

From the Editor

Small, Focused Technical Conferences



The feature article in this issue is a prelude to the Microbeam Analysis Society (MAS) Topical Conference on electron backscatter diffraction (EBSD) to be held at the University of Wisconsin, May 24–26, 2010. The popularity of the EBSD technique is growing rapidly. This analytical method is capable of both identifying crystalline phases and determining the orientation of grains and second phases. Phase analysis by EBSD combined with elemental analysis by x-ray emission spectrometry provides the SEM with extraordinary analytical power. Maps of crystal grain orientations are widely used in metallurgical and geological research.

The above conference is the ninth Topical Conference co-sponsored by MAS since 2002. Previous MAS Topical Conferences covered a variety of topics: quantitative electron beam microanalysis, spectrum imaging and hyperspectral data analysis, metrology, variable-pressure SEM, particle analysis, and EBSD.

These conferences are usually small in size, typically only 100–150 attendees, and inexpensive. This continuing program of small, focused conferences is an important and useful way to promote microscopy and microanalysis, especially for new and rapidly developing methods. This model for topical conferences could be expanded to include all aspects of microscopy including biological light microscopy and scanning probe microscopy.

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