



Beginnings, Reviews, and Rejuvenation

by Richard Hartshorn

Like most organisations, IUPAC has its rhythms of operation, and for us that constant beat is the cycle of the biennium. Our beat is governed by the two-yearly terms for positions and budgets that ensure that we are always bringing in new ideas and people, refreshing our leadership, examining our progress, and plotting our way forward.

This time, however, I would argue that the biennium will be special. We are about to begin the cycle of elections for this biennium, and those elected will have some special challenges: challenges that will provide the opportunity to set a new direction for IUPAC in a way that has not been done before; challenges that will have extra importance from it being the first time we are doing so.

In this article, I will provide some important context for these challenges, explain why they are especially significant, and outline how YOU can be involved in shaping IUPAC for years to come.

The Context

As many of you will be aware, we have a new beginning through the appointment of Greta Heydenrych as IUPAC Executive Director, succeeding Lynn Soby, and I want to thank Lynn for her years of sterling service leading the Secretariat. You can read more on page 22. We are also in the middle of an extensive review process for IUPAC, and this will lead to rejuvenation of the organisation, both through bringing in new people, and through examining anew just what we do and how we go about doing it.

The IUPAC Council, at its meeting in Paris, in 2019, asked for a formal review of IUPAC and the way it operates. It was seen as vital that IUPAC should find a way to sustain its activities over the long term, and to ensure that it remains relevant as a scientific organisation. The key proposals involved a separation of governance from management of operations, and the consequent recommendation that we establish an Executive Board for governance, and a Science Board for determining the direction of our scientific activities and overseeing their management. These recommendations were accepted by Council in 2021.

At the recent special meeting of Council (held virtually 4 June 2022), revised Statutes and By-Laws were approved, and these prescribe the exact nature of the new governance structure for IUPAC, and how it should be established. (see also iupac.org/iupac-ready/) It is our job, collectively, to make this happen. The 2023 election process will be central to that task.

Elections

For many years we have elected a Vice President (who is also President-elect) at Council meetings, along with other officer positions as they fall vacant. Last biennium we elected a new Treasurer (Wolfram Koch), and this biennium you will be asked to elect my successor as Secretary General. I invite you to consider nominating those of your colleagues whom you believe would be excellent in those roles. In the case of Secretary General, my advice would be that you look for people who already have deep knowledge of the scope and operations of IUPAC. Certainly, if you would like to know more about the Secretary General role, I would be very pleased to answer any questions that you may have (rhartshorn@iupac.org).

Through the first half of 2023, there will also be an opportunity to shape the committees that run our sub-disciplinary activities. Thus nominations will also be invited for roles (Titular Members and Associate Members) in our Divisions and Standing Committees, as we seek motivated expert volunteers to take on and lead our scientific work. (see more about these elections p. 22) I note here that there is a major thrust towards digitalisation of IUPAC activities, and that we are dreadfully short of people with knowledge and expertise in that space (as well as in a specific area of chemistry). If that is you, we need you to be nominated/elected!

New Roles in the New Structure

This election cycle will be special in that we will be electing members of the inaugural Executive Board and Science Board. The IUPAC Council has responsibility for filling six elected positions on the Executive Board and five elected positions on the Science Board. Once again, we seek your input in identifying suitable people for these roles. Governance experience and knowledge of IUPAC and its activities would clearly be welcome in nominees for the Executive Board. By contrast, the review report that led to the new structure was explicit about the desirability of having Science Board members with an external perspective in addition to people who are active in IUPAC. We need to give the wider chemistry community a voice in what

we do. Of course, in all of that, we hope to attain a degree of diversity that we can be proud of in a modern international organisation.

More Reviews and Thank You's

One of the first jobs the new Science Board will have is to undertake a review of the IUPAC science portfolio and the organisational structures through which we do that science. In the biennia before Covid, IUPAC was running deficit budgets and there were significant cash-flow challenges associated with the timing of national subscription payments (which were often made late in the year) in relation to the timing of our costs (which are spread through the year). Travel disruption through Covid meant that IUPAC costs were reduced significantly, and this certainly reduced the financial pressure on the Union. Now that travel is returning, however, we need to examine ways in which we can organise our science in a more sustainable way.

In addition, we are also beginning an examination of our key scientific journal, *Pure and Applied Chemistry*

(PAC), to assess the form it should have in order that IUPAC can best deliver on its vision to be the indispensable worldwide resource for chemistry. And this brings me to both another new beginning, as Professor Ganesan has been appointed interim editor of PAC while this review is being undertaken, and another thank you, to Professor Hugh Burrows, the outgoing editor. Hugh has been one of our hardest-working volunteers, and we are very grateful indeed for the years he has given us.

Finally, I want to thank those people who served on the selection panels for the Executive Director and PAC Editor roles, the fantastic staff of the Secretariat, and all of the volunteers who contribute their time and expertise to IUPAC work. 🇨🇦

Richard Hartshorn <richard.hartshorn@canterbury.ac.nz> has been involved in IUPAC since the late 1990s, initially with the Inorganic Chemistry Division and then with the Chemical Nomenclature and Structure Representation Division (as President in 2010–2013). He has served as Secretary General since January 2016 and will retire of this function at the end of 2023.

The poster features a teal background with a large circular image of three smiling women in white lab coats. The text 'Feb. 14th 2023' is in a purple circle. The logo 'GI WB Br' (Global Women's Breakfast) is in the top left. The URL 'iupac.org/gwb' is in the top right. The main text 'GWB 2023' is in large yellow and white letters, with 'Breaking Barriers in Science' below it.

The IUPAC Global Women's Breakfast was born during the International Year of Chemistry in 2011, and it was reborn in 2019 during the International Year of the Periodic Table. Since 2019, the GWB has grown into an annual event in February of each year in support of the United Nations Day of Women and Girls in Science.

The goal is to build a network of women and men in support of closing the Gender Gap in Science.

In 2022, more than 30,000 people participated in 400 breakfast events in 75 countries.

We invite women and men from all science disciplines to organize breakfast events on 14 February 2023 as part of the IYBSSD.

Go to iupac.org/gwb to register your event today.

Le petit-déjeuner mondial des femmes de l'IUPAC est né lors de l'Année internationale de la chimie en 2011, et rétabli en 2019 lors de l'Année internationale du tableau périodique. Depuis 2019, le Global Women's Breakfast (GWB) est devenu un événement annuel en février en soutien de la Journée des Nations Unies pour les femmes et les filles de science.

L'objectif est de créer un réseau de femmes et d'hommes de scientifiques pour soutenir la réduction des inégalités entre les femmes et les hommes dans le domaine scientifique.

En 2022, plus de 30 000 personnes ont participé à 400 petits-déjeuners dans 75 pays.

Nous invitons femmes et hommes de toutes les disciplines scientifiques à organiser des petits-déjeuners le 14 février 2023 dans le cadre de l'IYBSSD.

Allez sur iupac.org/gwb pour enregistrer votre événement dès aujourd'hui.

