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Publishing structural genomics results: the JCSG Special Issue

In the last decade we have witnessed the advent of structural genomics initiatives around the world. While traditional hypothesis-driven research continues to produce a wealth of new macromolecular structures, the contribution of structural genomics structures to the Protein Data Bank (PDB) has become ever more important. For example, the USA-based Protein Structure Initiative (PSI) alone has deposited more than 5000 structures with the PDB during phases I and II of the project.

While the various structural genomics initiatives have been immensely successful in producing structures, they have found publishing their results to be yet another bottleneck to overcome. Presently, many thousands of structures in the PDB have no publication associated with them at all. When *Acta Crystallographica Section F* was founded, one of its mandates was to provide an efficient and effective medium for presenting structural genomics results. We have sought new ways to ease the publication bottleneck and, with the help and advice of structural genomics leaders, now offer a platform to showcase these structures, and the experiments upon which they are based, to the wider structural and scientific communities. The key feature is the collection of the results produced by an individual structural genomics effort into a special section, allowing the structural genomics group to organize and annotate their structures and put groups of structures into context. The first example was published in December 2009 and contained eight papers from the RIKEN–UK structural genomics consortium in a special section. We have now completed the ultimate expression of this strategem, our first structural genomics special issue of *Acta Crystallographica Section F*, published online and entirely open access at <http://journals.iucr.org/f/issues/2010/10/00/issconts.html>. The Joint Center for Structural Genomics (JCSG), headed by Ian Wilson at the Scripps Institute (La Jolla, USA), contributed 35 fine papers to this issue and the center deserves our thanks for this concerted effort and perseverance. The October 2010 publication of the JCSG Special Issue defines the successful conclusion of an evolving process that started about two years ago during the 2008 IUCr Congress in Osaka, and it marks an important milestone for our journal – the first issue to focus exclusively on structures from an individual structural genomics group.

We have so far received a lot of positive feedback about this special issue from readers and from the structural genomics community as a whole. However, it is no more than a start, albeit clearly a successful one. We anticipate more special issues and special sections in the future and we already have new requests and proposals under consideration.

Finally, we would like to thank our reviewers for their extraordinary generosity of time and energy in refereeing the papers in this special issue.