

Preface

The 18th International Conference of Organic Synthesis (ICOS-18) was held in Bergen, Norway on 1–6 August 2010, under the auspices of IUPAC and with cosponsorship of the Norwegian Chemical Society and the Research Council of Norway. The structure of the meeting was in keeping with the tradition that has developed for the ICOS series of conferences, with a scientific backbone of lectures including the Thieme-IUPAC Prize Lecture, poster sessions, and exhibitions. Due to valuable help from members of the International Advisory Board, plenary and invited lectures were delivered by chemists from 22 different countries from all around the world. The talks covered most aspects of modern organic synthesis, from new delicate methodologies based on mechanistic understanding, via greatly improved synthesis technologies and exciting total syntheses, to the application of organic synthesis to meet challenges in bioorganic chemistry and the life sciences.

There were two new features at this meeting. One was a section of five parallel sessions with short talks given mainly by young chemists from 22 countries. This event was expected to be a challenge to execute because, after all, we like to talk about chemistry without paying attention to the time, but thanks to the speakers' exemplary discipline the chairs could be lenient in a firm fashion. Collectively, the short presentations showed that a wide range of new and brave ideas are investigated by the young colleagues, which indicate that organic synthesis is heading toward a bright future. The second addition was the Thieme-IUPAC Poster Prize, five in total, to the best posters presented at the conference as judged by an international committee of outstanding synthetic chemists.

The papers published in this issue of *Pure and Applied Chemistry (PAC)* give a good cross-section of topics covered at ICOS-18. I am grateful to all colleagues for their interesting contributions, which are instrumental in helping IUPAC disseminate cutting-edge research to the enormous group of organic chemists that did not come to the conference. When you read the papers you will find reviews with excellent examples of natural-product syntheses, new synthetic methodologies, applications of organic synthesis in biological research, and development of new materials with exciting functional properties. But you will also come across interesting papers that are more like traditional publications found in journals other than *PAC*; the reason for this being that invitations were also extended to selected younger chemists to contribute papers based upon short talks (the scope of which was of course narrower than that of invited lectures), and they responded with enthusiasm. I am sure you will find interesting material there as well.

ICOS-18 certainly nourished the organic synthetic chemists' professional development through lectures, poster presentations, and discussions dealing with the cutting-edge advances in organic synthesis. There are many that are looking forward to the next meal, to be served when ICOS-19 opens in Melbourne, Australia, on 1 July 2012 (<www.icos19.com>).

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