



2022, a year of the water tiger

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Abstract

According to Chinese astrology, the Tiger is considered as the king of all animals. The Year of the Tiger 2022 was meant to symbolize determinism, vitality, strength, spontaneity and novelty, with the water element making it wiser and thoughtful. Often associated with the defeat of evil, a Water Tiger year occurs only every 60 years. The 2022 version was indeed a year of resilience, even in the time of conflict and the struggles that we have faced both in personal and professional realms. It was a good time to reflect in order to overcome all challenges and difficulties. The revamping of both the International CCN society (ICCNS) and the Journal of Cell Communication and Signaling (JCCS) that I had previously initiated and officially announced in 2019, are on track to becoming a successful reality and will be pursued over the coming years, thanks to the strong support of our colleagues, members of the JCCS Editorial board and representatives of other scientific societies who support our efforts to broaden the scope of the ICCNS and its communication organ. I will schematically draw below the guidelines that we intend to follow in the near future.

Keywords Lunar year · Water Tiger · Water rabbit · ICCNS Workshops · CCN Society

The 11th workshop on the CCN family of genes

Our 11th workshop was held in the city of Nice, at the Hôtel Aston La Scala. The workshop celebrated, with a slight delay due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 20th anniversary of both the International workshop on the CCN family of genes and the birth of the International CCN society, the details of its inception being presented in a commentary within the present issue¹.

This workshop was a very special and important event for a variety of reasons.

First of all, it was the first face-to-face ICCNS meeting that we could organize since we had to postpone our workshop series because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Second, the workshop welcomed, for the first time, colleagues

working in broader communication and signaling fields that are close to, but distinct from, the specific CCN focus of the Society. Last but not least, the workshop was also a unique opportunity for JCCS Editorial Board members to convene and critically address various aspects of manuscript evaluation and publication, and discuss the aims and objectives of the Journal.

1) The reunion

Since our last meeting in 2019, many colleagues kept asking Annick to organize a special venue to celebrate 20 years of friendship and collaboration from which stemmed an ever-increasing quality of the science produced by all those who constitute the core of our closely-knit family-type reunions.

The 11th workshop was a genuine success, from both personal and scientific perspectives. Some of our colleagues did not hesitate to fly for many hours from very remote places to attend this meeting, even for a few days.

We are extremely grateful to all those who made the venue a great human adventure and a wonderful moment of scientific information sharing.

We will shortly announce details of the next workshop which is scheduled to be held in Oslo, Norway under the responsibility of Professor Havard Attramadal. All

¹ PERBAL B. Inception and establishment of the International CCN Society (ICCNS) and of the Journal of Cell Communication and Signaling (JCCS). Current JCCS issue.

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information will be available on the ICCNS society website <https://ccnsociety.com>.

2) The expanded topics

I have had the opportunity in previous editorials to provide details about my plans to broaden the scope of JCCS and include new research areas in our topics of competence.

We deliberately invited colleagues from a broader community of interest and expertise. We welcomed scientific societies, outside of our specific CCN realm who could share common ways of approaching the biological functions of regulatory elements that might be cofactors or inhibitors of the action of CCN proteins in various biological models.

Several researchers responded positively to our invitation. Their presentations triggered a real interest among the CCN community and built the foundation for more extensive collaborative projects to be pursued in the near future.

These are important steps in the direction to share more views, reagents, expertise and complex biological platforms.

A detailed report of the presented communications will appear in a forthcoming issue of JCCS.

Along the same vein, JCCS welcomes submissions from Middle East countries and China, regions which previously might have been underrepresented. I have clearly mentioned my firm opposition to the unprofessional practice of immediate manuscript rejection based on geographical origin. JCCS is putting particular emphasis on ensuring that all of the manuscripts from these regions are fully and respectfully reviewed.

This reminds me of the time when researchers from Eastern bloc countries belonging to the USSR² bloc would have a real hard time publishing their work in international journals³.

Fortunately, this time is over now and colleagues from the Middle East, central Europe, and South America, for example, are most welcome to submit manuscripts that reach the required standard and threshold for publication.

We are currently positively impressed by the high quality of submissions that would have probably not made their way to international audiences.

3) The editorial board members appreciation of JCCS

The escalation of JCCS popularity is very satisfactory, as shown by the regular monthly increase of article downloads (27,6% over the first 8 months of 2022)⁴. The expansion

of our readership occurred without any compromise on the quality of the work that is published in JCCS. It required scientific integrity, faithfulness, probity, responsibility, loyalty, and respect.

I also wish to mention and acknowledge the altruism and dedication of all the members of the JCCS editorial board who commit their precious time to deliver a constant high quality level of critical analysis.

Too many editors of publishing houses and open access mills, eager to earn the most financial profit from their journals, instead of prioritizing the highest quality of published science, should carefully consider this point. We can see more and more of a disagreement growing up among reviewers who are questioning the financial recognition of their input without which the publication world will collapse.

A summary of the conclusions reached during these very positive discussions will be presented in the near future.

This year of a Water Tiger will end on January 22, 2023 to make way for a year 2023 under the sign of a Water Rabbit. The water element in its Yin form is said to be the main source of energy in the Chinese calendar throughout 2023.

The year of a Water Rabbit 2023 is described as a prelude to a gentleness and serenity rhythm that should certainly be appreciated by all of us. It should therefore be an ideal period of time to regain a positive inner balance and prepare for the first ARBIOCOM meeting that is presently in the early stages of preparation.

All information will be available on the ICCNS web page.

We wish you all a very quiet and fruitful end of the year, away from conflict, uncertainty, disruptive thoughts and full of mutual respect, humanity and peace.

Acknowledgements I am grateful to the various colleagues who accepted to proofread this Editorial prior to submission. Particular thanks are due to Annick, S. Gabaron, A. Mobasheri and H. Yeger for their thoughtful comments and suggestions regarding the last version.

Note The previous Editor in Chief had the intention to publish a special issue of the journal on “Matrigel and microenvironment”. Because of an insufficient number of manuscripts received and the absence of a mandatory corresponding thematic section in the Editorial Manager, Annick and I could not publish these articles as stand alone. They have now been included at the end of this issue, along with its editorial.

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² Union of Soviet Socialist Republics created in 1922.

³ See for example the very complete work of Pecenka V., Dvorak M., Travnicek M. Avian nephroblastomas induced by a retrovirus (MAV-2) lacking oncogene. I. Construction of MAV-1 and MAV-2 proviral restriction maps and preparation of specific proviral molecular subclones. *Folia Biol (Praha)*. 1988 34:129–46.

⁴ Calculated from the numbers of downloads provided by Springer.