

## The 0th International Conference on Cutting-Edge Organic Chemistry in Asia—Asian Core Program (ACP) and IUPAC East Asian Networking Project

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The inauguration of a new international journal, *Chemistry—An Asian Journal*, by the efforts of Professor Ryoji Noyori, Wiley-VCH, and other prominent members of Asian chemical societies has been a long-awaited and anticipated event. It is timely as many recognize that Asia is one of the most rapidly developing regions in the world. Economic growth translates into tremendous progress across many fields to result in a rapidly changing culture and society, as well as exponential growth in the areas of technology and the sciences. In the summer of 2005, an IUPAC general assembly was held in Beijing, and a major topic of discussion was 'Innovation, Chemistry in Asia'. At the World Chemistry Leadership Meeting, Professor G. Mehta (India), President of International Council for Science (ICSU), delineated the significant changes in the central areas of sciences and education, which have expanded from Europe and North America and are now establishing themselves in Asia. Minoru Isobe, IUPAC Division President of Organic and Biomolecular Chemistry and Task Group Chair, noting a similar observation, has started a new initiative to establish a multinational network among organic chemists in Asia.

It is estimated that 25–30% of the worldwide research in the field of organic chemistry is being carried out in Asia. According to IUPAC statistics, the sum of IUPAC subscriptions by NAO (National Adhering Organization) members of top ten East Asian countries has reached 30%, and a higher percentage is expected in the next decade. Though

being geographically proximate, Asian countries have, in the past, not made full use of the convenient reciprocal access in order to facilitate dialogue and exchange among chemists. This is the background of the initiative for establishing a multinational organic chemists' network, particularly among East Asian countries/regions.

The vision was to establish and extend cooperative research efforts beyond the intraregional boundaries. The Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) has taken an initiative to support an Asian Core Program, which aims to create world-class research hubs within the Asian region and foster the development of the next generation of leading researchers by establishing sustainable collaborative relations among research and educational institutions in Asian countries. Nagoya University strongly supports and is the Core University of this program, with Minoru Isobe serving as the coordinator. Representing their respective countries/regions, Guo-Qiang Lin (China, Shanghai), Sunggak Kim (Korea), Somsak Ruchirawat (Thailand), and Chun-Chen Liao (China, Taipei) share in the vision to enhance collaborative efforts. As coordinators they have invited many cooperative universities/institutes in their home countries/regions to start the network (Table 1). All cooperating regions also agreed to support this program by acquiring matching funds for the duration of the program, that is, until March 2010. This program is jointly supported by the JSPS (Japan), the NNSFC (China, Beijing), the NSCT (China, Taipei), the KOSEF/CMDs (Korea), the NRCT/CRI (Thailand), and the IUPAC for an East Asian Network Task group project.

The initiation of the Asian Core Program and the Inauguration Conference (The 0th International Conference on Cutting-Edge Organic Chemistry in Asia) was held at the Noyori Conference Hall in Nagoya University, Nagoya, Japan during March 8–12, 2006 (and The 1st Conference will be held in Okinawa, Japan in October 16–20, 2006). At the 0th Conference there were 110 participants, including 25 overseas attendees (Figure 1). To start the conference program, Prof. Shin-ich Hirano, the President of Nagoya Uni-

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Table 1. Members of the Asian Core Program: Cutting-Edge Organic Chemistry in Asia

