr. Maria Athanasiou, and our editorial assistants whose coordination and day-to-day support are vital to the journal's operations. I also extend my thanks to our Journal Production Manager, Ms. Erin Pacino, and to the staff of the IEEE and the AP Society, whose continued efforts contribute greatly to the quality and consistency of the publication process. Finally, I am deeply appreciative of our authors and readers. The works submitted to IEEE TAP and the continued interest of our readership together form the foundation of the journal. This shared commitment allows IEEE TAP to remain a trusted source of insight and innovation within the AP community.

VI. Outlook for 2026

As we enter 2026, IEEE TAP remains committed to supporting rigorous and impactful research across the full spectrum of AP, from fundamental theory to cutting-edge applications on Earth and in space. With continued growth in submissions, rising global readership, and a solid editorial foundation, the coming year holds exciting opportunities for the journal and the AP community. Thank you for your ongoing support, partnership, and unwavering dedication to the Transactions. I am eager to see the innovations and meaningful scientific discoveries that lie ahead.

With best wishes for a joyful, healthy, and fulfilling New Year.

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