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Editorial

Contact
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SAGE

Welcome to the new electronic journal "Contact", published by SAGE. We have put together a large and highly influential Editorial Board and we have a Senior Editorial team on three continents who will be supervising the reviewing process and commissioning of articles.

"Contact" is a word with many connotations, from the personal to business. Here, it refers to the highly specialised world of membrane contact sites. In 2018, that meaning is clear to cell biologists, and people in related disciplines where it would not have been in 2008. The journal is dedicated to describing all aspects of the sites inside cells where different organelles interact (contact) with each other. This is the first journal for this field, which is still so young that we have no complete consensus on any of its most basic terms. For instance, it says above that the journal is about membrane contact sites, and that is the most recognisable phrase for this topic, but it is not the most accurate. If you read the ground breaking work of Maya Schuldiner's group on contact between one organelle with half a membrane and another with none at all[1], you might agree we should drop the "membrane" part, though with just "contact sites", our field would be even more likely to be misunderstood by non-scientists.

"Location, Location, Location..."[2] is a carrion call in the real estate business: precise position is everything in places such as the great cities of the world. The places cell biologists contemplate are about a billion times smaller than a city. On that scale, a piece of cake is about the size of an ion, a person equates to a protein domain, a four-lane highway similar to a microtubule, and a suburb the size of an organelle. Cell biology has gradually reduced the scale of the objects of study. It has concentrated on organelles for 300 years. After their first description by van Leeuwenhoek, most only fully came into focus with electron microscopy in the 1950s, and new bodies detectable by EM and fluorescence microscopy are still being named in this decade[3]. This drives cell biologists to specialise on an organelle's unique functions, and to isolate their distinct essence. For example, you might say "I work on the Golgi". The degree of super-specialisation is one thing to worry about, but what about the possibility that the whole project is partially flawed because the organelles on their own, in isolation, lack something: each other? Organelles, and suburbs too, have boundaries, and sometimes one comes right up to and touches the next one along. The places where organelles touch are the subject of this new journal. Who touches what, how, and what happens next?

The subject of (membrane) contact (sites) has suffered partly from the lack of contact between scientific colleagues. Historically, the two main groups of contact site biologists, studying either calcium ion fluxes or lipid transport, seemed oddly separate from each other. The object of this new venture is to break down all such barriers, providing one site for almost all aspects of intracellular contact. Almost all, because some are already covered by the more mature discipline of membrane traffic. We are here for all the rest.

If you go to the journal's main page you'll see four main buttons. Click on "About" to see our mission statement, and from there you'll find details of our aims and scope, the Editorial Board of over 60 eminent people in the field, and finally guidelines on submission for the different types of articles we have. If you have any questions, please contact me or any of the senior editors.

All the best,

Dr Tim Levine
University College London
Editor in Chief

Notes

1. Moldavski, O. *et al*. (2015) Lipid droplets are essential for efficient clearance of cytosolic inclusion bodies, **Dev. Cell** 33, 603–610
2. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Location,_Location,_Location
3. Zacharogianni M, Aguilera-Gomez A, Veenendaal T, Smout J, Rabouille C (2014) A stress assembly that confers cell viability by preserving ERES components during amino-acid starvation, **Elife** doi: 10.7554/eLife.04132

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