

Editorial

The *Journal of Fluid Mechanics* is launching *JFM Rapids* in January 2013

After 12 successful years of publishing, we are evolving the Fast Track into *JFM Rapids*. The new format will provide a highly visible venue for these short, high-impact papers across the full range of fluid mechanics.

As the names, present and future, suggest, our aim is to provide a vehicle for the rapid publication of high quality papers. Speed and quality do not necessarily go hand in hand: one can easily compromise the other. Our principal and over-riding objective is to publish papers of the highest scientific quality, so how is rapid publication ensured? It necessarily begins with the author. We are all familiar with the idea that it takes additional time and effort to write well and briefly. Rapid publication is certainly compromised by rapid submission of poorly formulated ideas, carelessly written. Once a paper is submitted, referees are asked to provide reports with a short turnaround. It is common experience that short, well-written papers brimming with interesting new science are reviewed happily and rapidly. Such papers will be accepted subject to minor revisions to improve clarity, usually without recourse to a second round of refereeing. With *JFM Rapids*, we are introducing a decision of ‘revise and resubmit’ where the editor, guided by the referees, judges that a paper has merit but requires substantial revision that will require significant refereeing. On re-submission, such papers will be handled as standard JFM papers.

Papers submitted to *JFM Rapids* will have the highest quality of editorial and refereeing standards and receive Cambridge University Press’s top quality copyediting and typesetting services. *JFM Rapids* will have free colour and for the first year of operation papers will be freely accessible to all.

JFM Rapids will publish papers online within one month of final acceptance. They will appear within a special new section devoted to Rapids on the *Journal of Fluid Mechanics* website, which will be re-designed as part of this development. Papers will still be cited and indexed as JFM articles but with a distinctive Rapids identifier, and will be assigned to a JFM volume. Rapids will not be included in the regular print versions of JFM, but a collection of all Rapids will be available to order in print at the end of each year.

As we introduce *JFM Rapids*, we will simultaneously be moving to an ‘open-volume’ publishing method for JFM, whereby each article will be assigned volume and page numbers immediately upon online publication. The benefit of this approach is that articles receive their final citation format as soon as they are made available.

We hope that the high visibility to be afforded to *JFM Rapids* will be welcomed and valued by the community. More details about how Rapids will be handled are described overleaf.

Paul Linden
Grae Worster

Submission to *JFM Rapids*

Papers submitted to *JFM Rapids* should be submitted to a member of the Rapids Editorial Board (see below). In order to achieve rapid publication and maintain the JFM quality standards the following guidelines will apply.

Preparation

Papers submitted to Rapids must be prepared using the JFM LaTeX style file.

Page limit

As with the current Fast Track, a limit of 10 Journal pages will be applied.

Refereeing

Papers will normally be sent to three referees who will be asked to respond within two weeks. The associate Editors will then decide whether to accept the paper as it stands or subject to minor revisions, to request it be revised and resubmitted as a standard paper, or to reject it.

Minor revision

Minor revisions are those that are points of clarification and the corrections of typographical or other small errors. The paper would not usually be sent back to the referees in this case and the corrections would be handled directly by the Associate Editor.

Revise and resubmit

In cases where more substantial revisions are needed, i.e. those where the paper needs to be sent back to the referees for their further scientific assessment, the paper will be withdrawn from the Rapids track. The revision will then automatically be resubmitted as a Standard paper to the same Rapids Associate Editor. The Rapids page limit would no longer apply and the paper will no longer receive the expedited Rapids publication.

Usually, the paper would continue to be dealt with as a Standard revision by the Rapids Associate Editor. However, in some cases, the Rapids Associate Editor may, at this stage, reassign the paper to a regular Associate Editor whose expertise is more closely aligned with the subject.

On initial submission, there will be an option in Manuscript Central to select Rapids, which will replace the current Fast-Track option. Since the goal of *JFM Rapids* is the fast publication of high-quality papers, authors will be required to write their papers in the JFM Latex style file. Papers should be written as in final form, and the Associate Editors will reject papers without review if the papers are not clearly written or prepared to the highest standards.

***JFM Rapids* Editorial Board**

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