

Just another new journal?

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In the near future we plan to have a topics page, in which different scientific fields are linked to the corresponding papers in ASTRA, to help the users to find articles of their interest most efficiently. An article can thus be listed under different topics, which are chosen by the author(s) and, in addition, by the editor.

A similar procedure will be applied for special issues of ASTRA. A *special issue* can be a topical issue, or can include manuscripts from a conference, for which an external guest editor will share responsibility for its contents. A special issue is handled in the same way as a regular issue: The manuscripts undergo the same refereeing process. After acceptance, the articles of a special issue are published in the regular ASTRA-journal, and linked to the special issue. The guest editor will be responsible for collecting the manuscripts, the length of the articles, e.g., the division into contributed and invited papers, as well as for the enforcement of a deadline to print the special issue if required. This procedure has the additional advantage that individual articles of the special issue are available as soon as they are accepted, and not after the last manuscript has been reviewed.

ASTRA will also have two new features: Firstly, the referee reports are treated in a double-blind fashion. This means that the authors' names and affiliations are taken off the manuscript before it is sent to the referees. This procedure will ensure that the main focus of the refereeing process is on the scientific work. Secondly, the referee reports are available upon request for personal use only. If a user wishes to read a report, s/he shall send an email to the Editorial Office of ASTRA (i.e. by clicking on the link to the office, in which also the manuscript number is encrypted) and will then re-

ceive the referee reports by email. The idea is to stimulate a scientific discussion between authors and the interested community. However, it should be agreed that the reports should not be passed on to a third party.

The above-mentioned two new features will ensure a fair and scientifically profound refereeing process, serving the only purpose to improve the manuscript.

We hope that the authors will support our ideas and promote the success of ASTRA by publishing many high quality papers to which we are looking forward.

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