

"The Frontiers of Inorganic Chemistry"—A Workshop

In September 2001 the National Science Foundation sponsored a workshop entitled, "The Frontiers of Inorganic Chemistry". The workshop, which was organized by Hilary Arnold Godwin, Kristin Bowman-James and Brian Hoffman and attended by approximately 30 active researchers in the field, was intended to provide a general assessment of inorganic chemistry, its recent evolution and its impact on other areas of molecular science from biological to material. The workshop was conducted over 2½ days during which both general and break-out sessions were held. In the break-out sessions, scientists were organized into particular topics that included *Frontiers in* (1) *Core Topics*; (2) *Materials Inorganic Chemistry*; (3) *Catalysis*; (4) *Bioinorganic Chemistry*; (5) *New Length Scales*; and (6) *Environmental Inorganic Chemistry*.

Challenges and issues for each topic were discussed, and writing of a general report was started. The purpose and goals of the workshop were foremost in the minds of the participants, as were the target audiences for the report produced. The latter included the National Science Foundation, the national inorganic chemistry community, the entire chemistry and science establishment, scientifically and technologically focused members of Congress and associated staff, and the general public. A key goal was to explain the central role of inorganic chemistry in emerging science and technology. The views expressed extend well beyond our borders, as inorganic chemistry is a global discipline, and this journal is a truly international meeting place. A second goal was to elicit support for future research funding and initiatives, but beginning with the view that no report, regardless of how well conceived or thoughtfully constructed, should or could dictate specific funding directions. We were simply there as interested, active scientists considering how our discipline was growing and changing, and preparing to meet twenty-first century challenges. In this light, I would like to draw your attention to the report which is available at <http://www.chem.northwestern.edu/Frontiers/Index.htm>. An Executive Summary of the report is also available at that website.

Ironically, the Workshop ended on September 10, 2001, and nearly all of us returned home that night to awaken to a different world the following morning. The workshop made us think about the future of our discipline even as the technological needs shifted overnight in an ever-changing world.

Richard Eisenberg

Editor-in-Chief

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