Music & Science, published by SAGE in association with SEMPRE, provides a peer-reviewed platform for researchers to communicate important new insights in music research from the full spectrum of scientific and scholarly perspectives to the widest possible audience. It complements, extends and broadens our current publishing portfolio from psychology – Psychology of Music – and education – Research Studies in Music Education. The fundamental criterion for inclusion in Music & Science is whether or not research involves the application or the consideration of scientific method in relation to music.

We have two principal aims in producing the new journal. The first is to provide a single home for research from any discipline or perspective that can illuminate, or that can be illuminated by, scientific approaches to understanding music. We plan to publish research across the field of music and science as broadly conceived, encompassing studies in cognition, neuroscience and psychoacoustics; development and education; philosophy and aesthetics; ethnomusicology and music sociology; archaeology and ethology; music theory, analysis and historical studies; performance science and practice-based research; computational approaches and studies in digital culture; acoustics, sound studies, and soundscape studies; music therapy; and clinical implications and approaches, including psychoneuroimmunology, health and well-being. Our goal is to be truly interdisciplinary; to give researchers from the many different scientific traditions that have been applied to music the opportunity to communicate with – and to learn from – each other, while encouraging dialogue with music scholars whose work is situated in artistic, performative or humanistic domains and that engages with scientific approaches to understanding music.

Our second aim is to deliver a vehicle for publication and dissemination of this interdisciplinary research in an online, open-access format at a cost that is as low as can be managed and that is at a level likely to be acceptable to all potential contributors. Increasingly, governments and funding agencies are requiring researchers employed in higher education institutions to publish in open-access formats. While this is appropriate for scientific researchers holding research grants, most humanities and arts scholars have little or no research funding and their situation and needs have, frankly, been ignored in this move towards open access. We expect to draw our contributors not only from the sciences but also from the humanities and the arts; hence we aim to ameliorate existing disparities by providing an outlet with broad scope, wide coverage, and low article-processing charges.

In part, the appearance of the journal is motivated by the need to facilitate a degree of cross-disciplinary understanding – or, at least, awareness. From its origins – whether these are viewed as first evidenced in the work of Helmholtz, Ohm and others in the 19th century, or as consequential to the cognitive revolution in the latter half of the 20th century – the literature that bears on music and science has been dispersed across a wide range of publications that have often exhibited strong, and sometimes exclusionary, disciplinary commitments. The aim of Music & Science is to be inclusive from the outset. We want to provide a home for research that explores music from prevailing neurocognitive (and other) scientific perspectives as well as for research not easily locatable within these core areas. This research may appear to be musicological, philosophical, sociological, even ethological, but wherever it is situated, it should be capable of being conceptualised as bearing on the same sets of questions that concern those of us working in what one can think of as the core areas of music and science.

In part, the journal’s establishment is motivated simply by the fact that much work around music and science that either falls, or does not fall, into conventional scientific frames is just very interesting. Serendipitous processes can sometimes lead us towards writings and research outwith our comfort zones. On occasion, those previously unregarded literatures can open up new paths for our own thinking, research and collaboration; on occasion, they simply elicit a sympathetic understanding that may prove to be no less valuable in the long term in sharpening our awareness of the thoughts and motivations of researchers in disciplines seemingly distant from our own.

Music & Science welcomes original research, commentaries and reviews, and sets no upper or lower limit on article length. As the journal is online it can host audio

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and video files. It has an open data policy; authors should be prepared to share and to make freely available data sets as well as relevant musical materials, whether audiovisual, sonic or notated. Authors are also asked to publish a summary of their research in audio or audiovisual form alongside their submission to highlight for a non-specialist audience the author’s view of the significance of their research in the broad field of music and science. Publication will be continuous; in addition to research articles, we encourage the submission of comments on published papers, and expect to commission commentaries on papers that we accept for publication and designate as target articles that can then be published together with the target article. We particularly encourage submission of work that raises issues around music as both a cultural phenomenon and as a focus for scientific exploration.

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