A note from the President

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The Society of Biological Inorganic Chemistry

SBIC has been established as a learned society of advanced research and education in the field of Biological Inorganic Chemistry

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Over the past few months members of the Society have been busy assessing applications and making awards to younger scientists, a pleasurable task and one of the very important contributions the Society makes toward supporting the next generation.

Most of you will have heard that the 2009 SBIC Early Career Award has gone to Professor Frank Neese of the University of Bonn. The selection committee had an extraordinarily difficult task of selecting a winner from a large list of candidates, any one of whom would have been a deserving awardee. Frank is a most deserving winner and is of course well known and highly respected in the biological inorganic chemistry community. In little more than a decade since completing his PhD, Frank has produced 150 papers in top quality journals. These papers have already gathered an average of nearly 30 cites each and his H factor is currently 38. His M factor (H factor divided by number of years since first paper) is 2.6—anything above 2 is considered stellar!

Of course such statistics are only one aspect when considering candidates for such awards, but they do provide a readily accessible assessment of achievement. My own interest in citation statistics stems from my role in

coordinating research assessment at my university (Australia is about to undergo a research assessment process not unlike that of the UK RAE). One of the things we have learnt in considering how we analyse citation data is that any type of analysis, and particularly reducing a career to one number, is a risky and questionable undertaking. However, a useful insight to emerge is that a sustained and rapid rate of growth in citations appears to be a very strong pointer to an early career scientist's being on a stellar path. For example, the number of citations Frank Neese's papers receive each year is more than doubling every three years. Each of the large group of nominees for the EC Award also has a tremendous rate of citation growth, which augurs very well for the future of biological inorganic chemistry.

The other awards we have been in the process of assessing are the SBIC Student Travel Grants for participation in the upcoming ICBIC-14 meeting. Here too we had an outstanding group of applicants and 27 awards have been made. Congratulations to the award winners, and I look forward to meeting you all along with other members of the Society in Nagoya.

Trevor Hambley