

MAX-PLANCK-INSTITUT FÜR GRAVITATIONSPHYSIK
ALBERT-EINSTEIN-INSTITUT



HEINZ-NIXDORF-ZENTRUM FÜR INFORMATIONSMANAGEMENT
IN DER MAX-PLANCK-GESELLSCHAFT

Press Release

Potsdam, January 23, 2003

**Innovative electronic publishing project has proved a big success:
Dynamic e-journal of relativity celebrates its 5th birthday
Publication concept now available for other fields of research**

Five years ago, on January 26th, the electronic journal "Living Reviews in Relativity" went online with its first article. Developed and published at the Max Planck Institute for Gravitational Physics, this innovative journal has provided a reliable, high-quality scientific resource enhanced by advanced methods for online accessibility.

With a rapidly increasing number of users, this sophisticated service has proved to be a valuable tool for the scientific community.

"Living Reviews in Relativity" is an exclusively www-based journal, publishing reviews of research in all areas of relativity. "Living Reviews" is unique in that it maintains a suite of high-quality reviews; its articles are subjected to strict peer-review and are kept current by the authors (hence the title Living reviews). Readers are therefore guaranteed to find quickly the most up-to-date overview on the state of research in each subject area of the field.

The "Living Reviews BackOffice", a joint project between the Heinz Nixdorf Center for Information Management in the Max Planck Society (ZIM) and the AEI, will now enable other Max Planck Institutes to publish similar e-journals in their own fields. The core infrastructure and services needed for these publications will be provided by the "Living Reviews BackOffice".

The success of "Living Reviews in Relativity" is based on the commitment of its authors to keep their reviews up-to-date as a service to the scientific community, as well as on the fact that access to the journal is free of charge. Therefore, one of the strategic aims of the BackOffice project is to sustain this journal and all following Living Reviews journals as free "Open Access" resources.

For more information:

<http://www.livingreviews.org>

<http://www.zim.mpg.de>

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The Living Reviews in Relativity at a Glance

Coverage and Mission

The articles of the journal, "Living Reviews in Relativity," provide an overview of all active areas of relativity research. They offer surveys of recent work, evaluations of the importance and inter-connections of results, entry points into essential literature, assessments of where new progress is needed, and access to useful online resources and databases of recent literature. "Living Reviews in Relativity" seeks to complement, rather than to replicate, existing printed or online physics resources. The journal is available free of charge on the web.

High Quality Reviews

All articles published in "Living Reviews in Relativity" are solicited from specialists in the field by the editorial board and are refereed by an anonymous peer-review process. Articles are directed toward physicists at the graduate student level and beyond. In 2002, the European Physical Society accorded "Living Reviews in Relativity" the "recognized journal" status, acknowledging its conformance to "highest scientific quality and international standards".

The "Living" Review Article

Published articles are regularly updated by the authors to incorporate new developments in the field. The dynamic quality of hypertext has been a major principle guiding the design of "Living Reviews". Articles are presented in a well-integrated viewing environment, whose navigation features allow intuitive and non-linear access to the article content. Authors enhance the presentation of their articles with colorful figures and animations and provide active links to other electronic resources.

Comments from its Readers

Living Reviews users regard the journal as "the most comprehensive yet readable material in relativity available on the Internet". It serves as a "valuable source of information, filling a unique niche in physics literature".

More Facts about the Journal

At present, 35 review articles are available. Another 50 articles are in preparation. About 5000 references from all published Living Reviews articles are collated into an online searchable reference database. Published articles have been downloaded on average more than 600 times (with individual articles reaching up to 2000 downloads). Articles published in "Living Reviews in Relativity" have been cited 595 times so far. About 650 out of 2000 active scientists in relativity worldwide subscribe to the journal's e-mail newsletter, which announces the publication of new articles.

The Living Reviews BackOffice Project

In 2002, the "Living Reviews BackOffice" was established as a joint project between the Max Planck Institute of Gravitational Physics and the Heinz Nixdorf Center for Information Management in the Max Planck Society (ZIM). It provides interested Max Planck Institutes with the core infrastructure and services needed for the publication of a Living Reviews journal. The BackOffice project is also further developing and generalizing the web publishing software and journal management tools developed for "Living Reviews in Relativity." Finally, the Living Reviews BackOffice is investigating models to ensure the future sustainability of highly- valued open access research tools such as Living Reviews.

Heinz Nixdorf Center for Information Management in the Max Planck Society (ZIM)

Set up in 2001 by the Max Planck Society as a five-year project and funded by the Heinz Nixdorf Foundation, the ZIM serves the Max Planck Society and its scientists as a competence and innovation center for information management in basic research. The activities of the ZIM are concerned with the full cycle of information management in scientific and scholarly research, starting with information retrieval, through the organization, exploitation, and collaborative sharing of information in the research process, and ending with the representation, communication, and publication of research results within the scientific community. Besides the Living Reviews BackOffice, current projects of the ZIM are, for example, the design and development of an e-document server for the Max Planck Society and the set-up of the "Max Planck Virtual Library".

Max Planck Institute of Gravitational Physics

The Max Planck Institute of Gravitational Physics (Albert Einstein Institute) in Golm (near Potsdam) and Hannover is an international leading research center for gravitational physics. More than 100 scientists and about 150 visiting scientists per year conduct research into all aspects of gravitational physics at this institute.

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