Optics in 2008

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This special issue of *Optics & Photonics News* (OPN) highlights the most exciting research to emerge in the preceding 12 months in the fast-paced world of optics. Optics in 2008 offers readers a unique opportunity to access, in a single source, summaries of cutting-edge optics research reported in the peer-reviewed press. The areas covered in 2008 include beam engineering, biophotonics, diffractive structures, lasers, material processing, microscopy, nonlinear optics, optical engineering, optical storage, optical tweezers, plasmonics, quantum optics, remote sensing, scattering, terahertz technology, ultrafast optics and nano-optics.

This year's issue comprises 30 summaries representing the work of more than 140 authors from 13 countries. Submissions were judged on the basis of the following criteria:

- The accomplishments described must have been published in a refereed journal in the year prior to publication in OPN.
- The work should be illustrated in a clear, concise manner that is readily accessible to the at-large optics community.
- The authors should describe the topical area as a whole and then discuss the importance of their work in that context.

Although OPN makes every effort to ensure that achievements in all optics subfields are recognized, there are no requirements in the selection process for inclusion of specific topical areas. When we receive a large number of submissions for a specific area, it is taken as evidence that the topic has been fertile ground for activity and research. OPN strives to ensure that engineering, science and technology are all represented.

OPN and OSA would like to thank all the researchers from around the world who submitted summaries, as well as to our panel chair and guest editors.

Acceleration dynamics of a non-diffracting finite-energy Airy beam. Image courtesy of Georgios Siviloglou.