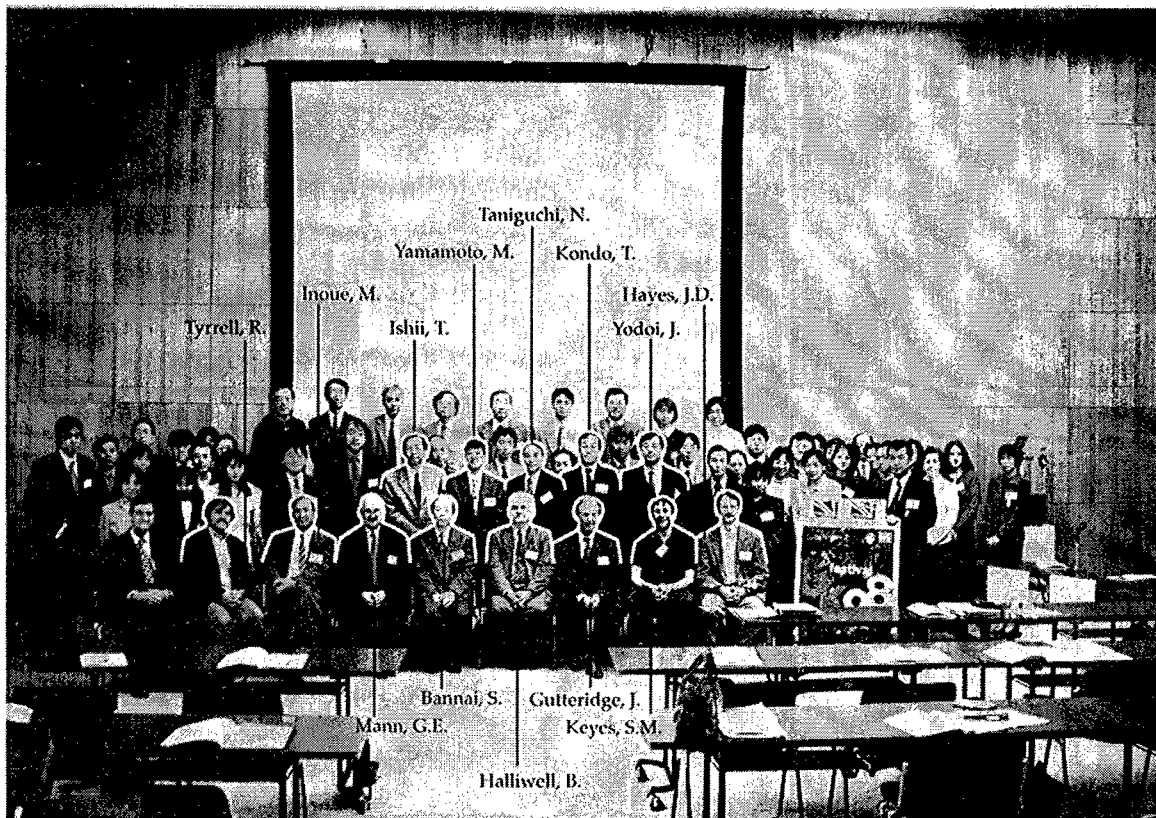


## Introduction

The concept of a British festival in Japan was endorsed by the UK/Japan Bilateral Action Agenda agreed in December 1995 by the Foreign Ministers of Japan and the United Kingdom, and by the Prime Ministers John Major and Ryutaro Hashimoto when they met in Bangkok in March 1996 at the first Asia Europe Meeting.

The UK98 Festival hosted a season of British events in Japan beginning in January 1998 and running throughout the year. Exhibitions, concerts, films, performances, fairs and scientific seminars and meetings were held during the UK98 Festival to demonstrate the diversity and quality of what Britain has to offer the UK-Japan



relationship. The British Embassy and British Council in Tokyo coordinated the planning for UK98 with assistance from a wide range of media, commercial, cultural and other bodies in Japan and the United Kingdom.

Following their longstanding British Council and Monbusho funded research link, Prof. Giovanni Mann (King's College London, UK) and Prof. Shiro Bannai (University of Tsukuba, Japan) proposed to hold an international scientific symposium in the University of Tsukuba under the auspices of UK98. Dr. Brendan Barker, the British Council Science Officer in Tokyo, kindly agreed to sponsor this scientific symposium entitled 'Regulation of Antioxidant Systems in Oxidative Stress' as part of the UK98 programme. The symposium brought together for the first time renowned senior UK and Japanese researchers interested in the molecular events underlying cellular defences against oxidative stress.

During the two day meeting, stimulating keynote lectures were presented by Prof. John Gutteridge (Royal Brompton & Harefield NHS Trust, UK), Prof. Barry Halliwell (King's College London, UK), Prof. Rex Tyrrell (University of Bath, UK), Dr. Stephen Keyes (ICRF, Dundee, UK), Dr. John Hayes (University of Dundee, UK), Prof. Giovanni Mann (King's College London, UK), Prof. Naoyuki Taniguchi (Osaka University,

Japan), Prof. Takahito Kondo (Nagasaki University, Japan), Prof. Masayuki Yamamoto (University of Tsukuba, Japan). Dr. Tetsuro Ishii (University of Tsukuba, Japan), Prof. Junji Yodoi (Kyoto University, Japan) and Prof. Masayasu Inoue (Osaka City University, Japan). In addition to these keynote lectures, thirty poster presentations were presented by young investigators from Japan and the UK. The symposium enabled younger scientists from the UK and Japan to discuss their research in a focused, yet relaxed, environment. The ensuing research papers from this symposium, of which eleven appear in this issue of *Free Radical Research*, summarize recent key developments in the field of oxidative stress and should be of interest to a wide audience.

The organizing committee of this scientific symposium acknowledges the very generous sponsorship of our main sponsor The British Council. Other key sponsors included The Daiwa Anglo-Japanese Foundation, Wellcome Trust UK, Eisai Co. Ltd, Banyu Pharmaceutical Co. Ltd, Funakoshi Co. Ltd, Fujisawa Pharmaceutical Co. Ltd, Yamanouchi Pharmaceutical Co. Ltd and Sankyo Co. Ltd. We are also indebted to the University of Tsukuba for agreeing to host this symposium.

Giovanni E. Mann  
Shiro Bannai