

Guest Editorial

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Guest Editorial

The 12th International Scientific Conference on Functional Materials and Nanotechnologies (FM&NT-2018) was held on October 2–5, 2018 in Riga, Radisson Blu Latvia Conference and Spa Hotel. The event was organized by the Institute of Solid State Physics, University of Latvia (ISSP UL). This conference is a continuation of meetings, first of which was organized in 2006 by ISSP UL in Riga. Since 2013, the FM&NT conferences turned over a new page, becoming a common conference of all three Baltic countries. Now it is being organized periodically by the ISSP UL, University of Tartu, and Vilnius University. FM&NT-2018 is also a tribute to 40th anniversary of the ISSP UL, Latvia's Centenary program Latvia 100 and beginning of Centenary year of the University of Latvia.

The purpose of the FM&NT is to bring together materials scientists, physicists, chemists, research staff, engineers, as well as experts in a wide range of the most demanding application areas, and students from universities, research institutes and related industrial companies. The topics of the conference included materials for energy and renewable energy technologies, biomedicine, multifunctional inorganic, organic and hybrid materials for photonics, and micro- and nanoelectronics.

This year, more than 180 scientists from USA, Belarus, Denmark, South Africa, France, Georgia, Estonia, Italy, Israel, Kazakhstan, Russia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Finland, Thailand, Taiwan, Ukraine, Hungary, Germany, Sweden, and, of course, Latvia presented their latest scientific achievements. They reported on trends and activities in research and development of perspective materials using modern nanotechnology techniques.

At FM&NT-2018, there were 6 plenary, 19 invited, 36 oral and 130 poster presentations given which reflected the results of theoretical and experimental research on functional materials and related processes, as well as the possible application of innovative materials in science and economy. In additional meetings, cooperation in joint projects, the exchange of students and young researchers, as well as governmental and political support for science were discussed. An overview of the ISSP UL co-ordinated project CAMART² was presented, which currently is the only second phase project funded by the European Commission's Horizon 2020 Spreading Excellence and Widening Participation program in the Baltic Sea Region.

The FM&NT-2018 Proceedings have been divided into three parts, one of which will be published in the IOP Conference Series, Materials Science and Engineering (Spring, 2019), the second part consists of 6 designated manuscripts that are published in the *Latvian Journal of Physics and Technical Sciences* (Vol. 55, Issue 6, 2018). Selected articles related to ferroelectricity will be published in this Special Issue of the *Integrated Ferroelectrics*.

The Organizing and Program Committees want to thank all the speakers, contributors, session chairs, referees and other involved staff for their efforts in making the FM&NT-2018 successful. Also, they want to express their gratitude to Dr. George W. Taylor and Dr. Deborah Taylor for their contributions to this Special Issue of *Integrated Ferroelectrics*, as well as the Taylor & Francis Group for their financial support.

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