

## Foreword

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It is our pleasure to announce the launch of *Progress in Informatics* as a new international academic journal to further promote the development of “Informatics”. Informatics is a new interdisciplinary domain encompassing a broad range of comprehensive information-related academic fields, covering from the natural sciences and information technology to the humanities and social sciences. Informatics is expected to be one of the most dominant academic domains of the 21st century. *Progress in Informatics* is intended as a forum for interdisciplinary exchange and a means of communicating achievements in the field to an international community, with an editorial board of internationally renowned scholars. It is our hope that *Progress* will become a truly international journal, drawing support from the global informatics community.

Great strides are expected to be made in informatics through interdisciplinary research, with numerous individual efforts in diverse fields being actively coordinated. Fruits from the informatics field are expected to contribute to social and economic activities through the formulation of an overarching academic basis. At the G8 Summit held in July 2000 in Okinawa, information and communications technology was discussed as one of the major topics and the “Okinawa Charter on Global Information Society” was adopted, wherein the 21st Century was defined as the “Information Century.” While a plethora of new possibilities have opened up with the global advancement of information and communications technology, there are serious issues as well, such as how to enhance information security, how to bridge the digital divide, etc.

The National Institute of Informatics (NII) was established in April 2000 as an inter-university research institute of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) to be a core organization for informatics research and the development and operation of an infrastructure for scientific information in Japan. As for research activities, the NII conducts highly scientific and forward-looking informatics research and also promotes interdisciplinary efforts in a wide range of research programs through comprehensive international coordination and collaboration with domestic and overseas universities, research institutes, and business entities. As for the operations, the NII emphasizes that research achievements should be quickly reflected in development of an infrastructure for scientific information. We thus manage the creation and operation of the Science Information Network and provide various academic information services. Through these researches and practical operations, carried out in close connection, NII's profound activities are promoted. In addition, post-graduate educational programs on “Informatics” are provided in collaboration with the Graduate University for Advanced Studies (Sokendai).

In April 2004, the NII became a member of an inter-university research institute corporation, Research Organization of Information and Systems. At this time, it was decided that the *NII Journal*, limited to papers from within the NII, should be discontinued and *Progress in Informatics* be launched as a new academic journal open to the entire informatics community.

Through this new endeavor, we are determined to promote the further advancement of informatics, and sincerely desire your kind cooperation and support in this regard.

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