

# Editorial

## A Message From the Editor-in-Chief



Tolga M. Duman

I took over as the Editor-in-Chief (EiC) of IEEE TRANSACTIONS ON COMMUNICATIONS (TCOM) exactly one month ago, on January 1, 2020. First of all, I would like to state that I am deeply honored and excited to serve as the new EiC. I have been closely involved with TCOM since 2007, both as an Editor and an Area Editor, and I am delighted that I now have the opportunity to lead the TRANSACTIONS.

TCOM is one of the top journals publishing PHY and MAC layer communications research with a large number of high-quality paper submissions (reaching around 1500 in 2019), short paper processing times, consistently high-quality reviews, and excellent metrics such as impact factor, eigenfactor, and article influence score. I am very pleased to report that TCOM is in excellent shape thanks to the tremendous efforts of the outgoing EiC Prof. Naofal Al-Dhahir and his predecessors, and its entire editorial board. With around 120 world-class expert editors volunteering their time, the journal enjoys an average sub-to-first decision time of about 75 days, and sub-to-pub time of around seven months. The average editorial load is less than 1.5 papers/month, which is a very healthy level.

The EiC transition process started back in November, and went very smoothly thanks to the great support of Prof. Al-Dhahir and our previous Managing Editor Dr. Derrick Wing Kwan Ng, as well as the COMSOC staff. Kwan has completed his term as the Managing Editor of TCOM after eight years of outstanding service, and Dr. Mohammad Kazemi of Bilkent University took over. I am deeply grateful to Kwan for his long and outstanding service, and I am looking forward to working with Mohammad to maintain TCOM's tradition of excellence during my tenure as EiC.

My first major administrative decision as the EiC of TCOM has been the establishment of a new area. Over the last few years, interactions between machine learning and communications have flourished, which has now become a very active area of research. Machine learning and artificial intelligence based communication system design, as well as communication systems and algorithms facilitating machine learning solutions for different applications have been very promising. Indeed, TCOM has already been receiving a significant number of manuscripts dealing with different problems at the intersection of machine learning and communications. To respond to this growth, I have established a new area called "Machine Learning and Communications," under the leadership of Dr. Deniz Gunduz as the Area Editor. I expect that this area will attract many high-quality submissions as there are many unsolved problems and fundamental challenges that need to be addressed, and TCOM papers will make high-impact contributions in this important field.

Going forward, I plan to continue the best practices that are proven to work and maintain a high-performing editorial board of top researchers so as to make sure that TCOM retains efficiency and quality in processing paper submissions. I will also work on increasing the number of editors from industry, which appears to be challenging given the differences in the focus of industry and the direction of communications research.

To conclude, I would like to thank the previous EiCs, current and previous editors, and the anonymous reviewers who generously volunteer their time for the TRANSACTIONS. Without their dedication and hard work, TCOM would not have been where it is today. I would also like to emphasize that your suggestions and proposals to improve the quality of our journal further are always welcome. You can reach me at [eic-tcom@bilkent.edu.tr](mailto:eic-tcom@bilkent.edu.tr).

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