<p><b>Japan:</b> Nagoya Univ.: Minoru Isobe (Chairman) The Univ. of Tokyo: Koichi Narasaka, Eiichi Nakamura Chiba Univ.: Atushi Nishida Hokkaido Univ.: Keiji Tanino Kyoto Univ.: Tamejiro Hiyama Osaka Univ.: Michio Murata Tohoku Univ.: Masahiko Yamaguchi Tokyo Institute of Technology: Keisuke Suzuki</p> <p><b>China, Beijing:</b> Shanghai Institute of Organic Chemistry: Guoqiang Lin (Co-Chair) Chinese Univ. of Hong Kong: Henry N. C. Wong Chengdu Institute of Organic Chemistry East China Univ. of Science and Technology Fudan Univ. Jiaotong Univ. Lanzhou Univ. Nankai Univ. Peking Univ. Shanghai Institute of Materia Medica Shanghai Jiaotong Univ. Sichuan Univ. Xiamen Univ. Tsinghua Univ. The Univ. of Hong Kong: Pauline Chiu (Secretary General)</p>	<p><b>China, Taipei:</b> National Tsing Hua Univ.: Chun-Chen Liao (Co-Chair) National Taiwan Univ.: Tien-Yau Luh (Co-Chair) Academica Sinica National Central Univ. National Chung Cheng Univ. National Taiwan Normal Univ.</p> <p><b>Korea:</b> Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology (KAIST): Sunggak Kim (Co-Chair) Yonsei Univ.: Kwan Soo Kim (Co-Chair) Seoul National Univ. Pohang Univ. of Science and Technology Korea Univ. Sungkyunkwan Univ.</p> <p><b>Thailand:</b> Chulabhorn Research Institute: Somsak Ruchirawat (Co-Chair) Chulalongkorn Univ. Mahidol Univ. Ramkhamhaeng Univ. Kasetsart Univ. Khon Kaen Univ. Burapa Univ. Srinakharinwirot Univ. Prince of Songkla Univ. King Mongkut's Institute of Technology, Thonburi</p>
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Figure 1. Faculty participants in the 0th International Conference on Cutting-Edge Organic Chemistry in Asia. Front row: Masahiro Murakami, Michio Murata, Tamejiro Hiyama, Sunggak Kim, Chun-Chen Liao, Minoru Isobe, Somsak Ruchirawat, Chin-Kang Sha, Kuiling Ding, Pauline Chiu, Kwan-Soo Kim. Second Row: Jim-Min Fang, Hee-Yoon Lee, Chan-Mo Yu, Chien-Tien Chen, Naoto Chatani, Biing-Jiun Uang, Atsushi Nishida, Ken-Tsung Wong, Rai-Shung Liu, Chien-Hong Cheng. Third Row: Hisao Nishiyama, Masami Sakamoto, Yoshinori Kondo, Masahiro Terada, Chun-Cheng Lin, Man-Kit Leung, Shin-Ichiro Shoda, Sung Ho Kang. Back Row: Toshio Nishikawa, Jye-Shane Yang, Kazuaki Ishihara, Wen-Feng Liaw, Chien-Hong Chien, Masahiko Yamaguchi. Insets: Left: Guo-Qiang Lin, Right: Keisuke Suzuki.

versity, addressed the audience and reiterated the university's strong support of this program. Following this, Minoru Isobe, Chief Coordinator, shared the vision of this network, and provided an outline of the program. In the following two days, 12 very high caliber lectures were delivered and 68 posters were presented. In the concluding session, three Poster Prizes were awarded to graduate students for their exceptional work, and 16 Core Lectureship Awards were given to ten promising young organic chemists.

The Asian Core program aims to create world-class research hubs within the Asian region. The core institutions (seven from five countries/regions) and member institutions (about 50) and over 160 networked members will strive to collaborate in cutting-edge fields of research and on research topics deemed to be of high international importance by way of joint research, scientific meetings, and researcher exchanges. The scope is not only organic synthesis, methodology, and total synthesis, but also includes nanochemistry,

green and sustainable chemistry, bioorganic chemistry, structural and materials sciences, environmental chemistry, chemical biology, and those applications that hopefully will bring benefits to all societies in the East Asian region.

The biggest leap forward was the establishment of a series of “Core Lectureship Awards” to promote exposure and exchange among the younger generation of organic chemists. At the prize-selection meeting during the 0th Conference, each country/region selected as winners those whom they deemed to be promising young chemists from other regions, based on the research presented in their posters or oral presentations. These candidates were each awarded a Lectureship Prize, which consists of an invitation and support for the awardee to visit their country/regions to deliver a series of lectures (Table 2). These Core Lectureship Awards will

Table 2. Awards presented at the 0th Conference on Cutting-Edge Organic Chemistry in Asia

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#### Graduate Student Poster Awards

- 1) Toru Hashimoto, Nagoya Univ., Japan
- 2) Rei Kondo, Nagoya Univ., Japan
- 3) Akinari Hamajima, Nagoya Univ., Japan

