

Guest Editorial

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The 1st Chinese–European Symposium on Biomaterials in Regenerative Medicine was organized by the Chinese Committee for Biomaterials (CCBM) and the European Society for Biomaterials (ESB) and took place from April 3–7, 2006 in the “Garden City”, Suzhou, near Shanghai in China. The symposium on this important topic included invited lectures and peer-reviewed oral and poster presentations, covering the broad spectrum of research and practice from basic development of innovative biomaterial matrices and scaffolds through *in vitro* investigations to clinical applications. The programme committee consisted of leading scientists from both China and Europe with the task of reviewing the submitted abstracts and putting together an integrated programme.

Despite the fact that this was the first joint symposium between the Chinese and the European Societies, there was an excellent response to the call for abstracts, 322 having been submitted from China and 47 from elsewhere. Following the review process, 129 abstracts were chosen for scientific presentation, either as spoken or poster presentation. A total of 9 oral sessions covered the topics of cell-scaffold interactions, drug-delivery systems, bone tissue engineering, biomaterials and scaffolds, tissue-inducing materials, gene therapy, and stem cells and biomimetic materials, with double sessions devoted to both drug delivery and scaffolds. In all there were 72 oral

presentations and 57 posters. A total of 150 colleagues registered for the symposium, representing 12 countries.

An important component of the abstract review process was to identify those topics with the quality of abstract suitable for consideration for this special issue of *Materials in Medicine*. The respective authors were then requested to submit a full paper, and in total 43 manuscripts were available for the peer-review process. The latter was undertaken in the first instance by a joint group of Chinese and European scientists in round-table discussions, which took place during the symposium in China. This was very beneficial in identifying those papers, which from the viewpoint of both relevance and quality should be short-listed for the special issue. As can be seen in the following, 21 manuscripts were chosen to comprise this special issue. The topics are as varied as the entities contributing to the current fields of biomaterials and regenerative medicine and include long-term implantation, the application of nanotechnologies to biomaterial development and modern molecular biological methods for performance assessment and the use of natural polymers and biomimetic approaches for clinical translation.

The Guest Editors would like to express their sincere gratitude to all authors who made the effort to prepare a manuscript for consideration for this special journal issue, to all members of the Programme Committee, who sacrificed many hours in China for the individual reviewing of the manuscripts and the joint round-table discussions, and to all reviewers who were subsequently recruited as experts on the various topics. We would also like to thank Professor William Bonfield as Editor-in-Chief of the journal for his unwavering support as well as to the Editorial Office of the Journal at the Department of Materials Science and Metallurgy, University of Cambridge, UK, especially to Mrs. Christine Carey for her patience and tenacity in seeing

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this project through to a successful conclusion. Thanks are also due to the Editors of Materials in Medicine, Dr. Serena Best (Cambridge) and Prof. Josep Planell (Barcelona) who have also invested much time and effort in this special issue. Finally, it is our wish that the scientific contributions here will be a useful source of new ideas and interesting data not only to generate more “cross-links” between the Chinese and European biomaterials communities, but also to catalyze the international interactions required to

advance this exciting field of the application of biomaterials to regenerative medicine. The success of this first Chinese-European Symposium led to the rapid decision at the close of the symposium to aim for a Second Symposium, most probably in 2009 and organized by European colleagues. Prof. Josep Planell, one of the Editors of this journal, kindly agreed to bear the burden of organization in Barcelona.