

## Life Sciences

### Sensing sense and making decisions

The closing of the 3<sup>rd</sup> volume of the *Annals* gives us a chance to reflect on what we have accomplished so far and where we want to go next. From the beginning, the editorial view has been to understand the *Annals* in general, and the “Life Sciences” in particular, as a heterogeneous mixture of areas that often reach across their conventional borders as defined by their subdisciplines. With this view in mind, we select contributions that cover aspects ranging from molecular to behavioural and from clinical to applied sciences, and we try to make these papers understandable to the widest possible range of scientists. As the *Annals* enter their fourth year, we intend to maintain the momentum achieved and to continue along this path.

In the first contribution of this year’s Life science section, J. P. Lowry discusses the development of a biosensor that, implanted into specific regions of the brain, can detect biochemical signals and their changes in real time. To obtain a “window” into ongoing brain activities is of major interest in the neurosciences, thus this work offers a great potential to understand the biological basis on how the brain makes sense.

The decision on what to do or which paper to read is a process that requires the evaluation of the respective benefits. Often however, such decisions are biased. Therefore, in the second contribution, J. Mysiak presents the development of decision making tools for complex tasks that are aimed to establish objective guidelines. His approach, which compares the benefits of cost effective analyses with multi criteria decision approaches in the context of environmental studies, has been tested in two EU-projects demonstrating the value of the methodology developed.

*Stefan Clemens*