#### Core Lectureship Awards

- 1) Masahiro Murakami, Kyoto Univ., Japan  
Expansion of Cyclobutanone Skeletons through Insertion of Alkenes and Alkynes
  - 2) Kuiling Ding, SIOC, China Beijing  
Self-Supported Chiral Catalysts for Heterogeneous Enantioselective Reactions
  - 3) Kazuaki Ishihara, Nagoya Univ., Japan,  
Rational Design of Small-Molecule Artificial Enzymes Based on Acid-Base Combined Chemistry
  - 4) Sung Ho Kang, KAIST, Korea  
Enantioselective Mercuriocyclization and Iodocyclization of  $\gamma$ -Hydroxy-*cis*-alkenes
  - 5) Chien-Hong Cheng, Nat. Tsing Hua Univ., China Taipei  
Palladium-Catalyzed Multicomponent Reactions
  - 6) Atsushi Nishida, Chiba Univ., Japan  
Furan-Iminium Cation Cyclization in the Synthesis of Manzamine Alkaloids
  - 7) Shang-Cheng Hung, Nat. Tsing Hua Univ., China Taipei  
Toward the Synthesis of Heparin/Heparan Sulfate Oligosaccharides
  - 8) Masahiro Terada, Tohoku Univ., Japan  
High S/C Organocatalysis by Chiral Brønsted Acid for Enantioselective Aza-Ene-Type Reactions
  - 9) Shigehiro Yamaguchi, Nagoya Univ., Japan  
Functional Organoboron Materials
  - 10) Toshio Nishikawa, Nagoya Univ., Japan  
Multifunctionality of Trichloroacetamide in Tetrodotoxin Synthesis
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continue to be presented in future International Conferences on Cutting-Edge Organic Chemistry in Asia and provide additional incentive to promote excellence in research and presentation, because “the business card for a chemist is a poster of his/her chemistry”.

By making full use of the proximity among the neighboring participating countries, the international research collaboration and exchange activities will be accelerated. The images of some recent memorable exchange events and conferences can be enjoyed at the following website: <http://www.agr.nagoya-u.ac.jp/~organic/asiahtml/acp2006-1.html>.

At the Business Meeting during the 0th Conference, future International Conferences on Cutting-Edge Organic Chemistry in Asia were planned as a series of annual chemical conferences. The scientific meetings will be hosted and organized by each country/region in turn. By rotating the venue of the meetings, each country/region would have the opportunity to host and bring discussions on cutting-edge organic chemistry from the world to their own soil, helping to promote the importance of this field to the attention of their societies and governments. The first conference is to be held in Okinawa, Japan, with an expected attendance of 150 chemists, and a postconference symposium will be held in Taipei, Taiwan. The 2nd conference will be held in 2007 in Korea. China (Beijing) will host this conference in 2008, Thailand in 2009, and Taiwan in 2010.

Another aim of this network is to provide education for promoting sustainable growth in Asia. At the Business Meeting of the Asian Core Program discussed jointly with the IUPAC Task Group, Minoru Isobe, Chairman of the IUPAC Division of Organic and Biomolecular Chemistry, reported a “Strategic Planning for a New East Asian Network for Organic Chemistry” as an official project (No. 2005-039-2-300, <http://www.iupac.org/projects/2005/2005-039-2-300.html>). This network and the IUPAC project would also be specially committed to supporting the development of organic chemistry in developing Asian countries. The Network will organize workshops on aspects of organic chemistry, chemical techniques, and current research trends, with the aim being to enhance the knowledge of organic chemistry and research in these regions. This will foster the development of science and science-based enterprises in these countries, catalyzing their progress into the scene of chemistry research in the 21st century. The Task Group members are initially Minoru Isobe (Japan), Pauline Chiu (China/Hong Kong), Chin-Kang Sha (China, Taipei), and Keisuke Suzuki (Japan). In order to further this program, additional members were inducted, including Koichi Narasaka (Univ. Tokyo), Eiichi Nakamura (Univ. Tokyo), Eun Lee (Seoul National Univ.), Chun-Chen Liao (China/Taipei), Tien-Yau Luh (National Taiwan Univ.), and Henry Wong (Chinese Univ. of Hong Kong).

Future developments to include additional countries and regions are planned. Membership is not static, and it is hoped that other countries and institutions will join this network and Core Program in the future.